

# LAKE FORK "The Big Bass Capital Of Texas"



## "The Fisherman's Guide, News You Can Use"

1 Section

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### Winnsboro High School Anglers Win THSBA

Winnsboro High School anglers Porter South and Samuel Cotton won the 2026 Texas High School Bass Association (THSBA) State Championship at Lake Texoma. South and Cotton brought in 42.18 pounds of bass over the two-day Lake Texoma event, which was over 10 pounds more than what the next best angler team reeled in. With the hefty win, South and Cotton will split an \$11,000 scholarship and will each get free Lew's ProTi Reels, state championship rings, large angler trophies, captains' trophies and \$125 gift cards.

Porter thanked everyone who helped them make it this far this year, including their boat captain, his brother Bassmaster pro-angler Pake South, who won this year's Bassmaster Open at the Sam Rayburn reservoir. "I want to thank my dad, my mom, my boat captain for this tournament was my brother Pake, thank God for al-

lowing all this to happen, allowing us to get here, I just thank everyone who allowed us to get here," Porter said on Sunday.

With this win, Porter officially entered THSBA history books as the first-ever angler to win two THSBA State Championships in their career. He won his first THSBA State Championship in 2024 with Leon Ackerman at Lake Palestine.



Daniel Helsley from McKinney, TX won heaviest over the slot in the 32nd Annual Skeeter Owner's Tournament on Lake Fork with his catch of this 11.53-pound bass.

### 32nd Annual Skeeter Owner's Tournament

By Don Hampton

The 32nd Annual Skeeter Owners Tournament held on Lake Fork June 6th and 7th had the Skeeters buzzing on the lake.

Luckily the Texas

weather held out and there wasn't a torrential storm hit like in last year's tournament but the high winds and white caps were something to deal with.

Over 1,600 anglers

representing 22 states brought their Skeeter boats to compete for the cash and prizes to be given away. With 10 places paid each hour of the

(See 32nd Annual ...

Continued on Page 10)



Cody Powers from Kemp, TX caught this personal best fishing Lake Fork with his grandfather Bob Laskey. C.P.R.

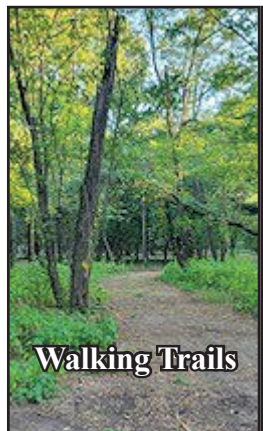


Bob Laskey caught this nice slot bass while fishing Lake Fork with his grandson Cody Powers. C.P.R.

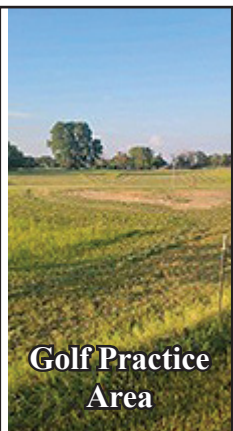
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## "Goodness Snakes Alive!"

By: Don Hampton

When it comes right down to it Bubba is not the bravest man in the world, especially when it comes to snakes. Believing in the Bible and "The Good Lord" like he does he believes that those belly crawling, scaly, forked tongue critters are just evil. When it comes to a snake crossing Bubba's path, he would much rather choose a different direction or else go back the way he came at a very rapid pace. Bubba has probably choked more snakes with trail dust than he has killed with his shotgun. He hates snakes so much he has even passed up some of his favorite fishing holes because a snake was there and it takes a lot for him to do something like that.

Now that you have an idea how Bubba feels about snakes, you can multiply that by ten and come up with how afraid Bubbette is of snakes. She won't even watch a television show where snakes are involved. She sees one in a movie and she is grabbing for the remote control faster than Bubba could run away from one.

Men are funny creatures though, and Bubba will be the first to laugh at himself. When women are present, men are always brave. For one reason or another, a man can mask his fear with so much macho bravado that women think of them as their sole protector. Such was the recent case of the snake on the flagpole.

