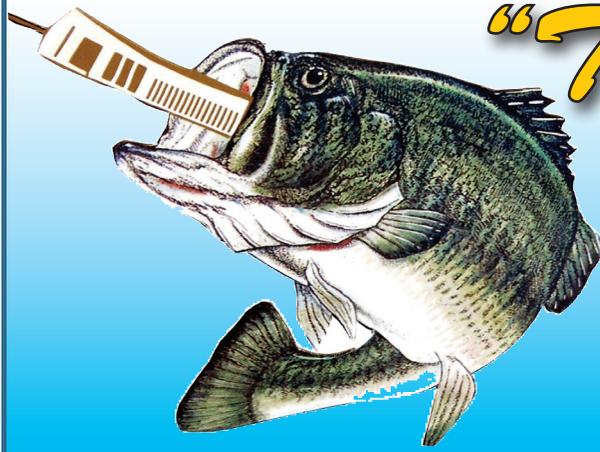


# LAKE FORK "The Big Bass Capital Of Texas"



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

2 Sections

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Free

Vol. 20

January, 2019

No. 233

### 24th Annual Rains County Eagle Fest



Just one of the many eagles that make Lake Fork their home. (Fisherman's Guide Photo by Don Hampton)

By Don Hampton

Rains County Elementary School at 372 FM 3299, Emory, Texas (On the RISD Campus, just south on Hwy. 69). This year marks the

24th Annual Rains County Eagle Fest. The first festival was held following a resolution in 1995 when the 74th Legislature of the State of Texas declared Rains County "The Eagle Capital of Texas" as an effort to protect and preserve the American Bald Eagles in the area. The resolution was adopted by the Senate on May 24, 1995 and by the House on May 29, 1995. It was signed by the Governor George W. Bush on June 16, 1995 officially proclaiming Rains County

See 24th Annual....

Continued on Page 3-A



In comparison, a full grown eagle's claw and talons are larger than a full grown man's hand.



The TPWD ShareLunker began with the first entry being caught by Lake Fork Guide Mark Stevenson on November 26, 1986. Mark's Lake Fork hawg weighed 17.67-lbs.

### TPWD/Toyota ShareLunker Program

By Don Hampton

For more than 31 years, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's (TPWD) Toyota ShareLunker Program has partnered with anglers to enhance bass fishing in Texas. The program was first initiated on November 26, 1986 when Mark Stevenson caught a Lake Fork bass weighing 17.67-pounds and measuring 27.5" in length

with a 24" girth.

On January 1, 2018 the program launched a new year-round participation season and more opportunities to participate and be recognized for contributions. The program also adopted a new logo and look that conveys the excitement of catching a lunker bass. With the new program initiated in the 2018 season that ran from January 1st through De-

cember 31st, once again Lake Fork out shined all other lakes in the state. During the course Lake Fork had 72 ShareLunkers, 3 of the 6 state wide in the Lunker Legacy Class; Lake Conroe 40 ShareLunkers; Lake Athens 28 ShareLunkers; Sam Rayburn 21 ShareLunkers; O.H. Ivie 17 ShareLunkers; Gilmer Reservoir 14 ShareLunkers; See TPWD/Toyota....

Continued on Page 4-A

## "Bubba's Resolution Is Making a Naughty List For Next Christmas!"

By: Don Hampton

Twas the season, and as far as Bubba is concerned it's "Tis the season," still. While everyone else was making a list of New Year's resolutions, Bubba is making out his Christmas shopping list for December, 2019. While a resolution for the New Year is made to improve one's character or habits, Bubba's list is going to make better shoppers next year out of his family and friends.

Just like Santa, he has a list and he is checking it twice to see exactly who shopped naughty or nice for him. For those that bought Bubba "Fishing Stuff" their names are going on the nice list. This will be very beneficial for these individuals because he'll shop for them very meticulously and with much thought and care. I would believe his motives for this are truly self-serving.

His two favorites and on the top of his 2018 nice list were Bubbette and Bubba, Jr. They know him real well and know about the list he makes after Christmas each year. They always know just the right items to buy him. It also makes shopping for him real easy. Each year they buy him gift certificates so he can go buy his own "Fishing Stuff". Bubba keeps their names on the top of his list.

For those individuals that gave Bubba a present that didn't include "Fishing Stuff" and bought him items that just cannot or will

not fit into his way of life or thinking, well, they will find their name on his naughty list.

I quoted the old cliché to Bubba, "It's not the gift that counts but the thought!" Of course he quoted me back one of his own, "Well, they should have put a little more thought into these," he said holding up a paisley tie and a potted plant. On those two presents I had to agree with him.

I've known him longer than anyone and I haven't seen him in a tie for at least 30 years. I've gone to weddings, graduations, funerals, baptisms, and even a couple of bar mitzvahs with him and he has never worn a tie. He cleans up pretty nicely but you can't force him to wear a tie. He has even informed me that when the good Lord takes him he will not be wearing a tie. I'd say he feels pretty strongly about a tie.

Bubba is the type that wouldn't say anything to the person that gave a present to him and he wouldn't even try to take something back to a store but he always seems to find a good use for everything. So don't be surprised or laugh when you see his boat tied up to a stump on Lake Fork with a paisley tie, unless you're the one on his naughty list.

When it came to the potted plant, this really spurred my curiosity. Whoever gave Bubba this surely didn't know about his naughty list. I even had the pleasure of watching him open this one. What really surprised me at

first was how many times he checked the name card. I asked him later why he kept checking the name card and he explained, "The first three times I was just making sure it wasn't meant for Bubbette and the fourth time I wanted to make sure I remembered who sent that to me!" I'm going shopping with Bubba next year just to see what that individual is going to get. Knowing Bubba the way I do it will probably be purchased at a gas station.

I did ask Bubba what his plans were for the potted plant just because I have one of those inquiring minds and you know how that goes. He had two options he was going to go with. First he was going to see if Bubbette wanted it, but since she doesn't really have a green thumb either I expect it will go to Bubba's second option. He's going to put some earthworms in it, keep the soil moist, put some coffee grounds in it occasionally so the worms will reproduce. That way he'll have plenty of bait for bream fishing in the summer.

If he does do the latter though, wouldn't that mean that person should be transferred to the nice list because technically it is now "Fishing Stuff". If that is the case and he uses the tie the way he plans to, shouldn't that person's name be transferred to the nice list. Oh well, I guess it really is the thought that counts.

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## 24th Annual Eagle Fest (Continued from Page 1-A)

as the "Eagle Capital of Texas". The Rains County Eagle Fest is an educational effort to expand our knowledge of the bald eagles in the area and our local heritage. Although the weather is often unpredictable in January during the festival, winter is the best time to see the eagles since there is less foliage obstructing the view and their nests.

The Rains County Eagle Fest host visitors from all over the country. This is a full-day festival celebrating and highlighting the American Bald Eagles that live around Lake Fork, Lake Tawakoni and in Rains County. The festival includes a line-up of live bird shows, educational exhibits and displays,

fun wildlife presentations, interactive Aztec Dance performances, nature tours, craft and food vendors and more! A highlight of the festival is the bus and barge tours at Lake Fork and the special bus tours at the old Iron Bridge Crossing at the Sabine River Authority on Lake Tawakoni.

General Admission is \$5 for adults and teens. Children under 12 are free. Bus and barge tours are available at an additional cost – Bus tours are \$5 per person; Barge tours are \$35 per person. Tickets are available in advance online. General Admission and Bus Tour tickets will also be available at the door (however, due to limit-

ed seating on the barge tours, tickets usually sell out in advance).

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## TPWD/Toyota ShareLunker Program (Continued from Page 1-A)

Lady Bird Lake 13 ShareLunkers; Lake Sheldon 13 ShareLunkers; Lyndon B. Johnson 12 ShareLunkers; Lake Buchanan 10 ShareLunkers. The biggest bass of the year was caught on Lake Fork and weighed 15.48-pounds.

