

# LAKE FORK "The Big Bass Capital of Texas"



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

2 Sections

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Free

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May, 2018

No. 225



Lake Fork guide Jay Eichler caught this nice bass weighing 12.04-lbs. on a Carolina rigged fluke in 5' of water. C.P.R.

### 14th Annual "The Legend of Lake Fork Big Bass Tournament" May 18, 19, 20

By Don Hampton

The 14th Annual Legend of Lake Fork Big Bass Tournament will be held on May 18, 19, 20, 2018. Tournament headquarters will be out of Lake Fork Marina located just off Highway 17. This year's tournament proves to be bigger and better than in previous years.

Don't let the name of the tournament fool you! It is "The Legend of Lake Fork!" Do not mistake it for an owner's tournament because all boats makes and models are welcome. It is the legend of this great reservoir!

It is an individual tournament. More than one angler can be in the boat, but each one

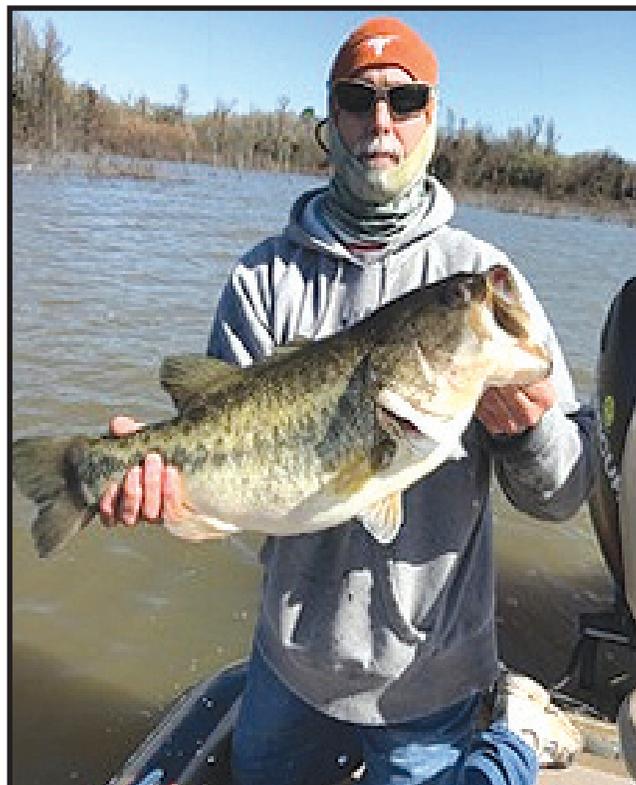
(See 14th Annual...Continued on Page 4-A)



Dr. Dal Sandvall caught this nice Lake Fork bass while fishing with guide Whitt Smith. Weight not provided. C.P.R.



Mike Kostial was fishing Lake Fork on Good Friday when it got better when he caught this 9.4-lb. 25" bass on a Finch Chatterbait. C.P.R.



Tim Gold caught his personal all time best fishing Lake Fork that tilted the scales at 10.5-pounds. C.P.R.



"Snake is on the Menu!" This Blue Heron was on snake patrol on Lake Fork when he got his supper consisting of a Water Moccasin!

## Bubette may soon be kickin' Bubba's bass!

By: Don Hampton

Bubba loves the sport of fishing and Bubette thinks he shows it too much sometimes.

I do believe every piece of Bubba's clothing has a picture of a fish or a bass on it.

His good luck tournament socks with the bass on the front (from the toe to the ankle) are a little bit much.

If you ever see Bubba without a picture of a bass on his shirt, you could just bet he's on his way to a funeral, a wedding, or church. At these times you could probably rest assured that he has a picture of a bass somewhere on his person. Most fathers carry pictures of their wife, children or grandchildren in their wallet. Bubba carries pictures of his latest big catch to pull out and show his buds.

They may be in his wallet or on his cell phone, but you can bet he will have them on him.

In Bubba's home the clocks have a picture of a bass jumping out of the water. The pictures in his game room are all of fish. He has his Big Mouth Billy Bass to sing to him and a talking Channel Cat hanging on the wall. This is to entertain him while he is admiring his stuff.

Bubette likes to have pretty flowers in

the house. Bubba has them sitting in a fish shaped vase.

Bubette likes to have pictures of the grandchildren placed around the house. Bubba has them all in frames with fish designs around the borders.

Bubette likes to have fine china for entertaining friends. Bubba bought her a set of plates for her anniversary in the shape of fish and glasses with plastic fish on the stems.

Bubba and Bubette's definition of class differ. Bubette likes Waterford crystal. Bubba likes his "Ford" and crystal clear waters. Bubette likes china. Bubba likes paper plates and baggies that keep his sandwiches dry in his ice chest. Bubette likes sterling silver forks and spoons. Bubba likes fishing the Fork with spoons. Bubette prefers satin and silk. Bubba likes braid and monofilament. Bubette likes ornamental curtain rods. Bubba likes custom angle rods. Bubette loves rings and jewelry that is real, while Bubba is always looking for a new reel. Bubette goes for glamour and glitz while Bubba goes for baits and tackle kits.

We all know how much Bubba likes fishing stuff but I do believe his stuff is about to be stuffed. Bubba's obsession to fishing memorabilia is about to come to an end according to Bubette. It would seem all of Bubba's

stuff is pushing all of Bubette's to the side and that is the wrong side to be on of Bubette.

Her final words on this matter were, "I love Bubba and can't kick him out, but if things keep getting so fishy, I'm going to kick his BASS!"

So if you see Bubba out fishing on the lake and he's standing up all the time, well you know what happened!



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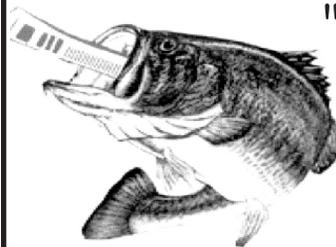
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## Catfish Season Returns to Neighborhood Fishin' Lakes Across Texas

With spring underway and summer break on the horizon, many Texas families are looking for ways to get outside and connect with nature. In an effort to bring new fishing experiences to families in urban centers, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) began stocking thousands of catfish at 18 Neighborhood Fishin' lakes and ponds across the state April 17-20.

Each of the lakes will receive continuous stockings of channel catfish every few weeks through early November - with a brief pause during the heat of August - to ensure there is plenty of time for families looking to spend quality time together outdoors.

"A recent study in Texas shows that children like nature and overwhelmingly prefer to play outside compared to inside," said Jennifer Bristol, Texas Children in Nature

Coordinator. "The kids interviewed in the Nature of American study said they felt happier when they are outside and feel more connected with friends and family. Taking your family fishing at a Neighborhood Fishin' lake is an easy and fun way to get kids exploring in nature and to make memories with family and friends."

Neighborhood Fishin' lakes are located in well-lit, easy-to-access parks near large urban centers such as Dallas-Fort Worth, Austin, San Antonio, Houston and eight other well-populated areas of Texas.

