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

2 Sections

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Free

Vol. 19

September, 2017

No. 217



John Heimgartner, Bro's Patio and Fisherman's One Stop put his Magic Cajun Touch smoking and preparing a young pig for the 4th Annual Hook N' Cook Sandbass Tournament that was held on August 12th benefitting the Wish to Fish Foundation on Lake Fork. When the meal began there was no doubt what the favorite was. A very large thank you goes to Tracy Redden, JSB Ranch in Aspermont, Texas for the donation of the young pig. He went above and beyond in his donation of the pig. He delivered it cleaned and quartered packed in ice two days before the event, plenty of time for John to put his Magic Touch on the porker. (See full story on Page 4-A)

## Sealy To Be Inducted Into Bass Fishing Hall of Fame

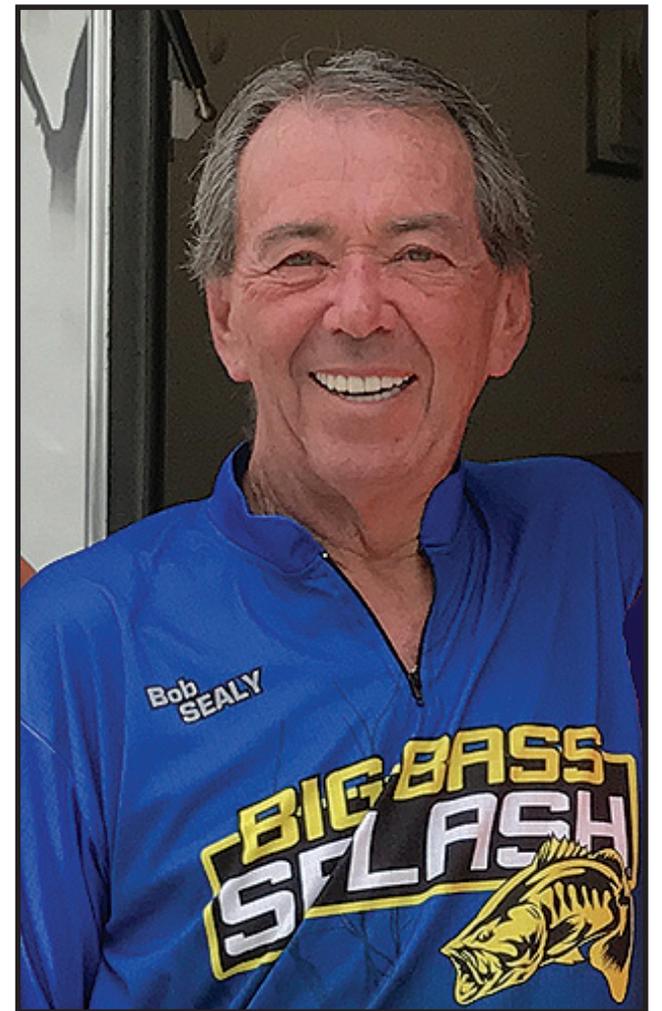
Big Bass Splash fishing tournament founder Bob Sealy will be one of five inductees into the Bass Fishing Hall of Fame's new permanent home in Missouri in November.

Since 2003, 62 honorees have been inducted into the Bass Fishing Hall of Fame.

Sealy, who lives on Lake Sam Rayburn, will be inducted alongside Wade Bourne, Shaw Grigsby, Morris Sheehan and Louie Stout at the hall's new location within Johnny Morris' Wonders of Wildlife Museum & Aquarium in Springfield, Missouri.

"This is quite an honor" Sealy said. "In 2014, I got inducted into the Legends of the Outdoors National Hall of Fame in Nashville, which recognizes outdoors sportsmen and sportswomen. This hall of fame, to me, is the next step up."

"A lot of good people are put up for nominations for this, based on what you do for the industry, what you've done and what



you've given back. We've worked awfully hard to get to this."

Sealy founded the Big Bass Splash, considered the world's largest amateur bass fishing tournament, in 1984, though he created the amateur concept years before while running a program on the Texas side of Lowe's Creek, near Hemp-hill, in the mid-1970's

"I owned a business up at the lake," Sealy said. "I was involved in Bassmaster (B.A.S.S.), which was founded by Ray Scott---a mentor of mine, who made bass fishing into a competitive sport. He and I became such friends, but I knew I couldn't compete with them."

"What we established (See Sealy Inducted...  
Continued on Page 7-A)

## "Bubba May Becoming a 'High Tech' Redneck Thanks to Bubbette!"

By: Don Hampton

If it wasn't for Bubbette I'm afraid Bubba would still be in the dark ages. When it comes to new technology Bubba could care less if it doesn't go on his bass boat or help him locate and catch bass.

Bubba doesn't have a problem learning, he just has a problem taking the time out from fishing to learn. He'll spend more time reading, studying, and learning about his new Lowrance HDS 12 Gen 3 Depth finder/GPS unit than a college student preparing for final exam. When it comes to new items and learning their use, Bubbette just has to be forceful with him. Being forceful with Bubba isn't easy but a little threat of her not cooking will do it every time.

Bubbette finally got him away from his polaroid camera and into the digital age. This was a task in itself because Bubba liked the way his camera spit the photo out the front and he had his pictures to show off sixty seconds later. Now he loves his digital because when he downloads them on his computer he can send to all his buds. Just another giant step for Bubba and mankind.

When everyone else was getting cell phones, Bubba had a beeper that he left in his truck most of the time. When cell phones became small and compact, Bubba had a bag phone he did leave in his truck all the time. Bubbette has finally got him up to date and in modern times and he is now carrying an Apple 6S+ phone but

he still has the old habit of leaving it in his truck at times. I'm pretty sure he does this on purpose because he doesn't want to be disturbed or found when he is hiding out on the lake.

When Bubbette took Bubba to a new level of advanced technology, I just wish you could have seen his face when she told him his phone and truck had "Blue Tooth" technology! "A blue tooth", Bubba exclaimed. "What would I do with a blue tooth? I have a full mouth of teeth! Corn on the cob, no problem! Steak, no problem! Apples, no problem!"

At this time Bubbette had to explain to Bubba just what a "Blue Tooth" was because he was really getting carried away! He had heard of false teeth, decayed teeth, green teeth, and no teeth, (the latter of which he knows a lot of jokes about people in a neighboring state) but he had no idea about Blue Tooth Technology.