"Angler recognition continues to be a primary goal of the TPWD/ShareLunker program," said Kyle Brookshear, Toyota ShareLunker program coordinator. "For the second year ever anglers who catch an 8-pound or larger can participate simply by providing important information to us to use to improve bass fisheries science. We will recognize and reward these anglers as well as those anglers who loan their lunker bass weighing 13-pounds or greater to our breeding program during the spawning season."

The four levels of achievement are: Lunker Legacy Class: Every angler who loans a 13-pound or larger bass to the Toyota ShareLunker program during the spawning period January 1st to March 31st will join the prestigious. These valuable fish are an integral piece of the Toyota ShareLunker selective breeding and stocking program and anglers will be eligible for an exciting prize package commensurate

with the importance of sharing their lunker. Each Lunker Legacy Class angler will receive a Toyota ShareLunker Catch Kit containing branded merchandise and fishing tackle items, a 13lb+ Legacy decal, VIP access to awards programming at the Toyota Bassmaster Texas Fest, a replica of their fish, and an entry into the year-end "ShareLunker Prize Drawing to win a \$5,000 shopping spree and an annual fishing license to be held at the end of the spawning March 31st. The 2018 winner of the drawing was Michael Terrebone from Cut Off, Louisiana. Lunker Legend Class: Anglers who enter a 13-pound or larger largemouth bass January 1st through December 31st will become a part of the Lunker Legend Class. These anglers will receive a Toyota ShareLunker Catch Kit containing branded merchandise and fishing tackle items, a 13lb+ decal to display their achievement, a replica of their fish, and an entry into the year-end ShareLunker Prize Drawing for a \$5,000 shopping spree and an annual fishing license. Lunker Elite Class: Anglers catching double-digit largemouth bass 10 to 12.99-pounds January 1st through December 31st will become a part of the Lunker Elite Class:

These anglers will receive a Toyota ShareLunker Catch Kit containing branded merchandise and fishing tackle items, a 10lb+ decal to display their achievement, and an entry into the year-end ShareLunker Prize Drawing for a 5,000 shopping spree. Lunker Class: Anglers entering largemouth bass at least 8-pounds or 24" in length January 1st through December 31st will be recognized at the Lunker Class level. These anglers will receive a Toyota ShareLunker Catch Kit containing branded merchandise and fishing tackle items, and 8lb+ decal to display their achievement, and an entry into the year-end ShareLunker Prize Drawing for a \$5,000 shopping spree and an annual fishing license.

The new logo and new tagline, "Bigger Better Bass" highlights the branding changes to the program, which also includes new Toyota ShareLunker branded merchandise for prizes, updated marketing materials and the new website and mobile application to make it easy to enter your catch in the program and keep up with the latest ShareLunker news. Starting January 1st, anglers can quickly enter their catch on their smartphone using the

*(Continued on next page)*



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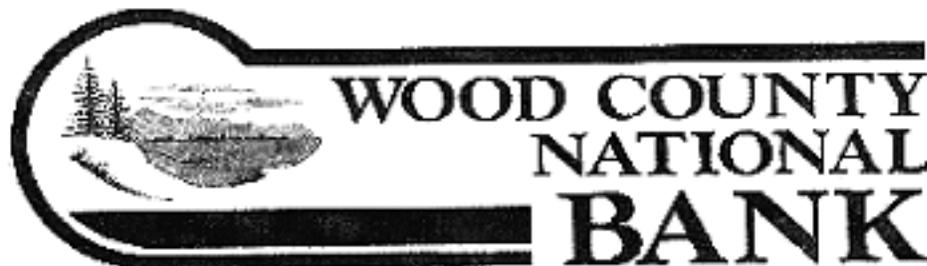
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Toyota ShareLunker mobile application, which is available for free download in the iTunes app store and on Google play or online on the Toyota ShareLunker website, [texassharelunker.com](http://texassharelunker.com) The digital entry forms allow anglers to easily submit photos of the fish being properly measured, weighed and held. Other entry criteria is detailed on the website and mobile application.

In addition to providing information and photos of their fish, anglers will also be able to provide a genetic sample of their largemouth bass by collecting and sending fish scales to TPWD using simple instructions from the app and website. This data will help fisheries biologist evaluate the impact of the ShareLunker breeding and stocking program in the gene pool. "Monitoring the impact of ShareLunker stockings is critical to evaluating the success of the program," Brookshear said. "That's why the citizen scientist piece is so important - we need anglers to help us better understand the populations of our biggest bass in Texas and we are excited to offer exciting prizes in exchange for providing us with the information and genetic material from their lunker catches." Hatchery Staff will also attempt to spawn all

eligible ShareLunkers 13-pounds or larger donated between January 1st and March 31st. Offspring of female genetic intergrades will be combined and stocked back to the source locations for all ShareLunker entries for the year, and genetically pure offspring will be maintained at the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center in Athens and eventually distributed to all TPWD production hatcheries to be used as brood stock for statewide largemouth bass stockings.

"Our goal is for all hatchery-held Florida largemouth bass brood stock to eventually be descendants of ShareLunkers," said Brookshear. "Increasing the percentage of ShareLunker offspring being introduced into Texas waters is an important part of increasing the lunker genetic potential in the state. We are incredibly grateful for anglers who choose to loan us these valuable fish and we are looking forward to continuing our efforts to make Texas fishing bigger and better with the selective breeding program."

For program updates, photos and to keep up with Texas lunker catches, join the ShareLunker community online at [www.facebook.com/sharelunkerprogram/](http://www.facebook.com/sharelunkerprogram/).

The Toyota ShareLunker Program is made possible by a grant to the Texas Parks & Wildlife Foundation from Gulf States

Toyota. Toyota is a longtime supporter of the Foundation and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, providing major funding for a wide variety of education, fish, parks and wildlife projects.



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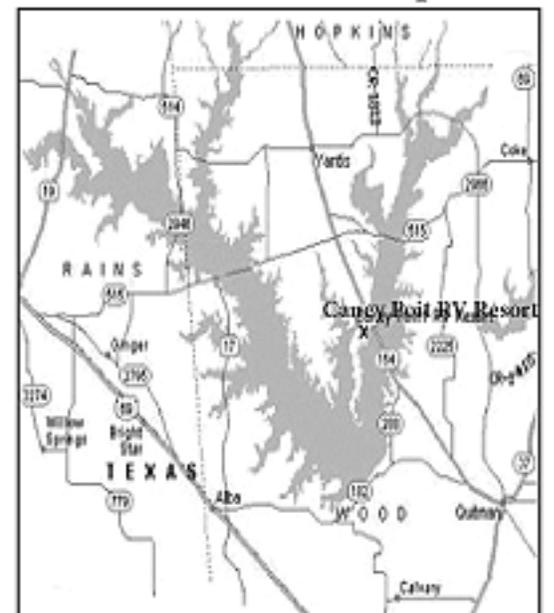
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# "Baby It's Cold Outside"

By David Ozio

"Baby it's Cold Outside"! Even the bass think so. Another year on Fork is now complete and there were a lot of big fish that made it to the scales throughout the year. January and February produced some super giants and many double digits followed suit throughout the ensuing months. This lake is one of a kind if you have the stamina to stay with it. Currently, locally heavy rains have made this Super Pond yoyo up and down which has helped and hurt in it's own right. With the gates open, fish have scattered and have been slow to take up residence on typical winter haunts at this point. No worries though. Water will stabilize soon and everything will be back to normal.

The good news with this recent abundance of water, an awesome spawn is on the horizon.