"Fishing is one of the most popular outdoor activities in Texas," said Dave Terre, Inland Fisheries Management and Research Chief. "We want to make sure everyone has access, so we are bringing the fish to the people in the places where they largely reside."

All anglers can keep up to

five fish per day without a minimum length limit, and additional amenities are available nearby such as bathrooms, picnic tables and car parking to help families to enjoy their time by the water.

Children under 17 fish for free, but a fishing license is required for all adults who fish. Fishing licenses can be purchased for as little as \$11 for "one-day, all-water" access. All proceeds go toward management and conservation of the fish and their habitats.

Neighborhood Fishin' is supported by donations from the Toyota Bassmaster Texas Fest and local partners throughout the state.

To find the Neighborhood Fishin' lake near you, see stocking dates for each location or to sign up to receive updates by text or email, visit [www.neighborhoodfishing.org](http://www.neighborhoodfishing.org).



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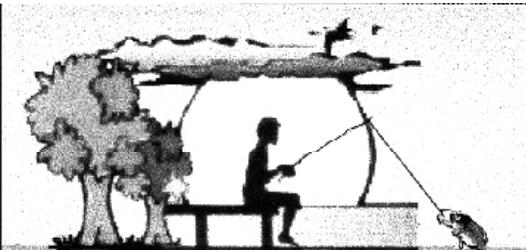
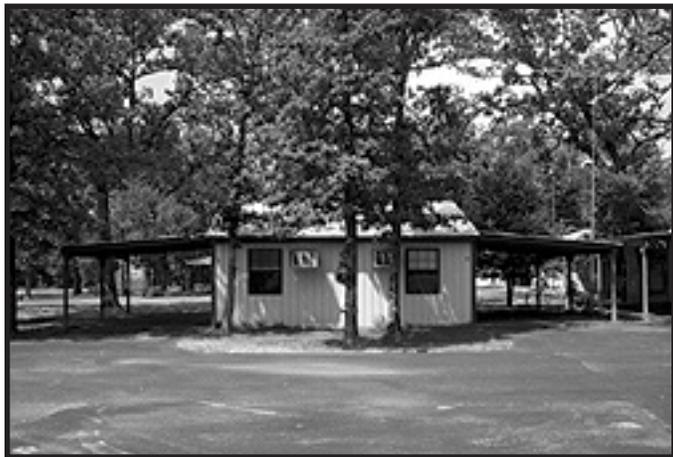
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14th Annual "The Legend of Lake Fork Big Bass Tournament" May 18, 19, 20 (Continued from Page 1-A)

has to be a paid entry and keep their bass separated from the other anglers in the boat.

We will be paying 10 places per hour with the first to be knocked out of ninth place receiving a \$100 gift certificate from one of the sponsoring businesses. This has some anglers really playing the game bringing a small bass that may weigh under a pound to the scales at the top of each hour just to be knocked out of the hour first and secure a win.

All early entries received on or before April 30th are in the drawing for a 2018 Triton TRX-18 bass boat powered by Mercury. Anglers if you missed the chance to get in for the early entry in the tournament you will still have a chance to win one of the other three boats to be given away and a chance to get in on the hourly paybacks.

Anglers will be competing for two boats for the two heaviest 24" and over the slot, one for the heaviest under 16" in length.

Anglers can fish one, two or all three days of the tournament. If you miss the early entry you can still come and register for the tournament. We will be set up and taking entries at Lake Fork Marina, the tournament headquarters, on Thursday May 17th from 2 p.m. until 10 p.m. on Friday May 18th from 5 a.m. till 6 a.m. and from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. On Saturday and Sunday

if only fishing one or two days we will be taking entries at the same times on Sunday from 5 a.m. to 6 a.m.. Official fishing days for the tournament are May 18, 19, 20 and fishing hours are from 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. with the first hour weigh in beginning with the 7 to 8 o'clock hour and ending with the 2 to 3 o'clock hour each day. Anglers have to be off the water by 8 p.m. each day of the tournament and cannot get on the water until 4 a.m. and cannot wet a hook until 6 a.m. The official starting time and hourly updates will be announced on FM 99.9 KMOO Radio Station. So be sure to have a radio in your boat.

Each angler will receive a 14th Annual Legend of Lake Fork cap with their weigh bag and baits. Again this year we will be selling commemorative T-shirts at tournament headquarters. If you purchase a shirt and have it on or with you and win 1st place in any hour, you will receive an extra \$100 in cash on the spot. Every hour of the tournament is a T-shirt hour.

All anglers will also be able to purchase a Temple Fork Outfitters rod from our selection for only \$60. This offer is while supplies last, two rod limit per angler. As popular as these rods are, they seem to go pretty fast, but on another note we will have a large supply.

The Chek-It-Stick is the official measure-

ment of the tournament. Bass under the slot coming to the weigh-in cannot touch 16" and bass over can touch or exceed the 24" mark.

This tournament is fun for the entire family. Come out and enter or just bring the family and enjoy the festivities and check out the vendors.

Entries for the tournament can be obtained at [www.legendoflakefork.com](http://www.legendoflakefork.com) or at [www.fish-guidenews.com](http://www.fish-guidenews.com) and click on tournament or give me a call at 903-360-6994 or 903-383-7748.

"I do hope to see all of you there!"

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# LFSA in Cooperation With TPWD Fingerling Restocking Program Seeks Volunteers

By Ed Swenson

The Lake Fork Sportsman's Association (LFSA) has a number of projects to support the lake and the community. One project is to improve the survivability of the Florida fingerlings supplied by the Athens Hatchery. Each year Lake Fork receives between 300,000 and 500,000 Florida fingerlings for stocking in the lake. Improving the survivability of these fingerlings is a critical step for the long term productivity of the lake. We have identified some methods in cooperation with the Athens Hatchery and Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPWD) personnel for the distribution of fingerlings into sites around the upper ends of creeks and coves with abundant cover allowing protection thus giving fingerlings a better chance of survival.

Last spring we initiated a project to bag fingerlings, in the same manner as minnows. LFSA provided them to individuals who transported them to sites all around the lake, releasing them into prime locations. The project was a great success and the 20 volunteers distributed 161 bags of 60-70 fingerlings/bag all around the lake. LFSA is expanding the project and will double the effort this year and needs additional volunteers to help with the project.

Overview of the project: One bagged release in the May timeframe. The

date is not finalized but we expect to have about a week's notice before the fingerlings are delivered. We do not plan to make the release on a weekend. The Highway 17 (515 West Bridge) public ramp will be used for the bagging operation pickup point. To avoid long waits to pick up the bags we will plan to run "flights" at 15 minute intervals. We will communicate the "flight" that volunteers have been assigned in advance and appreciate cooperation meeting the assigned time. Boats and vehicles can be used, with boats coming to the dock at the public ramp and vehicles to the parking lot. Fingerlings will be

transported to the release site using a cooler provided by the volunteer. It is critical to keep the loaded cooler in the shade to avoid increasing the temperature. Get the fingerlings into the water as soon as possible. Please have equipment in place for releasing the fingerlings immediately once at the release site.