Bubba had just left for work and hadn't gone more than five miles

from the house when his mobile phone rang. Bubbette was on the other end of the line in a panic. He couldn't understand a word she was saying in the first part of the conversation so he pulled his truck over to try and calm her down before proceeding any further down the road. He knew Bubbette was going to mow the yard while he was gone and the only thing he could figure out was that something was wrong with the riding lawn mower or else the house was on fire. It turned out to be neither.

When Bubba calmed Bubbette down enough so she could speak... all she could say was, "Snake, flag pole, snake, big snake, flag pole!!!" Bubba knowing her like he does ciphered this out real well. He knew

it was time for him to put on his macho brave hat and come to her rescue. Another thing that makes Bubba get brave when coming to Bubbette's rescue is he knows she will reward him with her delicious buttermilk battered fried chicken. Bubba will get real brave for some fried chicken.

Bubba got his courage up and told Bubbette he was coming back and would be right there to take care of the situation. He was not prepared for the sight he saw when he drove into his yard. All his fears of snakes were pushed aside by the comical scene he

was greeted with.

There was Bubbette standing on the seat of the lawnmower with his 410 shotgun in one hand and a hoe in the other. Bubba was smart enough on this occasion not to laugh.

When Bubba asked where the snake was, Bubbette would point first with the hoe and then with the shotgun. Bubba was pretty quick to relieve her of the shotgun and in all of his bravado thinking how those belly crawling, scaly, forked tongue critters are just evil, tracked the snake down and shot it. I guess he probably shot it about twelve to fifteen times. Bubba likes to do things

right and this way he figures he rid the world of a little evil.

Bubba walked back to Bubbette looking like the conquering hero returning from war with his gun on his shoulder. He probably would have been greeted as such if he hadn't said, "There ya go sug'dumplin... all taken care of! Oh yeah, what's for supper tonight and when you go to Wally World to pick up some chicken, will you get me some more shotgun shells?"

Well, she got him the shotgun shells in case any more snakes showed up, but I think he had bologna sandwiches that night!!

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## TPWD Graduates 68th Texas Game Warden and State Park Police Cadet Class

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) graduated its 68th Texas Game Warden and Texas State Park Police cadet class recently during a ceremony at the Texas State Capitol.

The class included 24 new Texas Game Wardens and four Texas State Park Police officers who completed eight months of intensive training at the Texas Game Warden Training Center in Hamilton County before earning their commissions as Texas peace officers.

As fully commissioned peace officers, Texas Game Wardens and Texas State Park Police officers enforce all Texas criminal laws and are responsible for enforcing the Penal Code, Transportation Code and Health and Safety Code much like other law enforcement agencies across the state. They also respond to emergencies, assist local, state and federal law enforcement partners and help educate the public on conservation and public safety issues.

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott delivered the ceremony's keynote address.

"You are now guardians of places that cannot speak for themselves," said Governor Abbott. "You carry a badge, but more than that, you carry a standard of courage, integrity, and selfless service. You are more than wildlife officers; you are law enforcement officers, border defenders, rescue responders, and Texas' all-weather, all-terrain, all-mission force to protect our great state. Texas is counting on you to protect what makes this state worth loving, and I know with absolute confidence that you will achieve that."

Texas Game Wardens are the primary law enforcement officers responsible for enforcing hunting, fishing and water safety laws and play a critical role in conserving the state's natural resources.

"Our new game wardens are joining a profession rooted in service, conservation and public

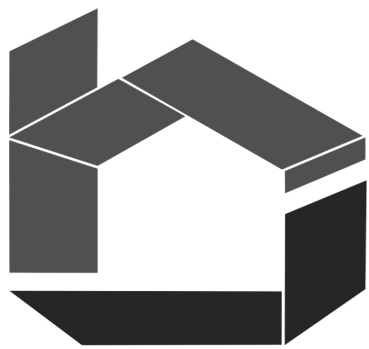
safety," said Col. Ron VanderRoest, TPWD law enforcement director. "They are stepping into careers that will take them into communities, on waterways and into remote areas across Texas where they will protect natural resources, assist people in times of crisis and uphold the laws of this state. We are proud to welcome them into the Texas Game Warden family."