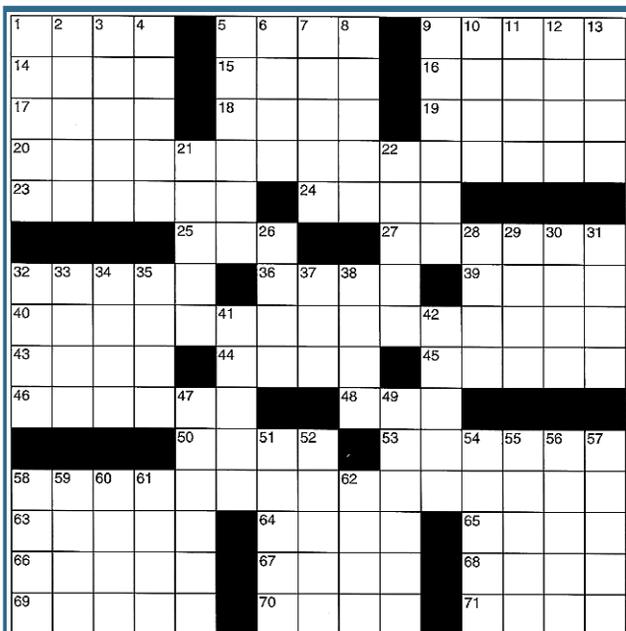
As it stands now, the lake is several inches over pool and the water temps are hovering around the low 50's which points to the fact that most bass should have set up on their winter haunts out in deep water by now. Stable water in January will move the green beasts to their typical winter lairs and can be caught on the right day. Their feeding habits are slowed down due to the cold water and one good meal could last them a while. The key is to target schools of shad and bar fish in the 20-30 foot range. Good electronics are the key and pay strict attention to the hooks that surround the school. The A-rig will be the go to set up to target these monster bass and rig it with any five inch swimbait on a 3/16 oz head. A flutter spoon or jigging spoon will also do the trick and my color choice will be gold. Focus your search on humps, roadbeds, long points and pond dams. If you notice the big arches laying on the bottom, switch to the Carolina rig or football jig in black/blue to attract the larger bites. Use a long leader on your C-rig with a 3/0 or 4/0 hook. Creature baits, large worms or giants lizards will be the baits of choice. I use blue fleck and char-



treuse pepper on cloudy days and watermelon red or watermelon candy colors when the suns beaming down in full force. Drop shots will play a huge roll in the coming months especially if the lake stays at this level or slightly below. January is the time of the year when the ultra giants are moving around and it offers the extreme possibility to boat the trophy of your dreams.

An alternate pattern targets the skinny water. Fishing shallow on the bright sunny days is the place to be, especially between 2:00 and 5:00pm. It is the warmest part of the day and the top layer of water offers comfort to the

(See Baby It's Cold.....  
Continued on Page 20-A)



**CLUES ACROSS**

- 1. Commoner (abbr.)
- 5. Before sunsets
- 9. Thou \_\_\_ not
- 14. Lounge about
- 15. \_\_\_ Turner, rock singer
- 16. Shield
- 17. Phil \_\_\_\_, former CIA
- 18. Pay attention to
- 19. Soul
- 20. Wolfe novel, with "Of"
- 23. Chinese capital
- 24. Tennis matches
- 25. Austrian money
- 27. Figure of speech
- 32. Iraq man (var.)
- 36. Soothing plant
- 39. Scan
- 40. Gould work
- 43. Projection
- 44. Give advice, explain
- 45. Fakes
- 46. Yemen citizen
- 48. \_\_\_ Caesar, comedian
- 50. Egyptian goddess
- 53. Greek prophetesses
- 58. Waterway for Pierre
- 63. UC Berkeley museum
- 64. Cheese
- 65. \_\_\_ Frank's diary
- 66. After prayers
- 67. Heavier sword blade
- 68. Greek portico
- 69. Cap
- 70. Begetters
- 71. Thou \_\_\_ sinned

**CLUES DOWN**

- 1. \_\_\_deutsch, low German
- 2. Maxims
- 3. Fragrant resin from tropical trees
- 4. Masks profane words
- 5. Cultural
- 6. Competed
- 7. Samoyedic
- 8. Hebrew letter
- 9. Rare
- 10. Loloish
- 11. Tel \_\_\_\_, Israel city
- 12. Green "lemon"
- 13. Czar (var.)
- 21. Scandinavian gods
- 22. Attila
- 26. Possess
- 28. Strongly suggest
- 29. Odd person
- 30. Hair
- 31. Not subtracts
- 32. Uncertain
- 33. Abnormal breathing
- 34. Styptic
- 35. Paul \_\_\_\_, Swiss painter
- 37. Light-emitting diode (abbr.)
- 38. Minerals
- 41. St. Pat's people
- 42. About some Norse poems
- 47. Most agreeable
- 49. Editions
- 51. Embed (var.)
- 52. Minute floating marine animal
- 54. Bold
- 55. Gossiper
- 56. Twisted yarns
- 57. Walter William \_\_\_\_, British lexicographer
- 58. Fatty tissue
- 59. Italy's capital
- 60. Vessel
- 61. Small integer
- 62. Necessity

Answers on Page 21-A

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## "A Perpetual Search for Love"

By Johnny Trammell

Today, I am on the prowl for a female. The bigger her belly and the more she weighs drives me absolutely crazy! I have braved the elements, darkness, heat, rain, lightning, and freezing temperatures in search for her. I have spent hours reading about her; I shop for things that might allure her and things that smell so good she might not be able to resist. I have spent thousands of dollars in my pursuit of her. My wife, at times, has been jealous of her; we've argued about her many times. I have left my wife alone for consecutive days in search

of her. I think about her more than any other female on earth. I have dreams about her; I have searched both high and low for her. Sometimes she plays hard to get; and I leave in disappointment because I did not get to meet her.

I know some day when we finally do get to meet, it will no doubt be love at first sight! When I get to look into her eyes and hold her in my hands, I will yell out a big ole "Woo Hoo"! I will get my picture taken with her and send it to all of my buddies. I will send our picture to the local newspaper with a story on how we finally met. I will take her measurements and

have a replica made of her and place it on my wall. From time to time, I will glance at it with a fond memory of her. Consequently because of my deep love for her, I will not be able to keep her long; I will have to tell her that I cannot keep her and that I must release her. With a tear in my eye and a lump in my throat it will be a sad day; yet somewhat of a gratifying day to think that someday we might meet again, where she will be bigger and heavier than ever before. Who is she you might ask? She is the "Elusive Large Mouth Bass"!

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## Mid-Winter Bald Eagle Count

January 12th & 13th, 2019

We will be meeting at the OakRidge Marina Café each morning at about 7 AM so that we can be ready and in place by 8 AM for the start of the count which will last until 11 AM each morning.

The OakRidge Marina Café is located on Hwy. 154 about 1/4 mile from the 154 bridge.

We will have routes from the land as well as by water, so if you have a boat that could be used we would really appreciate it.



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**"The Moon Report"**  
"Forks Winter Crappie!"

By Terri Moon

Happy New Year to you all! I love the anticipation of the upcoming year. I know January will bring cooler weather with not as many fishable days so it's time to check out all the boat and tackle shows in your area! It's incredible to see the growth of the crappie fishing industry. It's finally getting the attention it has long time deserved! From the tackle to trolling motors, to electronics, even the boat manufacturers are finally putting the crappie fishermen in mind. Even bigger and better payouts for the crappie tournaments – giving way to more television exposure. It's a WIN-WIN for all of us crappie fishermen!

Whether you fish a lot or a little – there is nothing better than fishing in comfort! Good job Skeeter Boats for getting involved in the crappie fishing world! I've been in their Solera 205 for about 3 months (and as much as I loved fishing in the Solera 189) the extra length of the 205 has made the comfort and fish ability "off the chart" especially when I have extra people on board. Another "BONUS" of the Solera 205 is the Yamaha 250 motor! What a sweet combination!