LFSA will want to get information of the release site location to track the distribution. Volunteers will be asked to identify where they target the release upon signup and will confirm it at pickup. Any change in release site must be communicated to the LFSA Project Leader. LFSA is seeking some community support to help with the actual bagging operation and transport/release of fingerlings. If you are interested in supporting the effort please E-mail either: EdSwensonelswen12@gmail.com or Carolyn West cwest212@hotmail.com to let us know your interest. Thank you and looking forward to your support.

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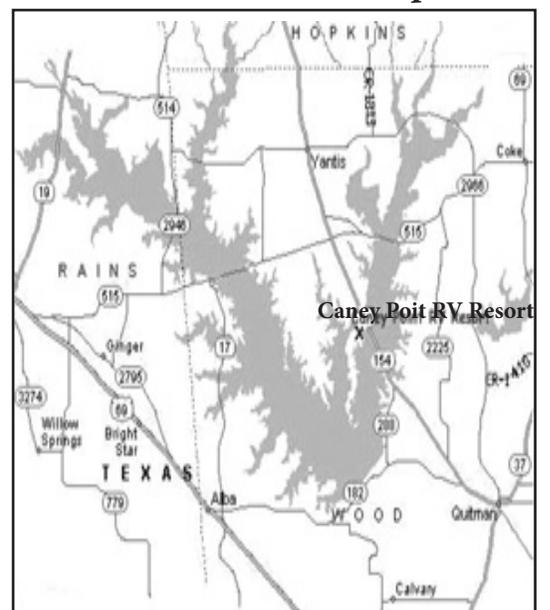
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# May Bass Will Be Feeding on Lake Fork

By David Ozio

"It's been an interesting year so far regarding what mother nature has delivered to all the guides on Fork. Cold weather and ultra high winds have been a nightmare on a daily basis. The good news is May is just around the corner and changes should be coming. Water temps as of this writing are still hovering in the mid sixties and the shad spawn hasn't even come close to showing itself. Late season cold fronts are hampering this progress but it will eventually happen. The backs of creeks are starting to show sign of shad movement but this slows as the water temps drop due to inclement weather. Recently, I saw one creek at 72 degrees one day then 62 degrees

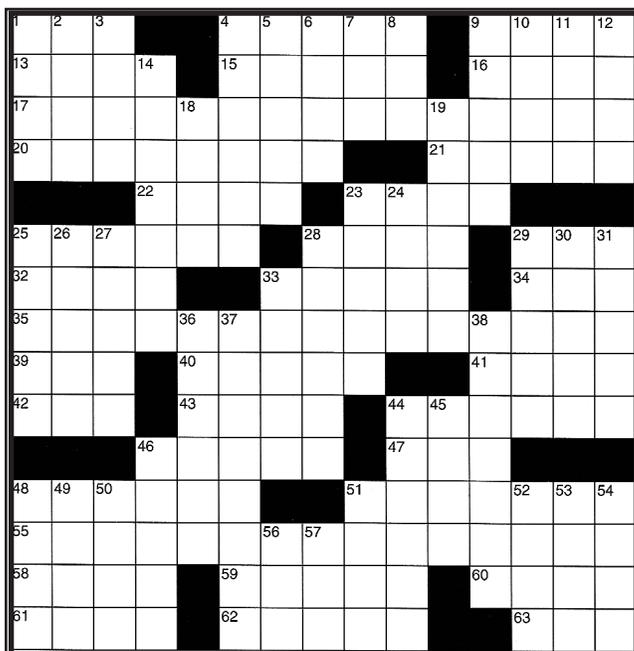
the next. Just silly. Nonetheless, when it begins, stay focused on the white birds as they will tell the tale as to what's going on with the shad.

There are many different ways to tackle these bass feeding on shad but I mainly key on using the squarebill and an ounce and a quarter spinnerbait to bring home the bacon. The first hour after daybreak provides the best opportunity to score a trophy bass and the above mentioned tools are a starting point. You can work the squarebill in 2-3ft of water and any shad colored option will work. Cover as many main lake points as possible and pay strict attention to any shad movement. Birds will help you recognize where these shad are grouped up and make your way there as quickly as possible to get in a few casts before they disperse. Option two is a large spinnerbait. Position the boat in 3ft of water and cast back toward the 12ft range. Let it sink for a few seconds and then start a slow smooth retrieve. Expect a jolting strike when they latch onto the bait. A Carolina rig is a must if there is no wind present and fish it in the same areas as the squarebill and spinnerbait. Flukes are my favorite to use on the c-rig along with a 4ft leader. Colors are standard, darker colors on over-cast days, more translucent hues on sunny days.

Piece two of the puzzle falls into place as the



month of May progresses, these trophy bass will start to migrate out to deeper water and gang up in large schools. Now is when you start your search using your electronics to find out where they will be taking up residence. The one great thing about this time of the year is that, if you find them, they will be grouped up and much easier to catch. Start your search on main lake points setting your sights in the 20-30-ft range. Humps, ridges and roadbeds also come into play. You will probably stumble on herds of sand bass but don't be dismayed. At this time of the year, trophy black bass will run with their cousins and feed along side them on balls



**CLUES ACROSS**

- 1. Point south of due east
- 4. Outdoes
- 9. Hindu garment
- 13. Branches
- 15. Small antelope
- 16. Rumanian city
- 17. Obstinate
- 20. Diners
- 21. Renowns
- 22. "Atlas Shrugged" author
- 23. Coats
- 25. \_\_\_\_ Strait
- 28. Cut into cubes
- 29. Damage
- 32. Ranidae genus
- 33. "Roll the \_\_\_\_," Styx song
- 34. Undivided
- 35. 1970 Western film
- 39. Affirmative
- 40. Soul
- 41. Tai
- 42. South southeast
- 43. Nothing (Spanish)
- 44. Travelers
- 46. Goose with black wingtips
- 47. \_\_\_\_cado, green fruit
- 48. \_\_\_\_-on-Thames, regatta site
- 51. Typical example
- 55. Newspaper position
- 58. Imitated
- 59. Bulgarian river
- 60. Descendant, heir
- 61. Indian groom
- 62. \_\_\_\_ Evert, tennis champ
- 63. Body system

**CLUES DOWN**

- 1. Goidelic language of Ireland
- 2. Bitu-Mandara
- 3. Indecent material
- 4. Audience response
- 5. Made a mistake
- 6. Evil acts
- 7. Don't know when yet
- 8. Female sibling
- 9. Languages of Sulu islands
- 10. Hoodlike-leaf plant
- 11. Abnormal breathing
- 12. March 15
- 14. About Iberia
- 18. Husk of wheat
- 19. Again
- 23. Ringworm
- 24. Passed with flying colors
- 25. Expresses mirth
- 26. Designed chairs
- 27. Ribonuclease
- 28. Jacket worn over the shoulders
- 29. Units of metrical time
- 30. Bird genus
- 31. Smells
- 33. Algerian city
- 36. Light boats
- 37. Type of thinker
- 38. About osmosis
- 44. Antics
- 45. Roman love poet
- 46. Child's ride
- 48. Robert \_\_\_\_, poet
- 49. Catch sight of
- 50. "In a second" (var.)
- 51. Small purse
- 52. About ear
- 53. Natural satellite
- 54. Sea eagles
- 56. The residue that remain when something is burned
- 57. Krone

Answers on Page 21-A

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(See May Bass..... Continued on Page 20-A)

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## Commission Approves Changes to Fishing Regulations for 2018-19

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission adopted a suite of changes to this year's fishing regulations that includes standardizing harvest regulations for largemouth bass to the statewide limits at 12 lakes and increasing the daily bag limit for commercial and recreational take of king mackerel from two to three.