Texas State Park Police officers provide law enforcement services within Texas State Parks and support public safety efforts in surrounding communities.

"Our new park police officers are joining a proud tradition of service within the Texas State Parks system," said Chief Wes Masur, TPWD State Park Police. "They will help provide a safe and enjoyable experience for the millions of visitors who explore our state parks each year while also supporting public safety efforts in surrounding

*(Continued on Next Page)*

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communities. We are excited to see the impact they will make."

All graduating cadets successfully completed the state-mandated requirements for peace officer certification, including criminal and constitutional law, firearms, self-defense, use of force, boat operations, arrest, search and seizure, ethics, first aid and emergency response.

The new officers will soon begin assignments in counties and state parks across Texas, joining more than 500 commissioned game wardens and about 150 state park police officers already serving statewide.

These are the new game wardens and state park police officers, and the counties or parks where they will be stationed:

**Texas Game Wardens**

- \* Bryson Ballard – Runnels County
- \* Justin Christoph – Polk County
- \* Brady Crump – Polk County
- \* Brenna Downey – Galveston County
- \* Kylan Edwards – Andrews and Gaines Counties
- \* Erick Hall – Webb County
- \* Dawson Hervey – Jefferson County
- \* Jesse Hoke – McMullen County
- \* Ethan Janecka – Val Verde County
- \* Evan Joseph – Reeves County
- \* Dylan Koch – Chambers County
- \* Gavin Martinez – Zapata County
- \* Rachel McMurray – Duval County
- \* Nohely Mejia – Maverick County
- \* Michael Muniz – Denton County
- \* Aaron Petta – Tarrant County

- \* Janson Robeson – Harris County
  - \* Julia Ryza – Harris County
  - \* Miguel Salvo – Matagorda County
  - \* Shelby Summerville – Zapata County
  - \* Robert Tarbet – Terrell County
  - \* Austin Thompson – El Paso and Hudspeth Counties
  - \* Daniel Walton – Carson and Hutchinson Counties
  - \* Ty Washington – Midland, Crane and Ector Counties
- Texas State Park Police Officers**
- \* Bryson Catlett – Garner State Park
  - \* Millton Correia – Garner State Park
  - \* Mitchell Glover – Lake Corpus Christi State Park
  - \* Sarah-Hope Parohl – Enchanted Rock State Natural Area

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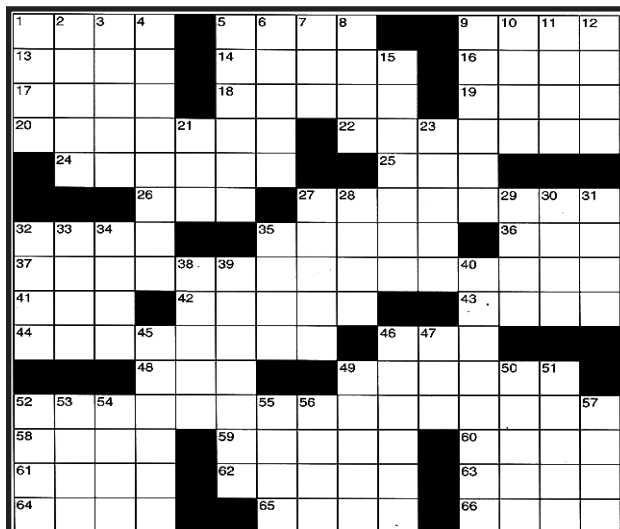
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## "The Drop Shot Rig"

By Whitt Smith

The drop shot rig works year-round, but can excel or save the day in the hot temperatures in the month of July. The biggest Drop Shot Bass a client has landed in my boat on Lake Fork was a huge Over the Slot Bass in the heat of July!