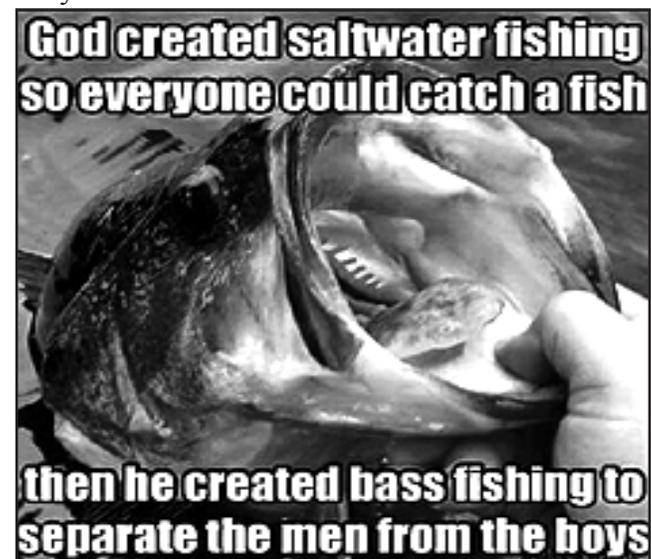
After a lengthy explanation of how he could answer all his calls, hands free, while he was driving down the road, he went for it he loved it. He just thought this was neater than peanut butter and sliced bread.

He was calling all his friends while driving down the road talking fishing! That was until he found out just how many others didn't know what he was doing! More than once someone asked, "Bubba why are you always talking to yourself going down the highway?" Those who know Bubba should know not to ask questions of that nature. He told one such unfortunate, "I am communicating with my 'Starship BassGet-

ter' when I finish lunch I'll have them beam me back to my Legend V21!" To another he was pretty short when he said, "It's the only way I can hear myself. My shotgun damaged my hearing when I was answering an off the wall question!"

You won't see Bubba talking to his truck too much anymore! I think what really turned him off to it was an incident that occurred while he was driving down the road. He was just talking away on it to Bubbette when a car with some youth past him and were looking at him laughing. He figured they either thought he was talking to himself or that he was taking up karaoke!

The way Bubba views this now is that this may still be a little before his time. Whatever the case, if you see Bubba driving down the road just talking away, do yourself and Bubbette a favor and don't ask!



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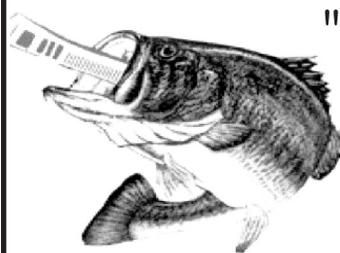
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## Texas Game Wardens Investigating Fatal Sailboat Incident on Lake O' The Pines

Texas Game Wardens are investigating a fatal boating accident that occurred Saturday afternoon, Aug. 7th on Lake O' The Pines involving three East Texas teens on a Boy Scout outing. Preliminary investigations and observations indicates the vessel, a Catamaran sailboat, collided with an overhead transmission power line and those onboard may have been electrocuted as a result.

The three occupants of the vessel, ages 11, 16 and 17, were members of Boy Scout Troop 620 from Hallsville, Texas. All three were wearing personal flotation devices at the time of the accident. Game wardens arrived

at the Alley Creek area of Lake O' The Pines near Avinger, Texas, shortly before 2 p.m. Saturday to find a Hobiecat Catamaran on fire with the sails up about 300 yards north of the power lines. Wardens discovered a 17-year-old male on-board and a 16-year-old in the water a short distance away. Both victims suffered severe bodily injuries and were deceased. A third unresponsive 11-year-old victim was located in a boat nearby and was being provided CPR by good Samaritans. He was transported to LSU Medical Center-Shreveport, LA, where he passed away as a result of injuries suffered during the accident.

The accident is being investigated by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's statewide boating accident reconstruction and mapping team. Victim identification is not being released.

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## 4th Annual Hook N' Cook Sandbass Tournament of Lake Fork

By Don Hampton

The 4th Annual Hook N' Cook Sandbass Tournament was held on August 12th and hosted by Bro's Patio and Fisherman's One Stop.

The fun day tournament was originally began in 2013 to benefit "The Wish to Fish Foundation" and help reduce the population of sandbass in Lake Fork. Fishing hours because of the heat were from 6 a.m. to 12 p.m. with all contestants having to be in the pull through weigh in by 1 p.m. This is to allow time enough for all the fish to be filleted for the great spread to begin at 5 p.m. that evening and give anglers

a chance to go home and cool off. Over 200 sandbass were filleted, which says a lot for the 21 anglers that participated. Some anglers were really on them while others struggled. Each angler could weigh in five fish but were asked to bring their daily legal limit of 25 to be fried. The tournament paid the top five places 80% of all entry money and three places for Big Sandbass paying 100% of entries.

Winning 1st Place Heavy Stringer was Dean O'Brien with a total 5 fish limit weighing 8.87-pounds. Dean also won heavy sandbass with a 2.09-pounder; 2nd Place Heavy Stringer was Evan O'Brien with a total weight of

8.55-pounds. Evan also won 2nd heaviest sandbass of the tournament with a 1.84-pounder; 3rd Place was Kyle House with a total weight of 7.73-pounds; 4th Place was won by Doug House with a weight of 7.17-pounds; 5th Place was won by Josh Busby with a total weight of 6.55-pounds. Josh also won 3rd heaviest sandbass with a 1.77-pounder.

After all the filleting knives were cleaned and put away and the work done, it was time for the fun festivities to begin. John and his staff at Bro's Patio had a terrific spread for those attending to partake in and it was open

*(Continued on Next Page)*



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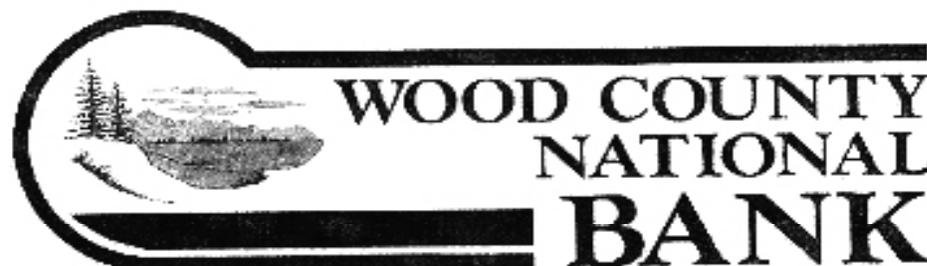
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to all. There was no cost on the meal for those attending, only a request for a donation to Wish to Fish. Well over 100 attended the meal. Many observed the no cost on the meal and ignored the donation part. If it seems I'm being a little harsh, I mean to be. There was a lot of hard work and expense put into this event with personal money involved. This year the donations totaled a mere \$305.37. At the 3rd Annual there was \$792 in donations for the meal with less people coming to eat.

After the terrific meal there was a raffle with many attendants taking home some nice gifts provided by the great sponsors of "The Wish to Fish Foundation". I would like to thank all

of our gracious sponsors for this. In the raffle there was \$320 raised for the foundation. At present time we are debating as to whether

or not there will be a 5th Annual Hook N' Cook Tournament. For those that did attend, I thank you all for opening your hearts and donating.