The Commission adopted the following changes to the 2018-19 Statewide Recreational and Commercial Fishing Proclamations, the details of which will be incorporated into this

year's Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Outdoor Annual:

- Change from 16-inch minimum length limit to a 14-inch minimum length limit. Daily bag will remain at five fish.
- Lake Granbury (Hood)
- Possum Kingdom Reservoir (Palo Pinto)
- Lake Ratcliff (Houston)
- Change from 18-inch minimum length limit to a 14-inch minimum length limit. Daily bag will remain at five fish.
- Lake Bryan (Brazos)
- Cooper Lake (Delta)
- Old Mount Pleas-

ant City Lake (Titus)

- Change from 14- to 18-inch slot length limit to a 14-inch minimum length limit. Daily bag will remain at five fish.
- Lake Bridgeport (Jack and Wise)
- Burke-Crenshaw Lake (Harris)
- Lake Georgetown (Williamson)
- Lake Madisonville (Madison)
- San Augustine City Lake (San Augustine)
- Sweetwater Reservoir (Nolan)
- Change from 14- to 18-inch slot length limit and five fish

(See Commission Approves Continued on Page 16-A)



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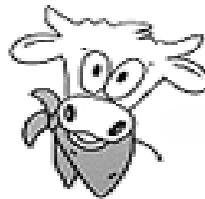
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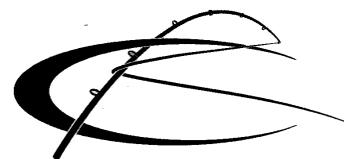
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**"The Moon Report"**  
**"May's Crappie Spawn on Fork"**

By Terri Moon

Can you believe it has taken till May for the crappie to get serious about committing to the shallows? It's even hard for me to believe – especially after last year when everything started getting shallow in February and March. Water temperature has been the biggest battle this year. Just when the conditions would get almost perfect –BAM– morning temps back to the 30's! Knocking water temps down 5-10 degrees. Then we would have the added "Bonus" of fronts and storms with 30 to 59 mph winds and down-pours, raising water levels causing them to open all flood gates – (If you fish Lake Fork much then you know Fork's fish do not like current!) So needless to say conditions have been tough on the fish and the fishermen! It really makes you grateful when that "PERFECT" day comes along, especially when this crazy wind finally lays and you can actually fish where you need to be fishing.

Speaking of "Crazy Wind" – I put my Skeeter Solera to the test this spring. It's been a blessing being in a boat that's made for rough water - besides being so darn comfortable to ride and fish out of! You definitely can tell that a lot of thought went in the making of this boat – (I love all the extras!) But most of all – I feel 'SAFE'



in it and that peace of mind is priceless! Also I'm impressed on how shallow of water I can run it in, especially this time of year when we are fishing 1-2 feet of water. So if any of you are thinking about a new boat, be sure and take a look at this Solera, it's something that can please the whole family! If you see me at Lake Fork Marina, you are more than welcome to check out mine!

Now as far as the crappie fishing! The females are finally moving in, especially with the full moon coming this week. They had been moving in and out with all the changing water temperatures. We've caught them from 1 ft. of water around the edges of the grass or near flooded willows, to as deep as 20 ft. around structure, brush piles, or bridges. It's a good time to have a rod rigged with a slip bobber to check shallow and a rod rigged for deeper water fish-

ing. The crappie depth can change throughout the day, so keep an eye on that depth finder!

If you've fished Lake Fork this spring, the water has been very murky (a little like chocolate milk) because of all the rain run off and wind churning it up, especially up north. So darker jig colors like black/chartreuse and purple/chartreuse have been working. Mid-lake and south the water has been a little clearer, so brighter colors like chartreuse or white/chartreuse have been working. Some days they want a very slow presentation, and other days they want the bait moving. So change it up to see what will work for the conditions you're fishing.

Now that water temps are finally getting to where it should be for this time of year, it looks like all the species should be moving shallow. Especially the big

(Continued on Next Page)

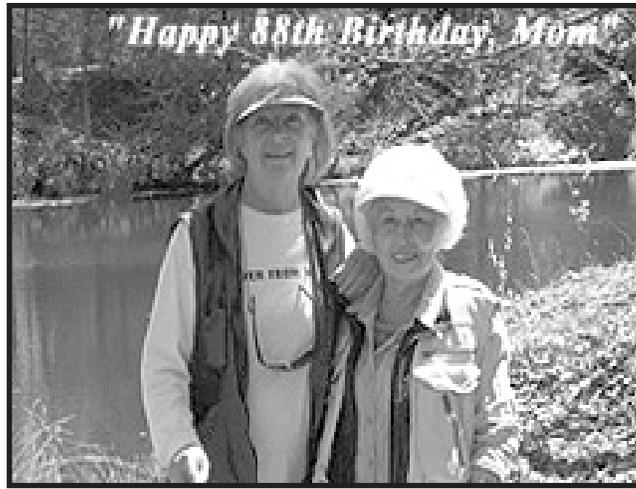
bream! There is nothing more fun than catching them! Crickets, night crawlers, or just Berkeley crappie nibbles will work on a slip bobber or just tight lining in 1 to 10 ft. Just check the same areas you were fishing for shallow crappie. The next couple of months should be pretty awesome.

I hope you all have the chance to get out and enjoy Lake Fork.

Our marina dog, Buddy is now doing great!

Happy Mother's Day to you all and especially to my Mom and happy 88th birthday too - Mom!