### CLUES ACROSS

- |   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Commoner                                   | 41. Retirement fund (abbr.)           |
| 5. Beverage made of fermented honey and water | 42. _____ Lansky, U.S. gangster       |
| 9. Weapon                                     | 43. Poverty                           |
| 13. Jeer                                      | 44. Auroras                           |
| 14. Give out                                  | 46. London radio station (abbr.)      |
| 16. Impressive in size or scope               | 48. Sunup in New York (abbr.)         |
| 17. Blue dye obtained from plants             | 49. Abnormal absorption with the self |
| 18. Withdraw from drugs                       | 52. "The Howdy Doody Show" character  |
| 19. Sans serif                                | 58. Swiss river                       |
| 20. Loosen grip                               | 59. Renaissance card game             |
| 22. Mended shoes                              | 60. Private school in New York        |
| 24. Vogues                                    | 61. Scum                              |
| 25. _____ de cologne                          | 62. Hedge                             |
| 26. Craze                                     | 63. Potential unit                    |
| 27. Immigrants                                | 64. Sound unit                        |
| 32. City in southern Japan                    | 65. Copied                            |
| 35. French region                             | 66. Epic                              |
| 36. Bravo                                     |                                       |
| 37. De Saint-Exupery story                    |                                       |

### CLUES DOWN

- |   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Small sailboat                         | 32. Elevator man                      |
| 2. Scottish waterfalls                    | 33. Beginning to end (informal)       |
| 3. Command                                | 34. _____ Connery, 007                |
| 4. Overabundance                          | 35. Infection of the eyelid           |
| 5. Brought together into a group or crowd | 38. Compound derived from ammonia     |
| 6. Fish genus                             | 39. With a good will                  |
| 7. Vestment worn by priests               | 40. Penetrating and sharp             |
| 8. Actor                                  | 45. Change mind, in a way             |
| 9. Way to dishonor                        | 46. Swollen, in a way                 |
| 10. Opaque gem                            | 47. British thermal unit (abbr.)      |
| 11. Parasites                             | 49. Person's legal place of residence |
| 12. Breezed through                       | 50. Crouch                            |
| 15. Upper vegetation                      | 51. _____ Park, California city       |
| 21. Flower petal                          | 52. Skip                              |
| 23. Sylvan deity                          | 53. Saint's aura                      |
| 27. Tent events                           | 54. Oil-producing nation              |
| 28. At all times                          | 55. Yugoslavian river                 |
| 29. Sea eagle                             | 56. Catch                             |
| 30. Contest of speed                      | 57. Scabs                             |
| 31. Cast off skin                         |                                       |

Answers on Page 21

The drop shot rig is one of the absolute best finesse presentations for bass, especially when the bite gets tough or fish are holding tight to deep structure.

Unlike a Texas rig, where the weight sits in front of the bait, a drop shot suspends the bait over the weight. This lets your plastic float naturally in the water column, while the weight rests on the bottom.

A main line of 10 to 15 lb braided line tied to a 12-15 lb (for Lake Fork) fluorocarbon leader is the standard setup. Depending on cover and fish you're targeting, you can increase the line size, appropriately. Fluorocarbon is critical here because it sinks, is virtually invisible to pressured fish, and offers excellent abrasion resistance.

Spinning Gear is usually used for this technique, but some prefer Casting Gear or if heavier line is preferred.

A 2/0- 3/0 Owner Cover Shot drop shot hook



for 4-6 or 7" straight-tail worms and 3/0, 4/0 or 5/0 size hook for soft Jerkbait. A 1/4 OZ weight is probably the most commonly used here, but vary weight to depth and structure you are fishing. Having enough weight to maintain contact with the bottom or cover is crucial.