John and his staff at Bro's Patio are to be commended for all their hard work and expense put in to make the 4th Annual Hook N' Cook Sandbass Tournament a success. Many thanks go to you from "The Wish to Fish Foundation".

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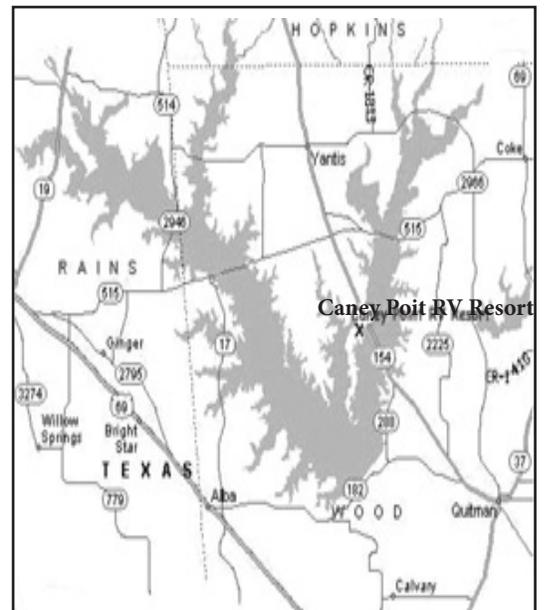
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# Summer is winding down!

By David Ozio

"Summer is finally winding down and it's time for the big bass to start making moves away from summer haunts and change from the dormant state of mind to the aggressive behavior that we all know and love. This summer followed suit with the summer of 2016 with the surface water temps rising to the 93 degree mark in late June, back down to the 82 degree mark in July, back up to the 94 degree area in early August and back to the 82 degree mark in middle August. This is enough to drive any guide nuts. Staying consistent on a daily basis has been extremely difficult and it's time to break out of this mode into the realm of bagging 20-50 bass per day. September should usher in this possibility as hungry bass migrate to the backs

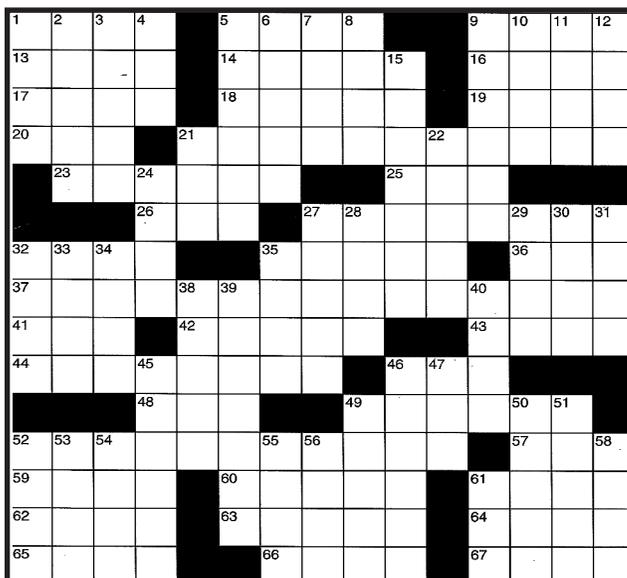
of the creeks looking to fatten up for the winter.

With the days growing shorter, certain patterns should take hold this month and I would be focusing on the shallow bite on a day to day basis. Backs of creeks will be the starting point if you are looking for consistent action. Shad will start to migrate to these areas of the lake and schooling activity will start to take place as the water begins to cool. Top water baits, squarebills, Texas rigged worms and shaky heads will lead the attack especially early and late. The lake is currently a little over pool and shallow water vegetation is taking root all over the lake. New grass growth, reeds and alligator grass (that's what I call the thick leafy vegetation) lines most all coves and creek banks. Bass love this new aquatic growth as it provides shade and protection from the summer sun and cover to ambush baitfish. If it is a cloudy day, the yellow magic might be the call for the entire day along this vegetation. A sunny day would probably require the Texas rig or shaky head fished in the same shallow areas. Water clarity will determine the color of the plastics needed, dark hues for heavily stained water and translucent colors for the much clearer water.

Once you reach the midday time frame, I would start looking to the deeper areas of the lake, humps, ridges, road beds and pond dams for the



larger bass. The football jig is hard to beat during this time of the year and the 3/4oz Talon Custom football jig is the best choice for the job. Add a Talon Repo Craw trailer and your ready to tackle the heavy weights of the lake. As of lately, I have found that setting the boat on the shallowest part of the structure and casting out to the deep areas has produced more bites than the reverse scenario. The Carolina rig will also be a "go to" presentation for the same application. I would use a long leader with a 3/0 hook and a Talon Custom Big 10 inch Swamp Wiggler Worm. When you get a bite on one of these, your partner better be headed for the net. Redbug, Watermelon Red or Green Pumpkin Pepper will do the trick as far as colors are concerned.



**CLUES ACROSS**

- |                                     |                                     |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Small fry                        | 41. Word element meaning "nitrogen" |
| 5. Jonas _____, cured polio         | 42. Rabbits                         |
| 9. Flew off!                        | 43. This weighs _____ (two words)   |
| 13. Algerian city                   | 44. Lets it be known, in a way      |
| 14. Bay window                      | 46. Angle (abbr.)                   |
| 16. Reign                           | 48. Being a single unit             |
| 17. Ear part                        | 49. Caps                            |
| 18. Eruption from the sun's surface | 52. Spanning                        |
| 19. Egyptian sun god (var.)         | 57. Copycat                         |
| 20. Doctors' group (abbr.)          | 59. Partisanship                    |
| 21. Made endless                    | 60. Excuse                          |
| 23. Digressions                     | 61. Weight unit                     |
| 25. "_____ Boot," 1981 film         | 62. Spanish river                   |
| 26. Distant                         | 63. Lounges about                   |
| 27. Pertaining to speech sound      | 64. Away from wind                  |
| 32. Formal close (music)            | 65. Hankerings                      |
| 35. Israeli city                    | 66. Jubilant delight                |
| 36. Upward (prefix)                 | 67. Approves food (abbr.)           |
| 37. Good-looking image              |                                     |

**CLUES DOWN**

- |                            |                                |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Weapon                  | 32. Cleaning lady              |
| 2. Pleasant odor           | 33. Any thick, messy substance |
| 3. Cakes                   | 34. Twains                     |
| 4. Compass point (abbr.)   | 35. Rabbit                     |
| 5. Give in                 | 38. African country            |
| 6. French city             | 39. View or pass               |
| 7. Fibber                  | 40. Challenge                  |
| 8. Lout                    | 45. Trunks                     |
| 9. Approval                | 46. _____ the Menace (female)  |
| 10. Dawdle (slang)         | 47. Work unit                  |
| 11. Take to one's heels    | 49. Good Book                  |
| 12. To be disposed         | 50. Afrikaans                  |
| 15. Opening move           | 51. Velocity                   |
| 21. Yeddo                  | 52. Comply                     |
| 22. Veranda                | 53. Feeling (slang)            |
| 24. Hebrew month           | 54. Acquire by one's efforts   |
| 27. Bullfighting maneuvers | 55. Wooden-soled shoe          |
| 28. To show disapproval    | 56. Mound                      |
| 29. Stretched tight        | 58. Ancient Greek city         |
| 30. Japanese waist pouch   | 61. Follows sigma              |
| 31. Herb _____, columnist  |                                |