**All the Best!**



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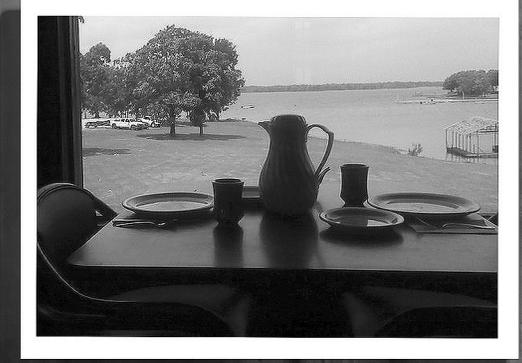
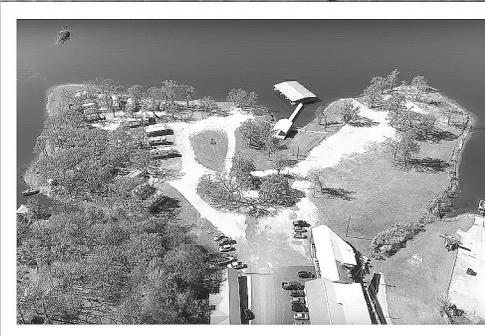
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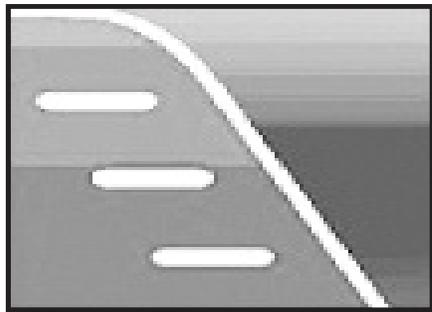
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# "Knowing What To Look For!"

By Michael McFarland

Hello fishing friends! it's been a crazy month. Here we are at the end of April and the cooler temperatures most certainly have made this year different than last. There are lots of

big bass spawning as we speak in the main lake and the shad and brim spawn is starting to happen as well. As the water temps continue to warm up into the upper 60's to low 70's we will really see the brim and bait spawn in full swing. I love this time of

year because the big bass get to have revenge. During the bass spawn the brim give the bass a hard time and try and eat there eggs. So fair is fair, during the brim spawn the big bass try and eat the brim themselves, lol. You can find brim beds in

very same areas you will find bass beds. I use my lowrance side scan to find areas with a lot of brim beds which are normally bunched up close like this image. I prefer to choose a side like left or right only because I get more of a detailed image in full screen mode. However using both left and right at same time works well also. Once I find a few good areas holding spawning brim I will frequently hit those specific areas only targeting the bass which are usually just a bit deeper or on the outside edges of the brim nesting area. Besides tossing a big brim/bluegill

swim bait some of my favorite baits are Santone 5/16 swim jig in river bream or Pakes perch color. Chatterbaits with LFT 4.5" live magic shad trailer also in brim colors. I also love to throw brim colored poppers like Rico's and Yellow

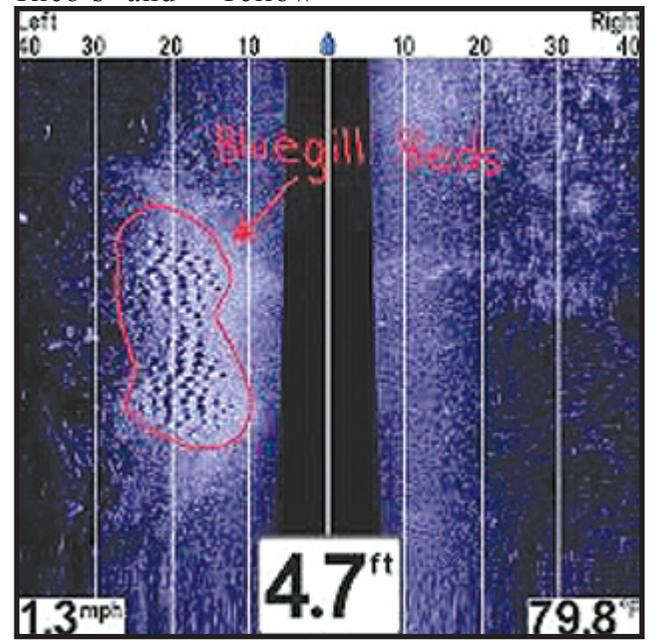
magics. On slower days I will back off and throw a weightless Senko, Fluke or LFT Hyperstick. I hope this will help some of you to catch more and bigger bass this spring. I wish you great fishing and may God bless.



**Michael McFarland**  
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## New Lake Record Caught During Lake Fork Anglers Tournament

By Bruce Allen

Well actually it may or may not be a new record for Lake Fork because instead of bringing it in for an official weigh in it was released. We were in the middle of an 8 hour tournament on a day when the wind was blowing 20-30 with 40 MPH gusts. Was not worth the boat ride even for a new lake record.

After checking the lake record books

in the TPWD website there is no recording of the species ever being caught at Fork.

A lot of that is because of the confusion on what kind of fish it is. I believe there is an unofficial record of a 4+ pound Chain Pickerel being caught in Lake Fork. But it is not listed on the TPWD website. This however is a Grass Pickerel which is native in East Texas and can be found in lakes east of Fork, primarily Hawkins and Caddo.



This little fellow is definitely a Grass Pickerel and not the non-native Chain variety.

When Ray Carter was bringing it to the boat I was sure at first it was a gar because of the long snout and toothy mouth. But after closer examination we both said pickerel. Really unusual to see one of them in Little Caney. And once he got the hook out of it's mouth and held it up we could easily see it was a Grass Pickerel.

While the other "big" fish that Ray caught on his popper was a 7.29 lb. largemouth I am sure he'll remember the 14" pickerel he caught on the 4/12.

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Kevin C. from Chicago, IL., caught this nice hawg while fishing Lake Fork with guide Whitt Smith. C.P.R. Weight not provided. (Courtesy Photo Whitt Smith Guide Service)

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Tyler Thetard was fishing Lake Fork in April with guide Andrew Grills when he caught this healthy bass weighing 9-lbs. C.P.R. (Courtesy Photo Andrew Grills Guide Service)



Dustin Clark from Burlington, Kansas was fishing with Lake Fork Guide Jason Smith on 4/28/18 when he caught this nice bass weighing 8.09-lbs. C.P.R. (Courtesy Photo Jason Smith Guide Service)



Lake Fork Guide Andrew Grills was fishing Lake Fork in April when he caught this hawg of a bass weighing 9-lbs. C.P.R. (Courtesy Photo Andrew Grills Guide Service)



Insulin, which diabetics use to control their blood sugar levels, was discovered at the University of Toronto.



Hubert Booth gets credit for inventing the first modern vacuum cleaner in 1901.



The sentence "the quick brown fox jumps over a lazy dog" uses every letter of the alphabet!