The magic of the drop shot rig lies in the fact that the hook sits perfectly horizontal (point up)

on the line. In order to achieve this, tie a Palomar Knot, starting on the hook point side of the hook eye. Before starting, be sure to allow plenty of extra line for a 12-24" line below the knot. After completing the knot, pass the tag end of the line back through the eye of the hook on the point side, again, and pull it tight. This should allow the hook to stand straight out with the hook point on top. Then you attach a round or cylinder drop shot weight, either by wedging the tag end of the line in the weight.

Cast it out to your tar-

(See The Drop Shot Rig..  
Continued on Page 21)

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## Lake Fork's Annual Kidfish Hosted by Wood County Sheriffs, Garme Warden Association and SRA

By Don Hampton

The Wood County 31st Annual Kidfish was held on Lake Fork on June 6th. This annual celebration is held each year on the first Saturday of June to introduce the youth to the pleasure of fishing.

It is presented by the Wood County Sheriff's Department, Texas Game Warden Peace Officer Association, Texas Parks and Wildlife and the Sabine River Authority Headquarters. All are to be commended for their diligent hard work and the many hours they put in to make this event such a success for our children.

This year only 120 youth accompanied by parents, grandparents, or guardians from all over the area came to enjoy a day of fishing Lake Fork. Bad weather is the fault of keeping many children from attending. For many of the children this would be considered their first tournament of many more to come in their lifetime. The love of fishing for these children could be

accredited to Kidfish.

During this event no one participating is required to have a fishing license. This gives parents that do not usually fish an opportunity to spend this time with their children and perhaps introduce the love of fishing to the whole family.

The event is free to all children and their parents. Each child is given a commemorative T-shirt, their own rod n' reel, and bait and tackle are furnished. Cold drinks, refreshments, hot dogs, and chips are provided for the parents and children. This year serving the parents and children were the many volunteers that give their time for the event.

The format of this event is a mock tournament and divided in age group divisions. These divisions include 4 years old and younger, 5- to 8-year-old, 9- to 12-year-old, and 13- to 16-year-old. Each child weighing in the heaviest fish of that species in their age group wins a trophy presented by Wood County Sheriff Kelly Cole

and a year's worth of bragging rights. The categories of species is bass, crappie, perch, catfish, and other. In the other category there were a great number of turtles and drum weighed this year. In past years there has been a drawing at the close for children to win a bicycle, because of the lack of funding this wasn't possible this year.

Texas Trails Bassmasters of Lake Fork did an excellent job of weighing in all the fish and of course the turtles. This was my 28th year to be the weight master over the event. I am very proud of this fact. I now see parents bringing their children to the event that I weighed their fish, in my first years of the event.

Due to storms moving into the area the tournament was called and ended at 10:30 for safety reasons.

A very special thanks goes out to all of the great sponsors that make this event possible. After all, our children are the future.

Photos of the event can be viewed on Page 16.



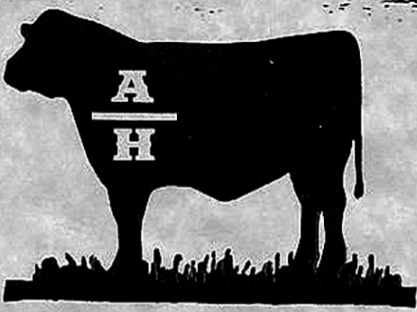
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## "The Moon Report"

### "Crappie Summer Pattern"

By Terri Moon

It's that time again - 90 to 100 degree days have sent the crappie transitioning to their summertime patterns. Early in the day we are finding them 8-15 ft. down in 16-25 ft. of water. As the day heats up, we are targeting 12-18 ft. of water. We are checking tree lines and scattered timber along with brush piles, ledges and bridges. (In this heat I sure wish more of them would hang out at the bridges!) Right now a slow presentation is working best for us, and that can be tough in some of these winds we've had! But, when they are actively feeding, they will hit it on the fall - so, really watch your line because 9 times out of 10 your line will just go slack and if you don't see it, you've just missed a fish.