Answers on Page 21-A

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(See Summer is winding... Continued on Page 20-A)

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## Sealy To Be Inducted Into Bass Fishing Hall of Fame (Continued from Page 1-A)

was a grassroots (tournament) for amateurs who dreamed of being in the limelight like those professionals but didn't have the opportunity to do so. It grew into Big Bass and the concept became family-oriented, with a motto, 'Where Amateurs Win Like the Pros.' We were showcased on National Geographic, which says a lot about what we've been doing and trying to accomplish."

Big Bass Splash events have spread beyond Lake Sam Rayburn across the nation. Since it began, the tournament has paid out more than \$30 million dollars and

raised more than \$2.3 million dollars to support Ronald McDonald House Charities and the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. "I owe a lot to my wife, Donna, and my daughter, Nicole," Sealy said. "We've accomplished a lot," Sealy said. "It's very rewarding. I always tell the crowd at the end of the tournament, 'You ain't seen nothing yet,' because I ain't done. There's still more to do."

His family will be with him during the induction dinner and ceremony, planned for Thursday, November 9.

"This is a special

milestone," said Donald Howell, the hall's board of director's president. "The goal since our founding in 2003 has always been to have a home to honor our inductees and their accomplishments in the sport of bass fishing. We all look forward to sharing and celebrating a special night with Wade's family, Shaw, Bob, Morris and Louie. And we are all anxious to showcase our past inductees in the hall's new home."

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**"The Moon Report"**  
**September Moon Report**

By Terri Moon

Right now it's hard to wrap my head around even writing an article with everything that's happening with "Hurricane Harvey" – My heart breaks for ALL affected by its wrath. This is truly a "significant emotional event" of our times. Prayers for the "Army of Angels" who hooked on to their boats and headed south – "Real Time Heroes"! You'll continue to be in our prayers till your safe return! The fishing industry response has been awesome to witness! It's a tough road ahead for all involved, but wishing each of you many blessings in the days to come.

Now as far as the fishing goes here, this has probably been some of the best "summertime fishing" of my 20 year career on Lake Fork. Consistent catches weren't as easy to come by until MinnKota perfected their "Spot Lock" with double GPS signals. I've been using the MinnKota Terrova while waiting for the Ultrex to be available, and it's finally arrived. I'm so excited and can't wait to get on the water with it! A huge "Thank You" to Bryan Sartin at "Sartin Marine" for all his help with all my trolling motor needs! Also I want to send a "special" shout out to Mike Harvey our MinnKota



Rep to thank him for all he's done to not only help me out but also how he's helped many of you! You're a "Good Man" my friend. I'm sending thoughts, prayers and well wishes your way!

If any of you would be interested in my Terrova, it will be at "Sartin Marine". I promise you will love the double GPS Spot Lock! It's truly been a blessed month. The fishing has been awesome (except when the gates are open) and got to catch a bunch with my mom and dad while they were here for a visit and the weather couldn't have been more perfect. I just love the morning cloud cover!

The crappie have been holding in 16 to 24 ft. of water. Depending on the time of day, they would bite as shallow as 12 ft. or as deep as 22 ft. I just keep a close eye on my Lowrance and adjust my casts accordingly. On a cloudy day, black and chartreuse is working and on brighter days, we

are using white and chartreuse – in L.F.T. live baby shad or Bubbas baits. We are finding them at the bridges, brush piles and standing timber. We're even catching a few really good bream on these baits, among the crappie.

I'm looking forward to Fork's fall fishing. From the weather trend this year, it could happen sooner than usual!

My best to you all and thanks for the fun month of fishing!

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Children ages five to twelve may participate in the Little Anglers Division and win Academy gift cards and trophies/medals for their winning catches of bass, catfish, crappie or perch. Registration is now open online for the Big Bass Splash Presented by Sealy Outdoors benefitting St. Jude Children Research Hospital. To enter, visit [www.sealyoutdoors.com](http://www.sealyoutdoors.com). Early Bird Registration Deadline is Friday, September 1. Onsite Registration will be at Lake Fork

Marina from 10 AM – 8 PM on Thursday, September 14. Registration will continue each morning from 5 AM until 6 AM on days of the tournament. Tournament Entry Fees are \$160 for One Day, and \$210 for Two Days, \$260 for Three Days: The Little Anglers Division entry fee is \$10 per Day.

All participants and spectators ages 18 years of age and up can get in on the action. Come out to the tournament site, enjoy the festivities and get your free ticket for the Open Drawing Sunday, September 17. The Big Bass Splash events are considered to be the world's largest grassroots amateur big bass fishing tournament of its kind. The Big Bass Splash attracts thousands of amateur anglers to these weekend events. It's what

we call "Fishing, Family and Fun" for everyone. A portion of the proceeds from registration fees will go to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

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For more information go to [www.sealyoutdoors.com](http://www.sealyoutdoors.com), call 888.698.2591 or stop by your local Academy Sports & Outdoors store for an official entry form. Follow us on facebook.com/BigBassSplash.

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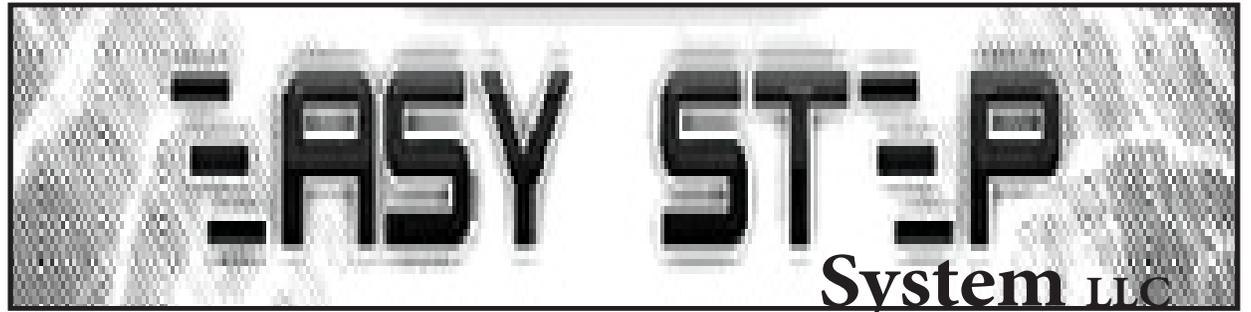
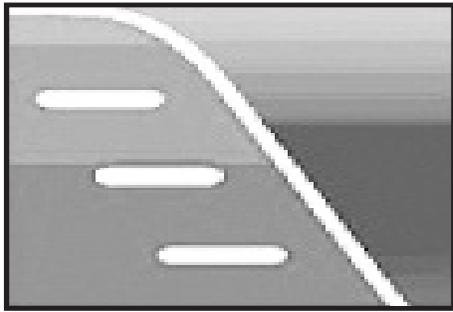
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# Lake Austin Positive for Invasive Zebra Mussels

Lake Austin is now classified as positive for invasive zebra mussels after biologists discovered them in the reservoir recently. Lake Austin is the third Central Texas reservoir where zebra mussels have been found this year, and the second in the Colorado River basin.