So, if you're bored with cabin fever, get



out to your local boat and tackle shows and check out all the latest in the fishing world. Be sure and stop by the Lowrance booth. They have something really exciting coming out with their new "HDS LIVE" sonar views. Get ready to have your mind blown with this! Also, the best bang for your buck has to be hands down for Minn Kota's Ultrex Trolling Motor with its PRICELESS "Spot Lock" – (I just couldn't imagine not having this piece of equipment in my life)! Don't forget to see Shimano's latest – (I'm partial to the Sahara 500 reels). They balance perfect with a 5 ft. ultralite rod but sadly Shimano discontinued their 5 ft. rods. So, thank you to "Reel Time Rods" at Lake Fork for building me one! There is nothing more fun than fishing with super ultralite equipment especially when the big ones bite! Now – if by chance you find a day that the wind isn't blowing 40 mph and it's

not raining, get out there and have some fun with Forks winter fishing. Our water temperatures dropped drastically but have stabilized to the mid 40's to low 50's so the crappie are bunching up and starting to fatten up. We have been targeting 25 to 35 ft. in 25 to 45 ft. of water so keep a close eye on that graph and search for the baitfish and target that depth. Also remember, a SLOW-MOTION-NO-MOTION with just a twitch now and then is a good idea for this time of year. Check the deep bridges, main lake points and humps, and deep ledges. When fishing this deep in open water, I like rigging 2 jigs about a foot apart. On cloudy days or murky water we're using darker colors – black/chartreuse, grey/blue – then on brighter, clearer water days – chartreuse/blue, and white/chartreuse. Also, my very favorite fishing line is Sufix Siege in HI-VIS tangerine in 8 lb. test.

(Continued on next page)

It's so easy to see the subtle bites with this.

Now for all you "Buddy" fans out there - his wounds have healed nicely and big thanks to Quitman Animal Clinic for always giving such loving care to him. I think he knows and appreciates that they saved his life when they first met him! He is adjusting to his new routine and just loves his visits to Lake Fork Marina (but he still likes to wander) so, I appreciate everyone who keeps an eye out for him.

I'm hoping all of you had a wonderful Holiday Season and I'm looking forward

to an exciting year of crappie fishing on Fork! Sending special thoughts and prayers to my family in Missouri!




Gary Johnson      Clyde McAfee

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**Cast into the New Year with Free Youth Fishing at the Tyler Nature Center Jan. 5 and Jan. 12**

Looking for a unique, family-friendly New Year's resolution that you can accomplish in Tyler, Texas? Here's an idea - take the family out to catch a colorful rainbow trout for fun or a tasty meal at the 13th Annual "Trails to Trout" fishing event at the Tyler Nature Center fishing pond.

"The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is stocking thousands of catchable-size rainbow trout at the pond to provide a high-quality, fun fishing experience for anglers of all ages," said Richard Ott, TPWD Inland Fisheries District Supervisor for Tyler South. "This is the perfect opportunity to introduce a child to fishing, catch your first fish or simply spend a day connecting with family in the outdoors."

The "Trails to Trout" event is free and open to the public 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 5 and Saturday, Jan. 12. There is no registration required and no need to purchase a fishing license - all anglers need to bring is fishing equipment and bait. The East Texas Woods and Waters Foundation (ETWWF) and TPWD will provide the rest, including staff on-hand to assist beginner fishing duos and provide limited fishing equipment for those who need it on a first-come, first-served basis.

Anglers can keep up to their daily bag limit of five rainbow trout and one channel catfish per day.

After a day of fishing at the pond, families are encouraged to explore the nearby outdoor hiking trails to complete the great outdoors experience. Recommended Equipment: Each child will need a light-action rod and reel combination with small fishing hooks, light line 12 lb. test or less, small bobbers (optional), and small split shot. For bait, bring salmon eggs, whole kernel corn, marshmallows, small worms or prepared trout bait (Berkley PowerBait Hatchery Formula Chews or similar). Small rooster-tail spinners work well. If you intend to keep trout, make sure to pack a string-

er or small cooler. How to Get Here: From ESE Loop 323 in Tyler, go southeast on University Blvd. (Spur 248). Take a right turn on F.M. 848

(Bascom Road). Go 0.2 miles and turn right at The Nature Center gate. Please park in designated areas in the main parking area and walk to the pond

using the concrete trail near the kiosk.

A complete list of trout stocking dates and locations is available at [www.tpwd.texas.gov/troutstocking](http://www.tpwd.texas.gov/troutstocking)



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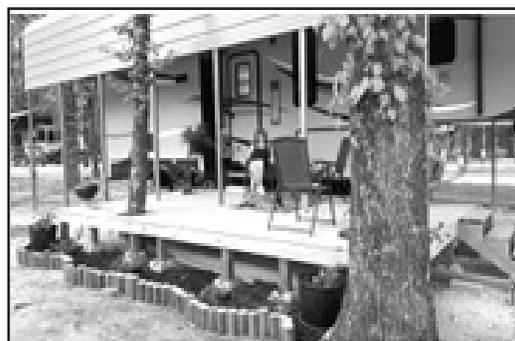
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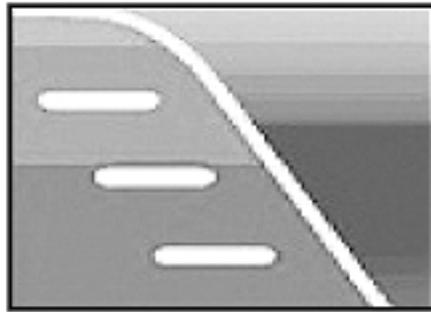
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# "Knowing What To Look For!"

By Mike McFarland

Well first of all I hope you all had a Merry Christmas and I wish you all a Happy New Year. With January upon us and cold water temperatures bass fishing can be considered slow going. In order to find better and more frequent success here are a few very

important factors to keep in mind when winter bass fishing on Lake Fork or anywhere for that matter. The first is to pay very close to warm trending weather patterns. When we have a night time low temperature that's above the current water temperatures the lake will retain some of the daily warming trend. Two

nights in a row of warming trend and bingo the shallow expansive flats, especially ones with vegetation warm up tremendously and the fish in those areas become active. By studying the navionics mapping on my Lowrance unit and premarking these potential shallow areas through the lake I can check and

fish them only when we have had a good warming trend. I use the Lowrance temperature bar graph to find the warm trending water in those specific areas and hone in much faster to the sweet spots. Once I find a good warming area I will use rattle traps, squarebills, chatterbaits, jerkbaits and glide baits to get the job done. These warming trends are obviously an afternoon deal but here's an early morning tip, look for the areas with fog.

When there has been no warming trend and things are very cold I will stick with the bridges, pylons and any mass of sun exposed concrete or rock I can find. The mass amount of concrete absorbs the daily heat from the sun and can really warm up the water in these areas. Remember this is a daily and afternoon trend however it can get very good with 2 days or more of the night time warming trend we previously discussed.

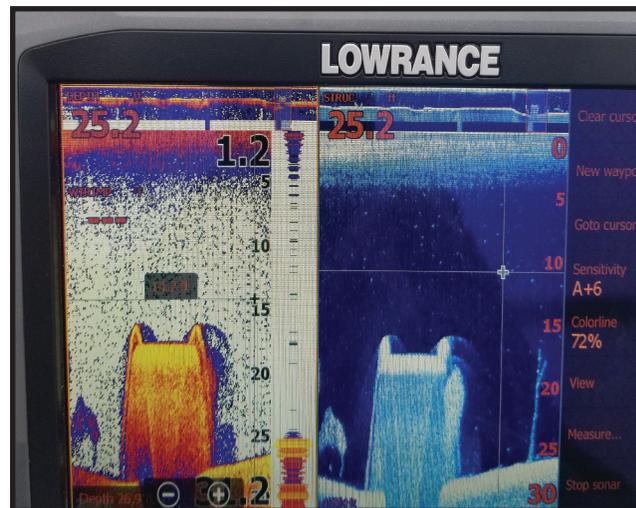
This image is of an under water bridge. You can find these old under water bridges next to and adjacent to most of the new active bridges. The bass and baitfish will use these areas as a winter home. I usually will fish these areas with an Alabama rig unless I'm fishing the shallow pylons in which then I will use suspending jerkbaits. My third and final winter presentation in the cold slow going water is a 1/2oz. Santone rattling jig (black/blue or black/brown/orange). I exclusively fish the tree stumps and roots in the creek bends but will make that be next months article. I hope this helps you all catch more fish and understand a little more about cold water bass fishing.