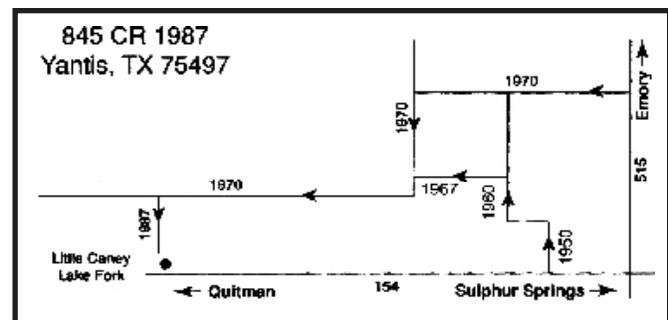
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**Commission Approves Changes** *(Continued from Page 7-A)*

daily bag limit to no minimum length limit and a bag limit of five fish (only two may be less than 18 inches).  
 -- **Grapevine Lake** (Tarrant)  
 --Change from 14- to 24-inch slot length limit to a 16- to 24-inch slot length limit. Daily bag will remain at five fish (limit of only one bass 24 inches or larger).  
 --**Fayette County Reservoir** (Fayette)  
 --**Gibbons Creek Reservoir** (Grimes)  
 --**Lake Monticello** (Titus)  
 --Change from catch and release with an exception allowing for possession and weighing for bass 24 inches or greater for possible submission to ShareLunker program to

a 16-inch maximum length limit and five fish daily bag with the ShareLunker weighing and possession exception for bass 24 inches or greater.  
 --**Purtis Creek State Park Lake** (Henderson)  
 -- **Lake Raven** (Walker)  
 --Change from an 18-inch minimum length limit and five fish daily bag for largemouth bass to a 16-inch maximum length limit and five fish daily bag with an exception allowing for possession and weighing for bass 24 inches or greater for possible submission to ShareLunker program.  
 --**Lake Bellwood** (Smith)  
 --Change from 14- to 18-inch slot length

limit and five fish daily bag limit for largemouth bass to a 16-inch maximum length limit and five fish daily bag with an exception allowing for possession and weighing for bass 24 inches or greater for possible submission to ShareLunker program.  
 --**Davy Crockett Lake** (Fannin)  
 --Increase daily bag limit for commercial and recreational take of king mackerel from two to three.  
 The changes to the 2018-19 Statewide Recreational and Commercial Fishing regulations take effect on September 1, 2018.

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## 9th Annual World Championship Bass on The Fly Fishing Tournament

The 9th Annual World Championship Bass on The Fly Fishing Tournament will be held May 5, 2018 at Lake Fork Marina from 6:00am - 2:00pm. This unique tournament is exclusively for fly fishing anglers and only rods, reels, line & lures made for fly fishing can be used. There is no rod length or line weight limit for equipment. It is the largest event of this type in the world!

Why would anyone want to fly fish for bass? Ted Warren, the tournament organizer, says "it's just like bow hunting for deer. It's more challenging and requires more skill and patience which brings a greater sense of accomplishment. And it can be quite effective."

Another unique feature is that it is a Catch-Photo-Release tournament.

Each participant will receive an ID number at registration which must be included in a picture of the fish on a metal or plastic measuring board before quickly returning the fish to the water. The Fly Fishers International Texas Council, which endorses the tournament, emphasizes conservation of our fishery resources. This is a bonus on Lake Fork because all the fish caught can be counted, including those in the 16"-24" slot! Winners will be determined by the total length of their five longest bass.

This year the tournament will be using the ianglertournament website and app. This enables the fishermen to send their photos in for review and acceptance

as they catch fish and a running tally will be kept for each contestant or team. Folks can keep up with the leader board through out the day and the final results will be quickly tabulated. In case of poor phone reception, the phone can still be used to photograph the fish and the photos will be reviewed at check-in as in prior years.

The tournament has two divisions. One for those with fishing boats (Boater division) and one for those who want to use kayaks, pontoons, float tubes, or fish from the bank (Kayak division). Recently, those in the Kayak division have done about as well as those with boats. Safety and sportsmanship rules must be followed by all participants.

The entry fee is \$60/person, which includes \$5 for the big bass pot. The cash payout for each division is determined by the number of participants in each division. There is also a Club trophy awarded to the club or organization with the three longest fish. Friday afternoon there is also an optional sun fish mini-tournament from 3-6 pm.

Entries received by April 16th are eligible for a drawing for a new Sage Largemouth II fly rod, line, case and a Sage 2280 reel, total value \$725. Approximately 80 participants are expected this year. In previous years participants have been from Florida,

Oklahoma, Louisiana, Missouri, California, and Colorado as well as Texas. All contestants must check in at the registration pavillon at Lake Fork Marina before fishing.

Additional activities include free hourly casting clinics, casting contests, vendor booths, and door prizes for participants. Prizes include the Sage rod, Umpqua coffee mugs, TFO rods & hats, Skeeter hats & shirts, Gypsy Jack bass lures, Redington discount certificates, Rio leaders, Pults poppers, Yellow Dog hats, Smith sunglasses, Buff sun gear, Brothers flies, Ranger hats, Mariner-sails discount certificates, the

Sage reel from Tailwaters fly shop, Ross reel & line from Living Waters fly shop, Simms lip protection & fish/flag decals, Bass Pro reel & line and net, Gray Wolf fly shop gift certificates, and a gift certificate from East Texas Fly Fishers.

The tournament provides educational opportunities, practices conservation and promotes friendly competitive fly fishing. A portion of every entry goes to support Reel Recovery (fishing retreats for men with cancer) and the FFI-Texas council, both 501(c)3. More details and the registration form can be found at [www.bassonthefly.org](http://www.bassonthefly.org)



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#### CATEGORIES:

**BOATERS:** 1-2 PERSON TEAM, 5-FISH PHOTOS, TOTAL LENGTH; **BIG BASS.** **KAYAK\*:** INDIVIDUAL, 5-FISH PHOTOS, TOTAL LENGTH; **BIG BASS** (\*kayak, float tube, pontoon, or bank fishermen. No power.)

**CLUB TROPHY:** 3 BIG FISH, total length for Club/Organization. **COST:** \$60/PERSON, includes \$5 big bass pot. **PAYOUT:** 1-\$1200, 2nd-\$800, 3-\$500, 4-\$300, 5-\$200, 6-10 \$100. Big Bass - \$300, \$200. (Based on 100 entries.)

#### PLANNED ACTIVITIES:

**FRIDAY - 1-5pm-** FREE CASTING CLINICS HOURLY, PRODUCT BOOTHS, KAYAK DEMOS, CASTING CONTESTS FOR PRIZES; **3-6pm - optional BIG SUNFISH TOURNEY \$10.**

**SATURDAY - 9am-NOON- FREE**

CASTING CLINICS HOURLY, KAYAK DEMOS 2:00 pm- PHOTO "WEIGH-IN";

**3:00pm-DOOR PRIZES.** FFI-TEXAS COUNCIL KAYAK DRAWING **REGISTRATION:** ONLINE at [ianglertournament.com](http://ianglertournament.com), You must have a smart phone to take and transmit photos. **MAIL** to Bass on the Fly, P.O.Box 173, Yantis, TX 75497. **ON SITE Noon-9:00PM Friday or 5-6:00AM Saturday, cash only.**

## 'Pack of Knowledge' "Stability equals good fishing on Lake Fork"

By Andrew Grills

You wouldn't know it, but May is upon us. The weather has been a bit more like March the past few weeks! I predict we will jump right into summer. Catching fish has been a challenge this spring with all the water level fluctuation and cold fronts. However, this has been a great season for bigger bass.

Right now the water temperature on the main lake is still in the low 60s. Normally it would be quite a bit higher than that by now. The lake level is .43" below full pool. I'm not sure why

the lake is a little low. We've had one of the wettest spring seasons I've ever seen. The extra few inches of flooded weed growth would've been a benefit to our future fish population. The level has been kept slightly low throughout the spring.