After a single zebra mussel larva was identified from a plankton sample collected near Tom Miller Dam and later verified by DNA testing, staff from Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Inland Fisheries and the City of Austin searched for zebra mussels on hard surfaces

around the lake. They identified several half-inch adult zebra mussels on multiple marina floatation devices and a barge near the Walsh Boat Landing Aug. 9.

Although the adult zebra mussels were found just a little over a month after upstream reservoir Lake Travis was found to have an established, reproducing population, biologists cannot determine whether the Lake Austin zebra mussel presence is the result of downstream spread from Lake Travis or whether it's the result of an infested boat coming into the lake.

"Passive downstream spread is a concern any time we have an infested reservoir, but boats can move adult mussels to a lake much quicker," said Monica McGarrity, TPWD aquatic invasive species team lead.

Lake Austin is a 1,589-acre reservoir on the lower Colorado River. The lake is formed by Tom Miller Dam, which is owned by the city of Austin and operated by the Lower Colorado River Authority. The lake is used for hydroelectric generation and water supply, and is a popular recreation destination. With seven boat ramps and a high level of recreational use by boaters that travel to infested lakes, Lake Austin - like other Highland lakes--has long been identified as having a high risk of zebra mussel invasion.

"Both Lake Austin and Lake Travis have a lot of boating traffic and a lot of use," said Brian Van Zee, Inland Fisheries regional director. "We really need all boaters to be diligent in their 'clean, drain and dry' efforts before leaving a lake. All boaters need to remove their drain plugs and be sure to pump as much water out of the ballast tanks, livewells and bilges as possible because zebra mussel larvae can survive in very little water."

In Texas, it is unlawful to possess or transport zebra mussels, dead or alive. Boaters are required to drain all water from their boat and onboard receptacles before leaving or approaching a body of fresh water in order to prevent the transfer of zebra mussels. The requirement to drain applies to all types and sizes of boats whether powered or not: fishing boats, wakeboarding and ski boats, personal watercraft, sailboats, kayaks, canoes or any other vessel used on public waters.

Although it is not yet known whether Lake Austin has an established, reproducing population of zebra mussels, TPWD biologists will be working with LCRA and the City of Austin to continue and expand monitoring efforts and install signage at boat ramps to remind boaters of the importance of cleaning, draining and drying their boats.

"We want folks to be aware of zebra mussels in Lake Austin and to let us know if they're finding them in other areas of the lake," McGarrity said. "As we continue to monitor the population that location information will be very helpful."

Users of downstream Lady Bird Lake should also take care to clean, drain and dry kayaks, stand up paddleboards, and any other equipment that comes into contact with the lake before putting them into another water body.

Since zebra mussels were first found in Texas in 2009, 11 lakes in five river basins have been infested, meaning they have an established, reproducing population - Belton, Bridgeport, Canyon, Dean Gilbert (a 45-acre Community Fishing Lake in Sherman), Eagle Mountain, Lewisville, Randell, Ray Roberts, Stillhouse Hollow, Texoma and Travis.

Zebra mussel-positive lakes - meaning zebra mussels or their larvae have been detected on more than one occasion - include Lavon, Livingston, Waco, Worth, Fishing Hole Lake (a small lake connected to the Trinity River below Lake Lewisville), and now Austin.

More information about zebra mussels can be found online at [tpwd.texas.gov/ZebraMussels](http://tpwd.texas.gov/ZebraMussels).

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## TPWD Receives Quality Deer Management's 2017 Agency of the Year Award

The Quality Deer Management Association (QDMA) has named the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department as the recipient of its 2017 Agency of the Year Award. The award was presented at QDMA's 2017 National Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, in recognition of the agency's commitment to a strong deer management program. "The white-tailed deer is a charismatic symbol that has come to represent the importance of wildlife conservation in Texas," said QDMA founder Joe Hamilton. "The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department understands deer hunting is an essential and

longstanding contributor to the state's culture, economy, and motivator for land stewardship." The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's signature deer management program has been so successful that its 80 wildlife biologists work with over 10,000 properties on 25 million acres, including nearly 200 wildlife Cooperatives actively receiving deer harvest and management recommendations. Texas is one of only a few states with a wildlife Cooperative program that includes a dedicated Cooperative staff member and incentives for participating landowners. "Successful management of white-tailed

deer is dependent on a strong partnership with hunters and landowners," said Kip Adams, "QDMA's Director of Education and Outreach. TPWD's engagement of hunters has been a catalyst to spark that partnership for wildlife and habitat conservation." Additionally, according to data compiled by QDMA for its annual Whitetail Report, Texas has one of the best buck age structures in the whitetail's range. During the 2015-2016 deer season, only 23 percent of bucks harvested by hunters were 1.5 years old while 59 percent were 3.5 years old or older.