The baits working for us have been Skippers hand tied jigs 1/8 oz. in chartreuse, or black and chartreuse and Limits Tackle in pink w/white tail or blus/chartreuse. Then in poured baits we use Bonehead Slim-



stick or brush glider or stumbugs in white/chartreuse, or purple/chartreuse have been working. These are all available at Lake Fork Marina, along with your crappie fishing needs.

Now for all you bream fans, the next full moon is time to hit the shallows for these treasures! Right now they are staged back at 8-20 ft. around tree lines, brush piles or bridge ledges, and deeper docks. Crickets, nightcrawlers or meal worms work for these. If you don't want to fool with live bait, pick you up a jar of Berkley nightcrawlers or meal worms. I will usually use a slip bobber when they are in 1-4 ft. of water. But, when they back off deeper, I will tightline for them just working the bait slowly across the bottom in that 4-12 ft. of water. Be sure and hang on tight to your rod because this time of year you never know when a big bass or catfish is going to hit your line! It's ALL fun, and it doesn't get any better than that! Many thanks to all of you who found the time to bring their kids and grandkids fishing making memories they will remember for a lifetime! That's why I truly enjoy taking so many photos and videos of the day so the families will have them to look back on over the years.

Hey you all be safe out there - the holidays can be a little crazy! Blessings to you all! If you would like to book a trip with me, you can reach me at 903-335-0941. Visit my Facebook page.



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## 32nd Annual Skeeter Owner's Tournament *(Continued from Page 1)*

tournament and the possibility of taking home a new 2026 Skeeter boat to be given away, anglers were hoping to get a lot on the line.

The 2026 Skeeter boat was to be presented to the angler that caught the heaviest bass over the 24" slot and a second grand prize to the heaviest bass under the 16" slot.

Heavy bass under the slot weights ranged high. The lightest to win money in any hour was a 2.98-pound bass and most ranging near the 2.00-pound and higher range.

The heaviest bass under the slot to win the Yamaha Viking side by side was Monty Sewell from Taylor, Arizona with a bass weighing 2.98-pounds.

the tournament there were many bass over the slot brought to the scales.

The 32nd Annual Skeeter Owners Tournament delivered another memorable weekend on Lake Fork. Daniel Helsley of McKinney, Texas weighed in an 11.53-pound bass during the 2 p.m. hour on day one, a fish that ultimately earned him the Overall Biggest Over-the-Slot title and a brand-new 2026 Skeeter FXR 20 Apex Edition plus his hourly prize money.

All anglers are urged to read the rules in each tournament and check their boats to make sure they have all safety equipment when fishing in any tournament on Lake Fork or any other lake.

During the course of

Many of the anglers reported catching great bass during the course of the tournament but were disappointed they were in the 16 to 24 inch slot. Fear not due to the great work that was done by the Lake Fork Sportsmans Association with their live release boat and crew the bass on Lake Fork keep getting larger and heavier.

We will be seeing you on the lake and remember to be safe and above all else "Fish Friendly".

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## Seven Summer Safety Solutions to Protect You from the Texas Heat

A Texas June marked the beginning of increased temperatures and the risk of heat-related illness, so Texas State Parks presents seven tips to help park visitors beat the heat and enjoy the beauty that Texas offers.

In 2025, 169 heat-related incidents were reported across Texas's state parks and six of them involved pets.

Although we are approaching peak heat season, there are steps that reduce the risk of heat-related illness. Here are the top seven hacks:

**Hydrate** – For every hour you spend in the heat, drink 16 ounces of water. While participating in strenuous activities, such as hiking, increase your intake to 32 ounces, and don't forget about your four-legged friends.

**Wear SPF** – Apply sunscreen liberally and frequent-

ly. It's best practice to reapply every couple of hours and after swimming and sweating.

**Dress Smart** – Light, loose-fitting, breathable clothing; a hat and wet bandana keep you cool in the sun. For pets, cooler times of day prevent blistering on the paws and booties shield them from the hot ground. A quick test is to touch the ground with the back of your hand. If you cannot hold it for five seconds, the surface is too hot for your pets' paws.