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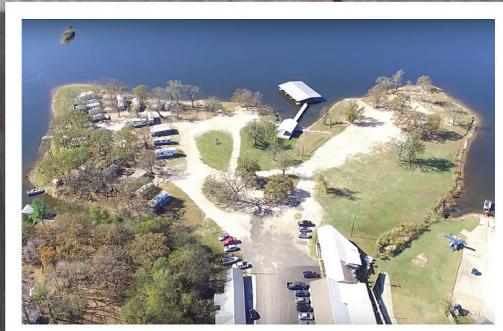
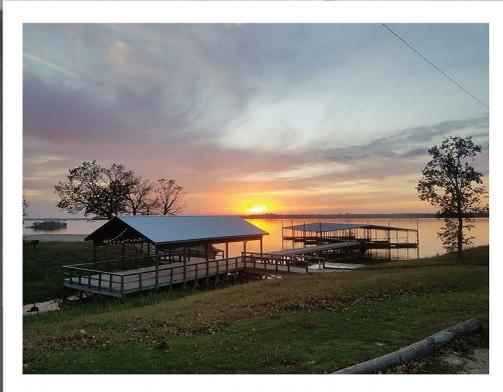
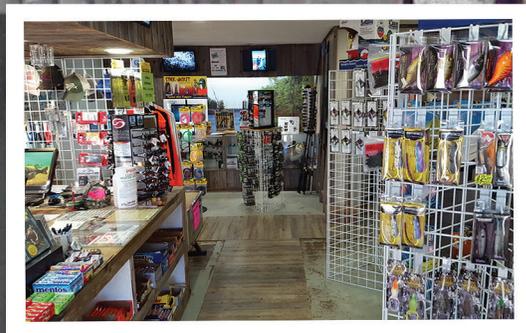
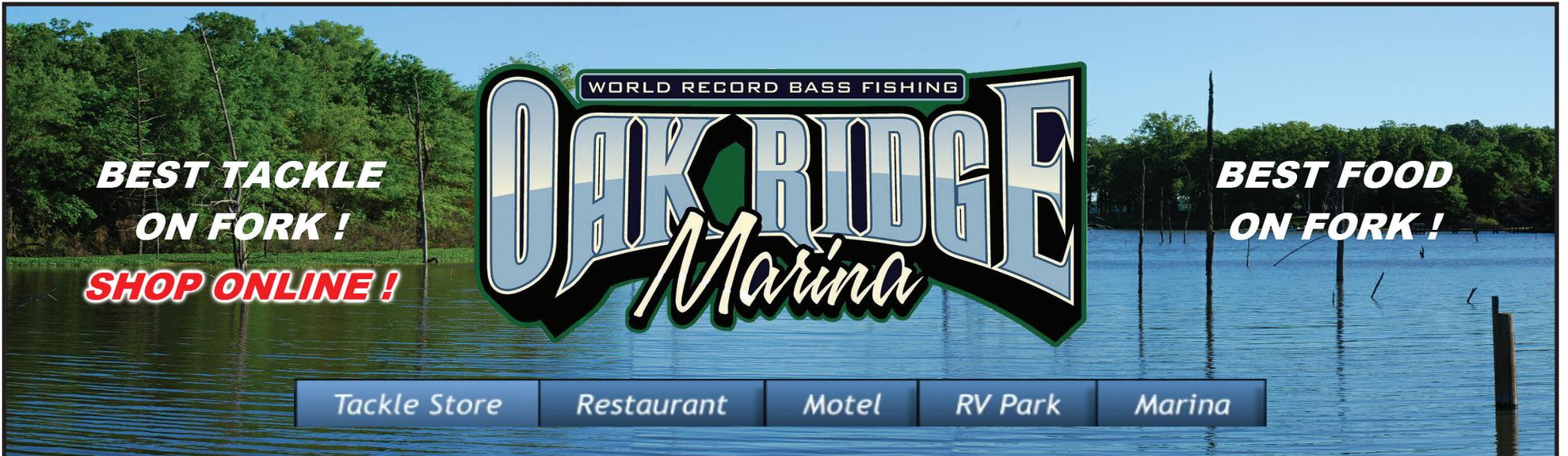


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## Battleship Texas to Re-Open Third Deck, Engine Room Jan. 5

Operation Full Steam Ahead, the final phase of repairs, cleaning and safety upgrades to the third deck of the Battleship Texas is scheduled to conclude Saturday, January 5. To commemorate the grand re-opening, the Battleship Texas State Historic Site will host a ribbon cutting and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department staff will be leading special tours of the newly opened areas. In

honor of the ship's 104th "berth" year, the first 104 people will be granted free admission.

For the first time in more than two years, visitors will be able to tour the ship's engine room, machine shop, brig, ammunition passageway and radio room, all of which have been closed for major structural repairs.

The program is set to begin at 8:45

a.m. Visitors can begin lining up at 7:30 a.m. to get their hand stamped and receive their ticket, a piece of salvaged steel from the ship, to board after the ribbon cutting ceremony. Regular ship admission will be charged once the first 104 visitors have boarded the ship.

Admission to the ship is \$12 for visitors ages 12 to 64; \$6 per person for visitors 65 and older; and \$3 for children 5-11 years of age. Active and retired military personnel (with valid ID), Texas State Parks Pass holders, and children 4 and younger are free. There is no charge to enter the San Jacinto Battleground park area adjacent to the ship.

The first round of critical structural repairs to the Battleship Texas began in 2013 when the support structure under the ship's Engine Room and areas of the stern were addressed. The project was completed in January 2015.

Later that year, the Texas Legislature allocated \$25 million for the second phase of structural repairs, which included the steering gear room, D-13 trimming tank, rear emergency diesel generator room, dynamo condenser room, and miscellaneous tanks, trunks and storerooms. This phase of repair work was completed in September 2018.

With both phases complete, majority of the most deteriorated structural elements of Battleship Texas behind the boiler rooms have been addressed. The only remaining critical structural repairs will be the framing beneath the boiler rooms. Permanent repairs to the hull can only be accomplished with the ship out of water in a permanent dry berth.

The Battleship Texas is operated by TPWD. It is permanently moored adjacent to the San Jacinto Battleground and Monument, 3523 Independence Parkway, in La Porte.

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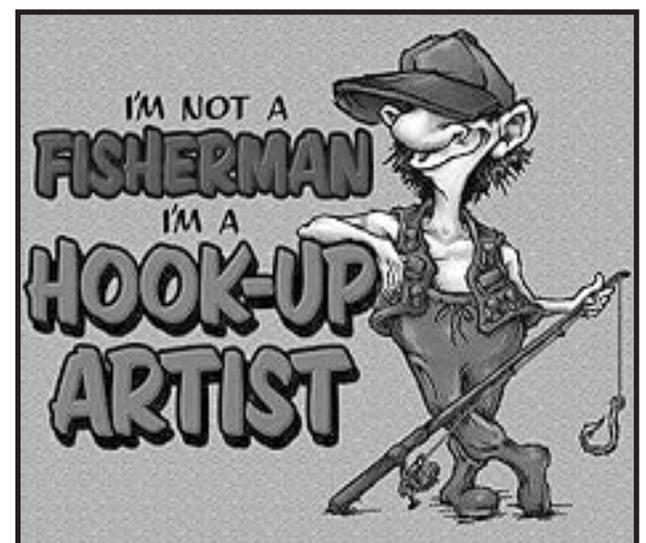


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## Texas Game Wardens Target Illegal Oystering with Operation Reef Safeguard I

Texas game wardens in Calhoun and Aransas counties recently led a multi-agency law enforcement surge operation targeting illegal commercial oyster harvest and possession along the coastal bend, netting more than 140 criminal cases. Many of the violations were for possession of undersized oysters that the state's prized reef ecosystem requires for sustainability and long-term health.