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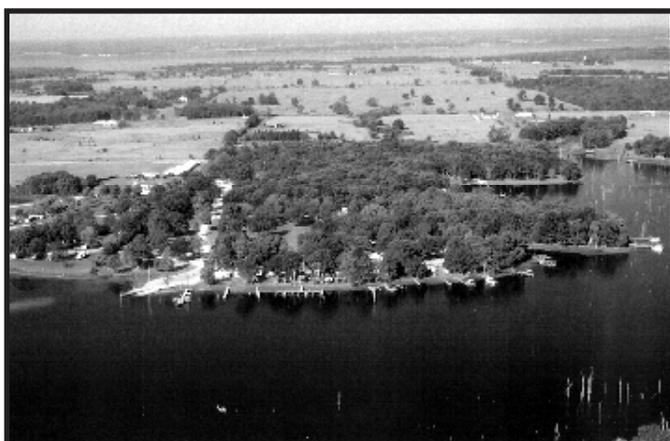
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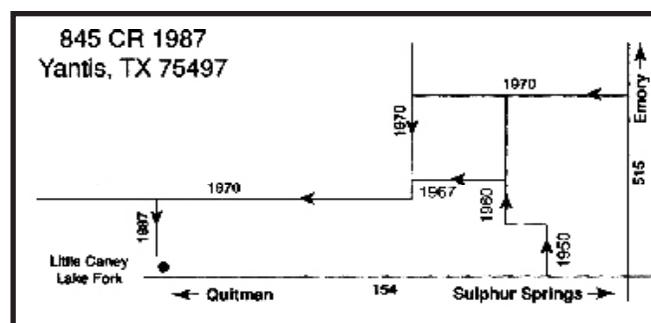
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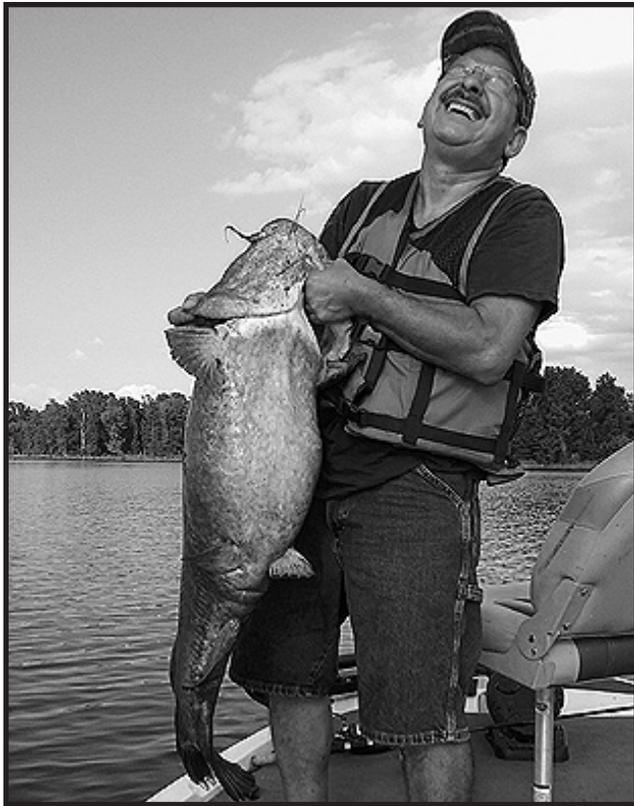
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Marshall Higgenbotham caught this nice Lake Fork hawg while doing some August night fishing with guide Randy Oldfield. C.P.R. (Courtesy Photo Randy Oldfield Guide Service)



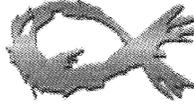
Matt Reames was fishing Lake Fork with guide Whitt Smith on 8/4/17 when he caught this hawg weighing 8-lbs. 9-ozs. fishing in 18" of water. C.P.R. (Photo Courtesy Whitt Smith Guide Service)

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# Biologists Seek Assistance From Anglers in Tracking American Eel in Texas Waterways

Every now and then, anglers fishing Texas waterways may reel in something unexpected: the slimy, secretive American Eel.

"[The American Eel] is just such a unique species that you don't see that often, and so when you catch one or you see one, you remember it," said Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) aquatic biologist Stephen Curtis. "It's going to leave an impression."

The American eel is found in rivers throughout the eastern half of the United States, but there are still many unanswered questions about the species, especially in rivers that flow to the Gulf of Mexico. TPWD biologists are currently collecting data to better understand this unique species, and they are asking anglers to help in the effort by submitting pictures and information about eels they have caught or observed in Texas waterways.

"In order for us to better manage and conserve this species in Texas, we need to have a better understanding of its distribution, abundance and life cycle," Curtis said. "We definitely need more data."

The life cycle of the American Eel is markedly unique. These slippery snake-like fish spawn in the warm waters of the Sargasso Sea, an area of the Atlantic Ocean near Bermuda. The young eels, referred to as leptocephalus larvae, are paper-thin, leaf-like and transparent. Over the next year, they drift on ocean currents to the Gulf of Mexico and east coast of the U.S., where they make their way into estuaries and begin their migration up rivers. Most eels mature in rivers, and may remain inland for over 20 years before they return to the Sargasso Sea to spawn and die.

TPWD biologists urge anyone who catches or observes American Eel in Texas waterways to report their sighting by taking a photo of the eel, recording the location, and contacting the River Studies Program at (512) 745-6844. Anglers can also donate their eel for research by freezing it and contacting the River Studies Program for delivery instructions. In some areas of Texas, American Eel "look-alikes" occur. American Eel can be distinguished from other eels, such as Snapper Eel and Shrimp Eel, by their distinctive underbite and the presence of a tail-fin. Another creature commonly mistaken for American Eel is the Lesser Siren, an aquatic salamander that can be distinguished by the tiny legs present behind its head. If someone is unsure whether they have captured an American Eel, Curtis encourages them to go ahead and report it.

Each American Eel donated to TPWD will provide scientists with a wealth of information, Curtis said.

"We plan to use the American Eel specimens

for genetic testing in order to see if the population we have within Texas is different from the population we have along the Atlantic coast," he said. "We also are going to be looking for parasites within the eel and extracting their otoliths, a small structure in their inner

ear that we can use to age them and determine at what point the eel entered fresh water."

Curtis said the photos, location data, and other input will be a valuable addition to the project, and will help TPWD better understand, manage, and conserve American Eel in Texas waterways.

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### 36th Semi-Annual Open Tournament

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**There will be a big bass pot ~ \$10 per person entry**  
**Big Bass will pay Three (3) places. (Based on 100 entries)**