**Stay Salty** – Food keeps energy up and replace salt lost while sweating. Snacks like jerky, granola, trail mix, tuna and dried fruit are great ways to nourish your body while on the trail.

**Bring a Buddy** – Two brains are better than one. Utilize the buddy system by having someone with you on the trail, allowing you to look after each other in

hot conditions.

**Plan Ahead** – Study the trail map beforehand and keep it close by, especially in areas with low service. Give yourself plenty of time to avoid hiking during the hottest parts of the day. Remember to rest in cool, shaded areas when necessary. Share your plan with someone and let them know when you should be back.

**Pup Safety** – Dogs feel the heat just as much as we do, so practice good habits for yourself and your pet. Bring enough water and snacks to ensure your furry friend is safe on the entire hiking trip. If you hold your hand to the ground and can't leave it there for more than a few seconds, you may need to rethink bringing your furry friend along or use dog booties to protect their paws.

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## TPWD Confirms Established Population of Invasive Zebra Mussels in Lake Meredith

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) has designated Lake Meredith, near Amarillo, as fully "infested" with invasive zebra mussels. This designation signifies that an established, reproducing population of these invasive mussels is present in the lake.

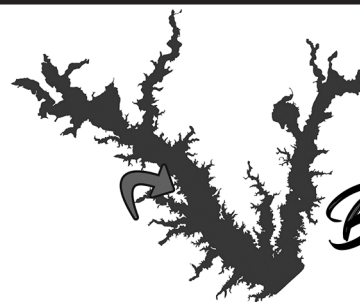
In late May, detection of potential microscopic zebra mussel larvae in routine samples from three locations in the lake was reported to TPWD by

partners with the U.S. Geological Survey Zebra Mussel Monitoring Program. The TPWD Analytical Services lab quickly confirmed these specimens as zebra mussels with genetic analysis. In addition, partners with the Canadian River Municipal Water Authority (CRM-WA) reported the detection of multiple settled zebra mussels on a camp chair retrieved from the lake by informed anglers. The anglers took ac-

tion and reported the invasive species to the National Park Service only days before the larvae were collected. These mussels were of multiple size classes, suggesting the mussels may have been reproducing in the lake the previous fall, as well as this spring.

The TPWD Amarillo Fisheries District staff rapidly conducted surveys of shoreline rocks at multiple sites on the lake and detected settled mussels of dif-

*(Continued on Next Page)*



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ferent sizes at all surveyed locations. This confirms the presence of a well-established, reproducing population that is likely dispersed throughout the reservoir.

"Unfortunately, detection of zebra mussels at Lake Meredith is a continuation of a trend in recent years of westward spread of this highly invasive species to new Texas lakes and this new infestation in a new river

basin in the Panhandle provides a particularly concerning steppingstone for further spread to uninhabited western states," said Monica McGarrity, TPWD senior scientist for aquatic invasive species. "As boaters visit waterbodies anywhere in the state—or visit from other states, it's important they take steps to properly clean, drain, and dry boats, or have vessels stored in invaded lakes

professionally decontaminated. These important steps not only prevent the spread of zebra mussels and other aquatic invasive species but also help anglers avoid facing state fines or even delays for watercraft decontamination as they travel between states."