Operation Reef Safeguard I consisted of patrols by Texas game wardens between Dec. 10-14 in collaboration with law enforcement officers with the U.S. Border Patrol, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Coast Guard, Calhoun County Sherriff's Office and the Aransas County Sherriff's Office.

"Since 1895, Texas Game Wardens have proudly protected the state's oyster resources," said Col. Grahame Jones, Law Enforcement Director for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. "Texas game wardens consider the protection of our natural resources, including oysters and the reefs they create to be a priority. Texas game wardens take the protection of our oyster reefs very seriously and we will remain committed through increased patrols. Additionally, we will proactively enforce laws regarding oystering in polluted waters with a zero-tol-

erance approach and will arrest those who place consumers' health at serious risk."

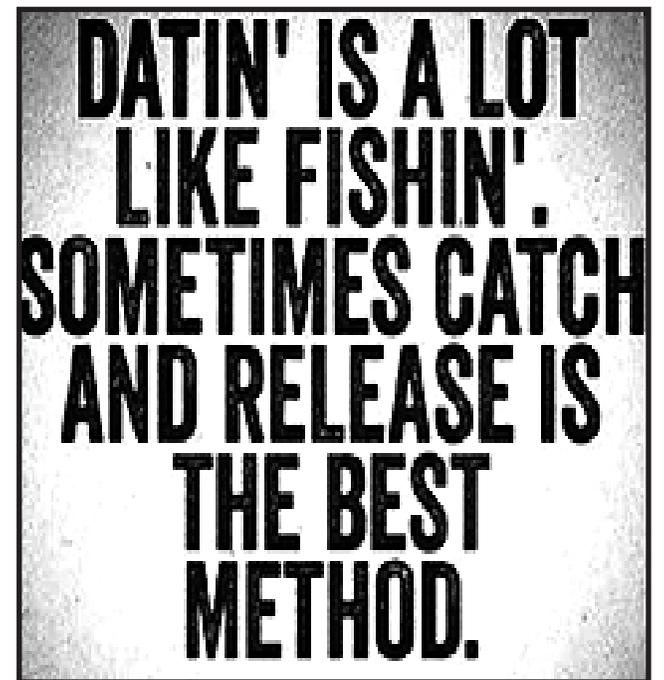
Thanks to additional laws created by the 85th Texas Legislature to help combat the harvest of undersized oysters through enhanced penalties, law enforcement officials are now able to hold all workers on oyster boats accountable for possession of undersized oysters. Previously, only the boat's captain was responsible for an illegal catch. New rules that took effect November 2017 reduce the allowable amount of undersized oyster taken from 15 percent to 5 percent and provided an enhanced penalty for the possession of undersized oyster to an arrestable offense. Some of the violators intercepted during the operation possessed cargos consisting of up to 35 percent undersized oysters.

"It is critically important to protect our oyster reefs from illegal harvesting of small oysters," said Robin Riechers, TPWD Coastal Fisheries Division Director. "Protecting harvest of small oysters ensures that our reefs stay productive and protects next year's marketable size oysters."

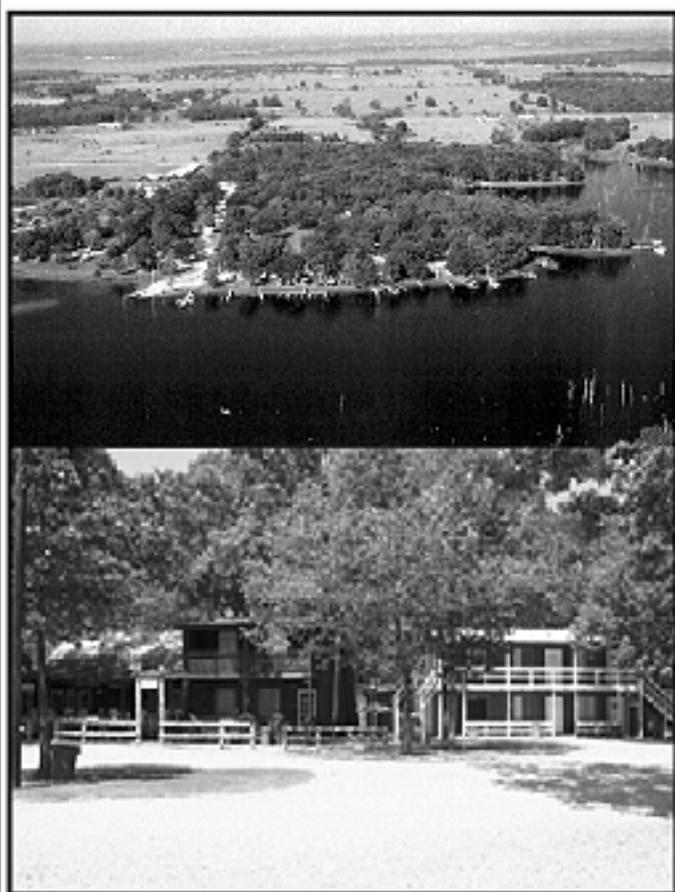
With the enhanced penalties for possessing undersized oysters, Operation Reef Guard produced three arrests for Possession of Undersize Oysters third or more offense, en-

hancing it to a Class B Misdemeanor. Game wardens also observed two oyster boats oystering in restricted waters, Class A misdemeanor violations resulting in five arrests.

In addition to the more than 140 criminal cases, game wardens issued numerous warnings. During the operation, officers also made arrests for multiple penal code violations. U.S. Coast Guard boarding officers identified over 25 violations related to vessel crew and safety requirements.

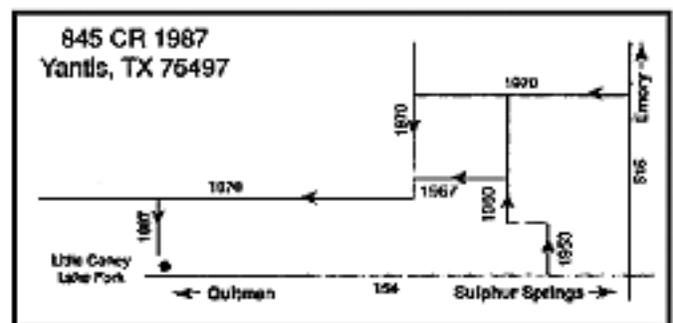


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## Rodney Franklin Named Texas State Parks Division Director

Rodney Franklin, a 27-year veteran of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, has been selected as the Texas State Parks Division Director.

Franklin, previously the Deputy Director of Texas State Parks, succeeds Brent Leisure who recently assumed the role as Interim Chief Operating Officer for TPWD after 8 years in the state parks director role.

"Rodney Franklin's career with the department is a long and distinguished one," said TPWD Executive Director Carter Smith. "He cut his teeth on the operations of state parks at an early age and has demonstrated an exceptional ability to lead teams and carry out the mission of our nearly 100-year-old state park system. I have complete confidence in Rodney to lead the teams that steward Texas' 95 state parks, which represent some of the state's most iconic landscapes and preserve our rich history."