**1st Place \$500.00**  
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**3rd Place**

- Entry fee is \$40.00 - late entry is \$45.00.
- Early entries must be postmarked by Sept. 30, 2017.
- All entry fees must be paid before 6 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 7, 2017.
- Check in time: Friday, Oct. 6, 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Saturday, Oct. 7, 5 a.m. to 6 a.m. at Oakridge Marina.
- To qualify, contestants must check in at tournament headquarters before fishing.
- Fishing hours will be 6:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (official clock at sign-in station). NO FISHING from midnight till start time.
- Fishing will be done on Lake Fork only (trailer allowed).
- Contestants must fish from a boat. No bank fishing or leaving the boat to land a fish.
- Life jackets must be worn any time their outboard motor is running.
- All state, federal, and local laws must be obeyed or contestant and fish may be disqualified. No slot fish may be brought to weigh-in.
- No one may have more than five (5) fish in their possession at any time. Only one (1) may be 24" or greater.
- Largemouth bass 12" to 16" or 24" or greater in length may be weighed. No fish under 12" or between 16" and 24" will be weighed (or state law limits at the time of the tournament).
- All fish must be caught on artificial bait by casting. (No trolling with gas engine). Pork trailer may be used.
- Weigh-in starts at 3:00 p.m. (official clock at sign-in). You must be in the weigh-in line by 3:30 p.m.
- All fish must be brought to the scales in weigh-in bags.
- No iced or frozen fish will be weighed. Ice may be added ONLY to aid in survival of fish.
- Each contestant will be responsible for weighing his or her own fish. (No pooling of fish).
- Dead fish at weigh-in will be penalized 1/2 (.5) pound. All fish weighed in become the property of Texas Trails Bassmasters and will be released (with the exception of trophy or dead fish).
- In the event of a tie for any position, prize money for that position and the following position will be combined and evenly divided between the tying contestants.
- Contestants may not have served as a compensated guide on Lake Fork 30 days prior to this tournament.
- Contestants may fished with a guide on Lake Fork prior to the day before fishing this TTB tournament.
- Use of ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES or CONTROLLED DRUGS are prohibited during tournament hours. Prescription drug use should be declared at sign-in.
- Anyone who has ever been disqualified for cheating or misconduct from any tournament is ineligible to fish.
- Any contestant who violates any rule may be disqualified. Any act of a competitor, verbal or physical, that reflects unfavorably upon Texas Trails Bassmasters effort to promote fishing, conservation, clean waters, courtesy or safety shall be reason for disqualification from this and all future Texas Trails Bassmasters tournaments.
- Parent or guardian must accompany contestants under 18 years of age.
- All protests must be registered in writing with the tournament judges within 15 minutes after designated weigh-in time. All decisions of the tournament judges will be final in all matters. Anyone protesting the outcome of an Open tournament will have to pay for any additional polygraph test given.
- All boats must be 8 feet in length or longer. An aerated live well is recommended to aid in fish survival for live release. Anglers cannot leave boat to land a fish.
- All contestants are responsible to have read these rules and must agree to abide by them (by signing the entry form) while competing in this Texas Trails Bassmasters event.
- Contestants will be subject to polygraph test. Failure to take and/or pass such a test will result in disqualification.

**Additional Information**  
 For more information or for information on joining Texas Trails Bassmasters of Lake Fork visit our website  
[www.texas trails bassmasters.com](http://www.texas trails bassmasters.com)  
 Remove entry form below this line. Retain above portion for your records

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### Entry Application

Entry fee of \$40 must accompany mailed entry and must be postmarked on or before Sept. 30, 2017 to Texas Trails Bassmasters, 538 PR 5861, Yantis, TX 75497, or you may pay \$45 at tournament headquarters before starting time of tournament. \$10 extra for Big Bass (optional). Print clearly.

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# "Walking the Frog"

By Andrew Grills

Some of my most memorable days on Lake Fork have been those spent catching big bass on frogs! Every angler loves a good frog bite. The oftentimes ferocious strikes are what make frog fishing so enjoyable. Day in, day out, topwater frogs produce big bass.

Frog fishing comes with a price however. There is no other technique in the world of bass fishing with such a poor hook-up ratio. This can be frustrating, especially when you can see how big the fish was that attacked your frog. Sometimes you can do ev-



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everything right and still miss the bite, but there are a few things you can do to increase your success.

First, it's important to choose the right frog. There are a lot of choices out there from many different lure companies. There are a few that I really like, and I'm sure there are some great ones that I haven't tried. Some companies offer a traditional style frog, as well as a "popping" style frog. Both styles have their place in my box. I tend to use the traditional frog more in the heaviest cover and matted vegetation. Sometimes a popping style will work better in areas where the cover is a little less dense.

The first thing you need to do when choosing a frog is feel the plastic. I like to press down on the back of the frog, right in front of the hook points. This tells me how much force will be needed to set the hook. Because they are so weedless and effective in heavy cover, they can also prevent fish from getting hooked. Therefore, I prefer frogs with a really soft body. Also, I always take my pliers and slightly bend the hook points out, just a few degrees. This will have little if any effect on how weedless the frog is, but I believe it makes a big difference in hook-up percentage.

I wish color selection was more simple. Lure companies offer such a wide variety of color options that it can be overwhelming. Personally, I believe having a few basic color variations is best. I like black, white, and brown or green. Keep in

mind the frog is silhouetted beneath a brighter sky and all the fish see is the bottom portion of the lure.

In my opinion, the retrieve is the most important aspect of being successful. I like to "walk the frog". This is the rhythmic left/right movement often referred to as "walking the dog" that is most commonly used with Zara Spook type topwaters. Most hollow bodied frogs aren't designed to do this, but with some practice it can be done rather easily. An angler who can walk the frog can go behind other frog fishermen and clean house!

The first thing I do when I remove a new frog from the packaging, is trim one leg of the skirt material about a half inch shorter than the other. This will change the balance of the frog and is essential in getting that side to side movement. I work the frog with my rod tip pointed down and employ a steady rhythm, twitching my wrist as I reel very slowly with the other hand. I leave a good bit of slack in the line as this allows the frog to move freely each direction. In a nutshell, you're retrieving the frog extremely slow while keeping a constant side to side motion. This looks like a meal that's easy to catch because it isn't covering much water, but at the same time the fish can't get too good of a look at it because it is moving constantly. It's a retrieve that a lot of folks have trouble with, but it's definitely worth mastering.

(See Walking the Frog...Continued on 21-A)



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# Summer is winding down (Continued from Page 6-A)

The next strategy will be focusing on suspended fish that set up just off the side of the same structures. Use your electronics to locate these hovering green monsters, pitch out a marker buoy once you locate a group of fish, then tie on a Talon Big Daddy Lake Fork flutter spoon and go to work. Cast back toward the buoy and count the spoon down until you hit the desired depth. Twitch the spoon and let it flutter down to draw the strike. Depending on the depth the fish are holding, a crankbait will work equally as well. I would

choose the Strike King 6XD or the 8XD. Both are deadly and can be fished on 15lb line on a cranking rod. Also, submerged trees will hold the lion share of bass. Throw the crankbaits around these trees and work the bait through the limbs. You may lose a few lures the rewards can pay off handsomely.

If you are headed out to Lake Fork in September 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 September and some open dates in October. 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](mailto: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 run a Skeeter FX with a Yamaha 250SHO and I would also like to thank Okuma Fishing and Talon Custom Lures for making my job the blast that it is. I hope to see a lot of you on the water. Romans 10:13. "Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved". I wish all of you a blessed day."



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**"Walking the Frog"** (Continued from Page 18-A)

I always use braided line with frogs. Being a topwater technique the noise and visibility of braid are not issues. Also, line stretch is eliminated with braid, so your hook-ups will vastly improve. 50lb test Power Pro is a good choice. I often use 65lb, however 50lb will give the frog a little more movement if you're having trouble walking it.