Stability equals good fishing on Lake Fork, and that's something we haven't had much of this year. However, after a few days of consistent weather the fishing gets good. Things are a little behind, so that means early this month will be a lot like mid April. Topwater should be great, and numbers should get better.

I'm looking for post-spawn fish now, and they're starting to show up in bunches in the areas where they spawned and near points on their way back out. Shallow running crankbaits, spinnerbaits, and swimbaits are excellent options because the fish will be actively feeding on shad on good days. Of course you'll want to have a topwater handy for the early morning.

When things slow down it's a good idea to take weightless plastics like a wacky rigged worm or a Texas rigged fluke and work the shallow cover. On some days, I'll put a small split shot sinker on the fluke and work it a little deeper. This is not the best way to catch a big fish, but it will get your line stretched on a tough day.

Towards the end of the month I'll be looking at deep offshore structure for the big ones. At that time the classic deepwater techniques are all good options. Catching them is the easy part, finding them will be the challenge.

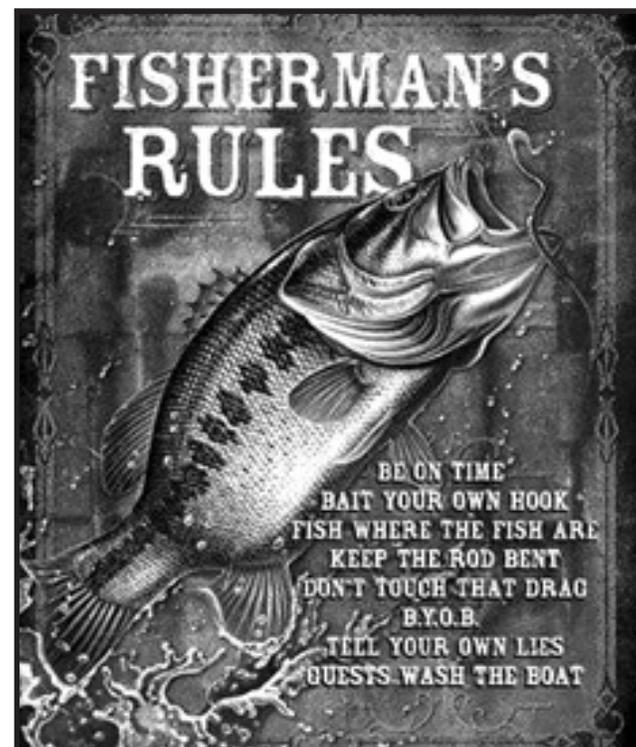
Hopefully this report gives you some good ideas for your next fishing trip. As always, feel free to contact me if I can be of any assistance.



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# Crappie Anglers of Texas 5th Annual Crappiefest on Lake Fork

CAT recently held its 5th Annual Crappiefest Tournament on Lake Fork on March 31, 2018, and it was a day for the record books! A record total of 363 anglers (331 Adult Anglers & 32 Junior Anglers) representing states from Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Missouri, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Texas participated in a great day of fishing filled with fun, fellowship and plenty of excitement! This tournament was a "big fish" tournament, so each angler weighed-in only one big crappie. The weather was nearly perfect for early spring, the big fish were on the prowl, and the result was some very big fish and some very excited anglers!!! Here are the results:

First place went to David Harley (Warrensburg, MO) with a Monster Crappie weighing in at 3.07 pounds!! David's huge crappie netted him \$5,000 and the "Norton Metals Monster Crappie Bonus" of \$7,500, making his total winnings a whopping \$12,500!!! Mackey Whyte (Allen, TX) came in 2nd place with a 2.58 pound slab worth \$2,000. Mackey was also the Top Finishing CAT Member, so he added another \$1,000 to his winnings. Ben

Moore (Muskogee, OK) took home third place and a check for \$1,500 with his crappie weighing in at 2.55 pounds. Daniel Barrick (Quinlan, TX) brought in a 2.54 pound crappie and took home 4th place and \$1,000. Johnny Merriman (Emory, TX) netted 5th place and \$750 for his 2.46 pound crappie. Cory Carter (Muskogee, OK) took home \$700 for his 6th place crappie weighing in at 2.44 pounds. Seventh place went to Bruce Bidy (Hooks, TX) weighing in a 2.42 pound slab worth \$600. Eighth place was won by Charlie Bunting (Jefferson City, MO) with his 2.41 pound crappie netting him a check for \$500. Darrell Standridge (Canton, TX) won ninth place and a \$400 check for his 2.32 pound crappie. Tenth place went to Charles McHughes (Midlothian, TX) with a 2.30 pound crappie netting him \$250.

All top twenty anglers qualified for the Texas State Crappie Championship.

The top twenty anglers all took home cash prizes, and the top ten anglers qualified for the Texas State Crappie Championship.

Much excitement was generated by the ever

popular "Exact Weight Bonuses" and the "Bass Printing Mystery Weight Awards". Nine anglers weighed in crappie weighing exactly (or closest to) 1.00, 1.25, 1.50, 1.75 and 2.00 pounds and received a total of \$3,300 in cash, and seven anglers shared \$1,000 in cash from the Bass Printing Mystery Weight Awards. Junior Angler 10 & under division: Not to be outdone by the adults, the youngest crappie anglers in the contest really put on a show. First place was won by Mason Tucker

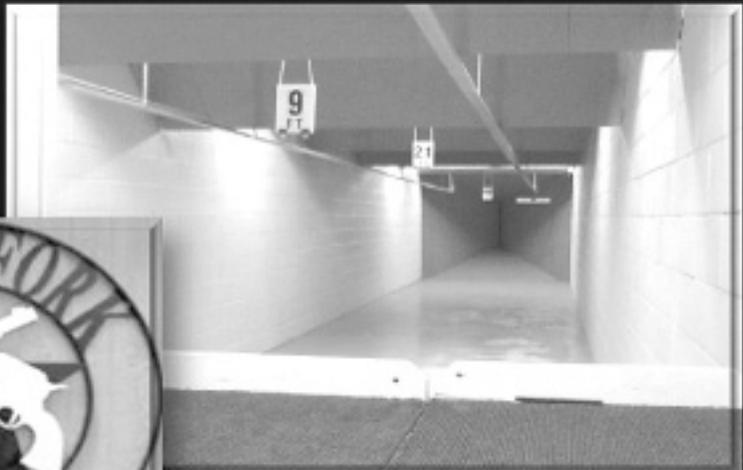
*(See Crappie Anglers....Continued on Page 22-A)*



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### May Bass Will Be Feeding on Lake Fork (Continued from Page 6-A)

of shad. Spoons work well provided that the bottom is free of timber but the c-rig will do most of the heavy lifting. It's also a good time to tie on a football jig in black/blue or peanut butter/jelly. Any craw trailer will work and be sure to match the skirt of the jig as close as possible. I would also set up an A-rig if an abundance of sand bass are present. Rig this presentation with any white swimbait in the 3 1/2 to 5 inch length. Make a long cast and let it sink to the bottom. Start a slow retrieve and hold on. You may have to weed

through several pesky sand bass but a giant could latch on to the rig and totally make your day.