As director of Texas State Parks, Franklin will oversee a workforce of about 1,350 employees who proudly protect and manage the more than 630,000 acres that comprise the state parks system in

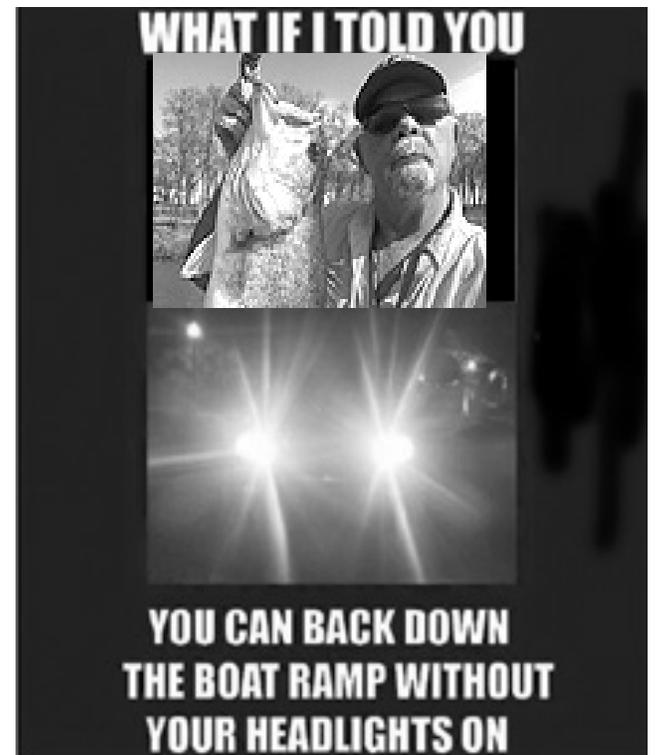
Texas. State parks represent the principle gateway to the outdoors where nearly 10 million visitors discover adventures in hiking, camping, fishing and countless other outdoor pursuits every year.

"I am extremely honored to have been selected to lead our state parks team," said Franklin. "As we approach the Centennial of Texas State Parks, I am truly excited about the opportunities that lie ahead. I consider it a privilege to work alongside an outstanding TPWD leadership team, as well as all the conservation professionals throughout the agency and the state parks division."

Franklin grew up in the small northeast Texas town of Powderly. It's here that he first discovered a strong interest in conservation and public service as a seasonal employee at the Sam Bell Maxey State Historic Site in nearby Paris, Texas.

Through his tenure at TPWD, Franklin has effectively led teams at state parks such as Lake Bob Sandlin and Cooper Lake, as Regional State Parks Director for north, north-central, and Panhandle state parks, and most recently, as the Deputy Director of Texas State Parks.

"I have spent a number of years working with friends, colleagues, partners and organizations dedicated to caring for the special pieces of Texas represented in our park system," said Franklin. "I look forward to continuing this important work as the Texas State Parks Division Director."



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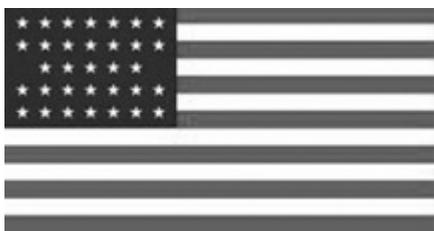
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By Don Hampton

For anglers wishing to learn or improve their bass fishing methods and those who do not own a boat, here is some good news you may want to hear. Texas Trails Bassmasters of Lake Fork at their annual meeting in December voted to open membership to non-boaters. This means if you join as a non-boater you will be fishing in a different member's boat each tournament. This will give you experience in different techniques

## The Texas Trails Bassmasters

and learn the different lakes the club fishes. This club is a highly motivated progressive bass fishing club with ties to the Wish to Fish Foundation and weight masters for the Wood County Annual Kid Fish. If you are thinking of joining a bass club, you can't go wrong with Texas Trails Bassmasters of Lake Fork. Dues to join the club are regularly \$30 per year. Now is the time to join. They are starting their new year off and offering half price of \$15 for annual membership fee. Cost for each tournament is \$25 with a \$5 Big Bass Option. There is also a progressive side pot

that an optional \$5 for the first 7-pound or over bass. Non-boaters are require to pay the boater \$20 for boat expenses. If you wish to join now our next tournament is January 19th on Lake Bob Sandlin and you can join at the ramp that morning before 6 a.m. For more information on joining this great club give Rodney Ellis, president a call at 903-714-6473 or me, Don Hampton, VP/Tournament Director at 903-360-6994. Fishing is going to be great! Come out and fish with us! Who knows you could catch a Share-Lunker for the season and finish in the tournament a big winner!

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## "Cold Water Bass Habits!"

By Andrew Grills

When folks think about January, fishing isn't the first thing that comes to mind. There are a few of us however, that recognize the potential for big fish during this cold month. That's why I think it would be a good idea to discuss the cold water habits of bass that I have learned over the years.

When I was learning to fish Lake Fork before I began guiding, I had spent most of my time fishing during the winter months. I worked on construction crew and we did a lot of work in the northern part of the country where it just wasn't possible to work in the winter. Therefore, I had a few months

a year, during the winter to spend time on the lake.

I was never intimidated by cold water. I hear folks talk about slowing down when the water temperature drops to the mid 50's. However, I have had phenomenal days using moving presentations when the water was in the low 40's!

The main thing to keep in mind concerning winter fishing, is that the smaller bass don't have the need to feed very much. They're metabolism is running so slow due to their cold blooded nature that they don't feel very hungry. The bigger female bass however, have developing egg sacks that need protein to grow. Also, bigger bass have to eat more often in winter to keep up their body weight.

Bass fishing in the winter on Lake Fork is all about big bass, not numbers. While you can have some nice days where you catch quite a few, a bite an hour is about what I expect on an average day. The key is those bites will generally be quality bites.

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

They like deeper water close by as well. I believe this gives big bass a feeling of safety. Always having an escape route and having some more

comfortable water in case of severe cold snap is important. The term "deeper water" is relative. In some of the creeks on the upper end of a reservoir that could mean 6' deep. On other areas of the lake it might mean 25'. It just depends on the area and how deep the water gets in the vicinity.

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

When searching for fish in creek channels and ditches, look for the areas that still have definition. Sometimes the creeks will silt in over time. Not all are equal. Also, keep an eye out for sharp "horseshoe" bends in the creek. A bend will almost always mean there is a deeper, steeper, more washed out part of the channel. This will be on the outside of the bends. Later in winter, when the fish really start to get into a true prespawn pattern, they will relate to flats big time. However, there are usually still drains and ditches that will hold the biggest fish in the area.

Hopefully you found something helpful here concerning winter bass habits. It's my favorite time of year to fish, and it just might become yours.



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## South Texas College to partner with TPWD for Target Range Program Grant