I really like a heavy rod with a slightly softer tip for this technique. You need a rod with a lot of backbone to get a hard hookset. However, a rod with a tip that's too stiff will make the frog difficult to cast and walk. I think the G. Loomis 854 is an excellent choice. It's not so long that it's smacking the water when I'm retrieving, and it has the right balance in my opinion. You want a strong rod, but you don't need a flipping stick when you have braided line. I use a high speed Shimano Curado for my reel. Taking up slack quickly is very important with this technique. Finally, I try to force myself to delay the hook set. Waiting just a second longer than you feel like you should will greatly increase your hook-ups. I often

find that bass will hold the frog a long time if you don't jerk. Pausing a moment will allow the fish to get the frog down in it's mouth deeper. If I still miss the fish, I find it's very rare for me to get that same fish to make another attempt at a frog. However, if I have a weightless fluke or senko handy, I toss it

exactly where I missed the fish. This is the only way I've found to salvage missed frog bites.

Hopefully this information will help you have more big catches and less missed opportunities. If you're planning a fishing trip to Lake Fork, feel free to contact me, I'd love to help in any way I can.

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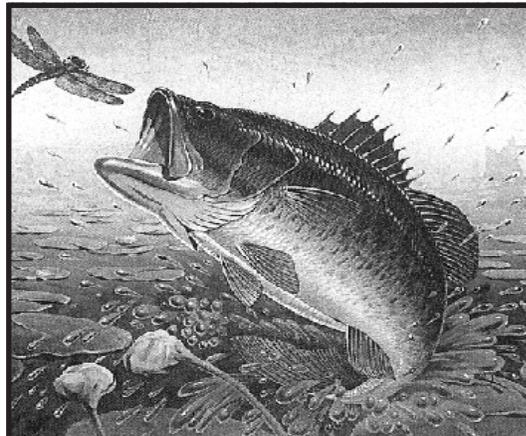
1	B	A	B	E		5	S	A	L	K		9	P	F	F	T		
13	O	R	A	N		14	O	R	I	E	L		16	R	U	L	E	
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32	C	O	D	A		35	H	A	I	F	A		36	A	N	A		
37	H	O	U	R		38	G	L	A	S	S	F	I	40	G	U	R	E
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65	Y	E	N	S		66	G	L	E	E		67	U	S	D	A		

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- |            |           |
|------------|-----------|
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| BLUEBERRY  | LEMON     |
| CURRANT    | MANGO     |
| GRAPE      | ORANGE    |
| GRAPEFRUIT | PAPAYA    |
| GUAVA      | PEAR      |
| HONEYDEW   | PINEAPPLE |

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L N A E V L E N O A E V  
E E M L U E R A E P N A  
C Y A P L E B Y R A R U  
U D L P N A R R N Y S G  
E E P A U C U R R A N T  
P W E E G N O E A P P U  
A P A N Y A L B N A V R  
R A N I R R B E K I W F  
G R A P E F R U I T A P  
U A N E G M E L W Y R R  
V Y A P N I P B I E R G  
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## Grahame Jones Named New Texas Game Warden Colonel

Grahame Jones, a 24-year law enforcement veteran, has been selected as director of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Law Enforcement Division. He will pin on his colonel's badge Sept. 1.

Jones, previously Chief of Special Operations, succeeds Col. Craig Hunter, who retires at the end of this month.

"Grahame's career in law enforcement as a State Game Warden with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is a distinguished one," said TPWD Executive Director Carter Smith. "He is a consummate professional, a visionary leader, supremely dedicated

to TPWD's mission, work, and people, and a respected leader among state and federal law enforcement agencies, private landowner groups, and fish and wildlife conservation partners. I have no doubt that Grahame will make a significant positive impact leading the critical conservation law enforcement work of our game wardens and our agency across Texas."

As TPWD Law Enforcement Division director, Col. Jones will oversee a force of 551 highly trained state game wardens that provides law enforcement "off the pavement" across Texas, and 128 dedicated

non-commissioned support staff. Though state game wardens focus primarily on conservation laws, they are fully commissioned peace officers authorized to enforce all state statutes. During Jones' career with TPWD, he has served as a field game warden in East Texas, a Sergeant Investigator in Environmental Crimes, a Captain and Major in Internal Affairs, and the Chief of Special Operations.

Jones grew up in Houston, fishing the Galveston Bay complex and hunting ducks and geese on the Katy prairie. He has been actively in-

*(Continued on Next Page)*



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involved with conservation efforts through the Coastal Conservation Association (CCA) and served on the CCA State Board prior to going to work for TPWD. Jones received a Bachelor of Science from Stephen F. Austin State University and attended the National FBI Academy in Quantico, VA. Jones and his wife, Julie, have two daughters, Gabbie and Jali.

"The way we protect our natural resources, the way we provide water safety and public safety, and the way we respond to disasters has evolved over the last 120 years," Jones offered. "On the other hand, the dedication, passion, and commitment exempli-

fied by Texas Game Wardens and non-commissioned staff in protecting our natural resources and in serving our fellow Texans has remained a constant. That long-standing legacy of duty is something all Texans can all be proud of."

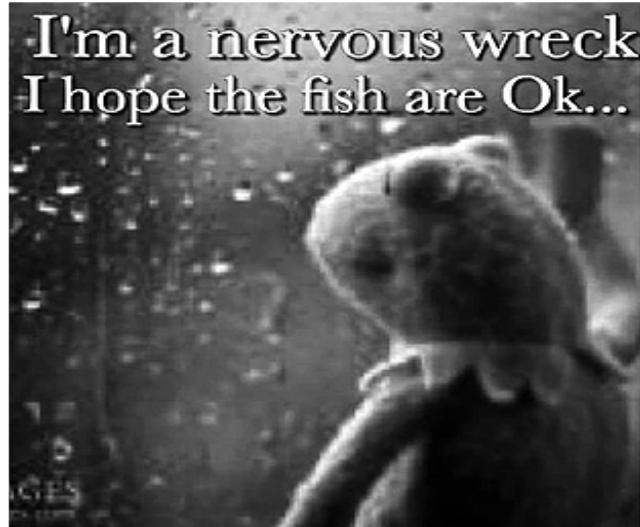
Col. Hunter retires with 40-plus years of law enforcement service. "He has been a devoted and tireless leader within the department, as well as the state's law enforcement community as a whole. As the TPWD Colonel, Craig has expertly led our game wardens through some of the most challenging situations and times confronting the Texas outdoors. From responding to mas-

sive floods and fires to breaking up sophisticated commercial fish and wildlife poaching rings to enhancing our law enforcement presence along the state's borders and waterways, Colonel Hunter has left a big footprint across Texas' lands and waters.

"Through his selfless service and dedication to protecting the natural resources and people of Texas, he has earned the respect of landowners, outdoor enthusiasts, lawmen, and local leaders in every corner of our home ground. We all wish him the best of luck as he transitions to his new life of retirement and leisure, i.e. electing where to hunt and fish each

day," said Smith. "If you need to find him, check Colorado Bend State Park when the white bass are running, Uvalde on the opening day of dove season, and Lampasas when deer and turkey seasons kick off!"

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