If you are headed out to Lake Fork in May searching for the trophy of a lifetime, I would love to be a part of this trophy quest. I also have gift certificates available if you have friends or loved one's who have dreamt of landing a huge bass. You can contact me at 409 782-4269 or e-mail me at skeet21c@aol.com. You can follow me on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/davidoziolakeforkguide>. I post my daily trip results on this page. 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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### TPWD Unveils New Alligator Gar Website

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) unveiled a new website April 13 to educate and inform Texans about alligator gar - the largest freshwater fish in Texas and one of the largest freshwater fishes in North America. The site, which can be found at [tpwd.texas.gov/texasgar](http://tpwd.texas.gov/texasgar), features informational articles about alligator gar and the findings of studies conducted by TPWD biologists.

The new website was created by TPWD Inland Fisheries staff to provide anglers and non-anglers with all the information they need about Texas alligator gar in one place. That includes information on alligator gar identification, management, distribution and fishing tips and tactics.

"There is a lot of misinformation floating around about alligator gar regarding their impact on other fish, where they are located throughout the state and population sizes of the gar that live in our reservoirs and rivers," said Dave Buckmeier, Research Program Di-

rector. "This website will provide Texans with a one-stop shop to find science-based facts and information about alligator gar and clear up some of the confusion surrounding these misunderstood fish."

Some other common myths and misconceptions about alligator

gar addressed on the website include the idea that they attack humans, that they are not native to Texas, that they are invasive and that their populations are plentiful throughout their range.

"Alligator gar are only present in a handful

(See TPWD Unveils....  
Continued on Page 23-A)

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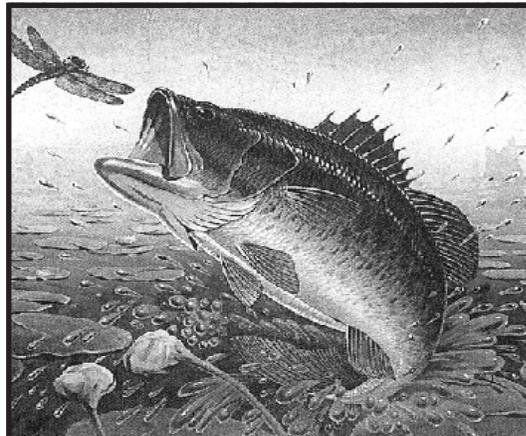
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### Supply Find

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

- |          |            |
|----------|------------|
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| PEN      | PAPER CLIP |
| PAPER    | GLUE       |
| RULER    | BACKPACK   |
| ERASER   | LOCK       |
| TEXT     | FOLDER     |

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P I C E N O M E L P C F  
F O L D E R A T E I E R  
E C O L U E R A S P N U  
C O K P P R B S R A R L  
U N O T E B O O K Y S I  
E A E L N R U P C A N C  
R T U I G C O I A S P N  
A R A S Y P L B P L V E  
S P N T C R K E K E W P  
E A A A E C R U C M A K  
R N R P O M E L A A W S  
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### Crappie Anglers of Texas *(Continued from Page 19-A)*

with a monstrous crappie tipping the scale at 1.90 pounds. Mason won a \$100 Amazon gift card. Easton Tucker took home second place and a \$75 Amazon gift card for his 1.21 pound crappie. Kylie Gaston rounded out the top three with her crappie tilting the scale at 1.18 pounds. Junior Angler 11 - 17 division: The older kids cashed in as well. Cody King won first place and a \$100 Amazon gift card with a weight of 1.59 pounds. Thomas Owen came in 2nd place and netted a \$75 Amazon gift card with his crappie weighing 1.42 pounds. Ben Lampe took third place and a \$50 Amazon gift card with his 1.41 pound crappie.

All of the Junior Anglers took home tackle goodie bags valued at over \$25.00 each and a trophy. Our Junior Anglers took home awards and prizes valued at over \$1,300! Crappie Anglers of Texas would like to thank our 2018 Crappiefest Sponsors for your support. We really appreciate YOU! This year's sponsors were: Star Industries; Norton Metals; City of Emory; Aflac Insurance; Allied Employer Group; AmeriGas; B/A Products Co.; Bass Printing; Frost Bank; Graphic Solutions; Graystone Insurance Agency; Spectra Bank; Texas Motor Cars; WasteQuip; YRC Freight; Potts Feed Store and Greenville Chrysler Dodge.

A GREAT BIG thank you to Shannon Winters and all of our NOCC volunteers for their tremendous help!! We will be sending the NOCC a check for \$9,006.00!!! This includes the tournament fees, raffle proceeds and profit off of t-shirt sales!! And last but not least, a very special thank you to Anne and Ronnie Parker and Kevin Sharp for hosting our 2018 Crappiefest at Lake Fork Trophy Lures. Great Sponsors make Successful Events and CAT has the best of the best!!! Be sure to go to [www.crappieanglerof-texas.com](http://www.crappieanglerof-texas.com) to view all pictures made at Crappiefest 2018.

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### TPWD Unveils New Alligator Gar Website *(Continued from Page 21-A)*

states in the country, and although Texas has some of the most robust populations, these fish still face challenges related to angling pressure and limited access to floodplain spawning habitats," said Dan Daugherty, TPWD research biologist. "In order to sustain this unique fishery for future generations of anglers we want to engage the public and provide a better understanding of these fish both as a recreational resource and as a valuable part of the ecosystem."

To date, TPWD research has focused on understanding how long alligator gar live, how fast they grow, how often they successfully reproduce

and how healthy our populations currently are. But while they have learned a great deal about these topics, researchers know relatively little about the anglers who fish for them.

To help answer this question, the new alligator gar website is hosting pre-registration for an upcoming constituent survey that will gather information about people's preferences, attitudes and opinions about these fish. This information will be used by researchers to help inform upcoming management decisions about fishing rules and regulations for alligator gar.

"With this survey we will be targeting both anglers and non-

anglers in an effort to reach an audience as diverse as Texas itself," said Warren Schlechte, TPWD research biologist. "The goal is to gain a better understanding of who our constituents are, how our anglers like to fish, their harvest practices, and how they would like to see alligator gar managed in the future."

The alligator gar constituent survey will launch in June, but anglers can pre-register now on the new alligator gar website here. Pre-registered anglers and non-anglers will be notified via email when the survey launches this summer.

Other resources on the new alligator gar website include links

to the species description, current fishing regulations statewide and in select reservoirs, Texas Parks and Wild-

life Magazine feature articles related to alligator gar and a list of publications related to alligator gar life his-

tory and management. To learn more, visit the alligator gar website at [tpwd.texas.gov/texasgar](http://tpwd.texas.gov/texasgar).



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