South Texas College (STC) is partnering with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) to construct an indoor target range at the College's new Regional Center for Public Safety Excellence in Pharr, TX. During a press conference held at the Texas State Capitol, South Texas College was awarded \$307,219 for the planning phase of a 13,300 square foot indoor 12-lane target range through TPWD's Target Range Grant Program. Upon completion of the planning phase and environmental compliance grant requirements, South Texas College is eligible to receive a grant for the construction of the range in the amount of \$2,447,382, totaling to \$2,754,601 in grant funds. This grant funding is provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, supported by sportsmen's dollars derived from the sale of hunting licenses and by federal excise taxes on sporting arms and ammunition as authorized by the Pittman-Robertson Act. South Texas College also plans to contribute \$1,280,775 toward this project. The total combined funds for this project amount to \$4,035,376. The target range will be open to the public for firearms safety training, practice shooting, and skills development. In addition to the target range, the College will also provide educational opportunities, including face-to-face Hunter Education courses approved by TPWD and led by certified Texas Hunter Education instructors. TPWD's Target Range Grant Program Co-

ordinator Renan Zambrano explains why the Target Range Program is important. "The goal of the program is to create public access for recreational shooting opportunities and to enhance educational resources by promoting firearm and hunting safety," said Zambrano. "We accomplish this by partnering on target range stewardship projects with non-profit, private, and civic organizations with common objectives for providing safe, responsible and ethical firearm education and target range facilities for the general welfare of the community. We believe this project in particular is uniquely suited to serve the needs across several Rio Grande Valley communities." The College's Law Enforcement Academy and the College Department of Public Safety will also benefit from access to this state-of-the-art target range facility. South Texas College's Regional Center for Public Safety Excellence center is dedicated to all local, state, and federal law enforcement, public safety, and fire science professionals. South Texas College Chairman of the Board of Trustees Paul Rodriguez says this unique collaboration will benefit the region. "Our board of trustees is pleased to pursue the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's Target Range Program as it aligns extremely well with the type of training and educational programs we envisioned for our Regional Center for Public Safety Excellence," said Rodriguez. "The prospect of having this type of facility for the general public as

well as law enforcement agencies is ideal." The college will be seeking additional funds to expand the target range to the law enforcement community in the future; STC President, Dr. Shirley A. Reed, says access to the covered target range will assist law enforcement professionals in receiving first-rate firearm training. "South Texas College is excited to partner with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. This target range will not only provide hunter education and general public education opportunities, but will also lay the groundwork for an expanded facility to provide state-of-the-art firearms training and qualification opportunities for our many law enforcement and public safety partners." Texas Sen. Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa, D-McAllen stated the significance of the Target Range Grant Program during the press conference in Austin. "I appreciate Texas Parks and Wildlife for working with our local, state, and federal partners to make this investment possible. This grant would not have been awarded without the dedication, cooperation, and commitment from all those involved," said Hinojosa. "The educational and training opportunities provided for the public and law enforcement will further enhance the public safety of our region." The estimated completion date for the target range is February 2021.



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**"Baby It's Cold Outside"**

*(Continued from Page 6-A)*

sluggish bass. Vegetation is the attraction for these bass and I would throw a rattlettrap or chatterbait to draw a strike. Depending upon the water temp, a suspending jerkbait would be the ticket if the temps are lagging into the mid 40's. Red colors are the main choice for the moving baits and I would have a chrome version tied on as a back up. Gold has worked well on partly cloudy days and I always keep one handy on whatever lure I present. Don't be afraid to hurl them into the thick grass and rip it out as bass will hit it once it clears

the outer edge. Experiment to see where the green fish might be positioned. Make some casts out to the deep edge of the grass and slow roll the bait back to the boat. You might be surprised at the results.

January is also a great month to catch numbers on the power plant lakes. If cabin fever has set in, give me a call and we can wear them out where the water temps are summer like. If you are headed out to Lake Fork in January 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 USA and Talon Fishing Unlimited 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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# Texas Trails Bassmasters of Lake Fork



By Kenny LaDuke

Lake Welsh was the site of the Texas Trails Bassmasters 2nd tournament of the 2018-2019 season.

The month of December has arrived and while the wife and kids are getting ready for Christmas that means one thing for the anglers in East Texas. FISHING POWER PLANTLAKES!

Warming water and cold air temperatures brings the anglers to Lake Welsh to get an early start on the spring like conditions catching numerous amounts of fish, but the key was to catch those fish that measured 18" and above. A few anglers were able to figure out the highly pressured lake and bring in some nice bags of fish.

Chris Large with a nice 5 fish limit that weighed 20.73lbs. for 1st place. Leon Davis brought in 4 fish for 2nd place with 13.54 lbs. Don Hampton had 2 fish weighing 7.04 lbs. for 3rd place. Chris Large also had big fish of the day weighing 4.59 lbs.

The club welcomes new member - Jeremy Thomp-

son.

Texas Trails Bassmasters is a club around Lake Fork, Texas. and they fish surrounding lakes with one tournament a month (mostly on Sat.) and a two day club championship. If you are an angler that

is looking for a great group of fellow outdoorsmen, then please feel free to contact me, Kenny LaDuke, or Don Hampton and join our club. We have had several new members join this year and you could be part of the fun

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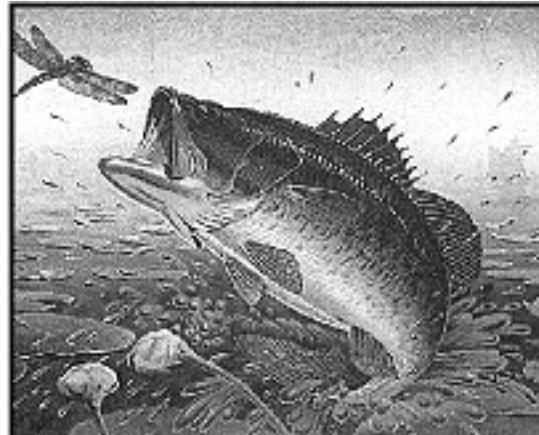
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## Science Search

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

- |          |          |
|----------|----------|
| ACID     | MATTER   |
| ATOM     | MOLECULE |
| ELECTRON | NEUTRON  |
| ELEMENT  | NUCLEUS  |
| ENERGY   | OXYGEN   |
| GAS      | PROTON   |
| HYDROGEN | REACTION |

T A M A G S U E L C U N  
 N O T O R P L U C E L O  
 U X O X N O I T C A E R  
 K Y G Y N R D U L C R T  
 L G E P R A T M O I N U  
 I E L E M E N T S D M E  
 O N E R N C E L E M I N  
 S U C O E T R C A H T E  
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 A C R A O N Y L E D E T  
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 O U X O Y G R E N E R P  
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COLUMBIA, S.C. (December 10, 2018)

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At each sanctioned tournament, the top two finishers among all Berkley Cast for Cash members will be rewarded with cash prizes ranging

from \$100 to \$2,000 with no limit as to how many times one can win.

"We recognize the passion for tournament bass fishing and want to do our part to reward anglers that trust in Berkley baits to help them catch more fish," said Jon Schlosser, Berkley VP of Marketing. "We think this is an innovative and exciting program that will continue to grow in the future."

Partner tournament trails include ABA, Bass Champs, BASSMASTER, Best Bass, Fishers of Men, and FLW. A full list of sanctioned tournaments within these trails can be found on the Berkley website.

For more information on the Berkley Cast for Cash bait contingency program, and to become a member, visit [www.berkley-fishing.com/CastforCash](http://www.berkley-fishing.com/CastforCash). About Pure Fishing, Inc. Pure Fishing, Inc. is a leading global provider of fishing tackle, lures, rods and reels with a portfolio of brands that includes Abu Garcia, All Star, Berkley, Chub, Fenwick, Gulp!, Hardy & Greys, Hodgman, Johnson, Mitchell, PENN, Pflueger, Sébile, Shakespeare, SpiderWire, Stren, Trilene and Ugly Stik. Pure Fishing, Inc. operates in 22 countries with a dedicated workforce conversant in 28 languages.

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

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I hereby enter the above "Legend of Lake Fork Tournament". I have read and understand the rules and waive and release all other Contestants, Tournament Directors, Tournament Sponsors, and their agents from all claims of personal injuries, accidents and/or damaged, lost or stolen property incurred in connection with the tournament. I understand that \$5 of my entry is a voluntary contribution to the "Wish To Fish Program". I hereby grant permission to the tournament and all tournament officials the right to publicize, video tape, photograph and/or broadcast my name, character likeness or voice and the fact that I was a participant and/or prize winner, and all other matters incidental thereto. If I place for any prize, I will submit to a polygraph examination or be disqualified and will abide with such results. Contestant Ratifies and approves entry in the above "Legend of Lake Fork Tournament" made on his/her behalf by another and agrees thereby to be bound by all rules of the tournament.

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

**Entry Form Must Be Signed To Be Valid**

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