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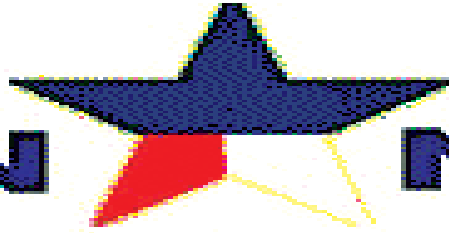
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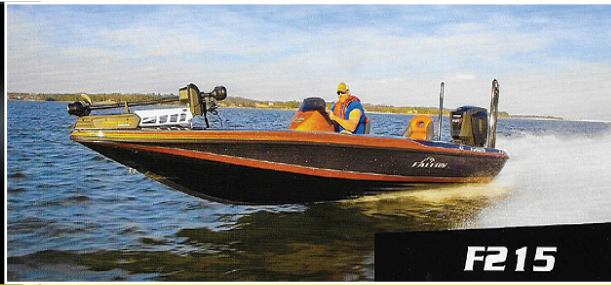
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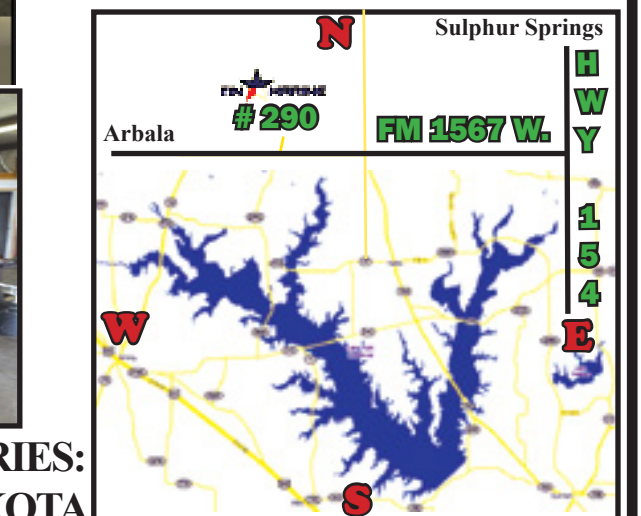
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# Generous Donation From Bass Pro Shops, Grapevine

Fishing Manager Charles Pratt and Brian Kennedy, fishing team member at Bass Pro Shops in Grapevine, TX, presented a do-

nation of rods and reels for Lake Fork Sportsman's Association's High School Tackle program at its store on June 11. On

hand to accept the donation were LFSA President Don Hampton and High School Tackle committee member Richard

Nipp. Bass Pro Shops in Grapevine has been a long-time donor and supporter of our high school fishing project. LFSA is very grateful for this partnership.

Charles Pratt's father was a guide on Lake Fork for 20 years and Charles and his daughter fished in the MegaBass and Berkley tournaments on Lake Fork for several years.

Other recipients of Bass Pro Shops' generosity include Grapevine Police Department's outreach mentorship program, Future Forward. It is currently working with ten

at-risk, economically disadvantaged high school students. Terry Caldwell, a retired, now part-time police officer and Kyle Hopson, program coordinator are pictured with Charles Pratt.

Scouting America's Longhorn Council troop 168 from Southlake, TX was present to accept Bass Pro Shops donation, as was Hebron High School's fishing program.





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**21st Annual Big Bass Tournament**  
**May 15,16,17, 2026**

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Wish to Fish Foundation, we would like to thank all of our  
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dedication and participation that makes this a success.  
We hope to see all of you next year at the 22nd Annual.*

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## Lake Fork Sportsman's Association "Preserving the Legend That is Lake Fork"

By Don Hampton  
LFSA President

June was a very active month for the Lake Fork Sportsman's Association and looks to be even the same in July.

At the closing of the Skeeter Owner's Tournament winners in the Spring Raffle were drawn and the lucky winners were notified. Fortunately most picked up their winnings that day and those that didn't they will be sent to them.

Fishing Manager Charles Pratt and Brian Kennedy, fishing team

member at Bass Pro Shops in Grapevine, TX, presented a donation of rods and reels for Lake Fork Sportsman's Association's High School Tackle program at its store on June 11. On hand to accept the donation were LFSA President Don Hampton and High School Tackle committee member Richard Nipp. Bass Pro Shop in Grapevine has been a long-time donor and supporter of our high school fishing project. LFSA is very grateful for this partnership.

We would like to thank

Rick Wheeler of Air Control Heating & Cooling in Emory for supplying us a Storage Unit to refurbish the fishing equipment for the high school students. We will also be needing volunteers to assist in this project.



Come and join us at our next meeting on July 14th at 6:30 p.m. at Jamie's Restaurant.

Our guest speaker in July will be Christine Thomas, Executive Director, WCEDC.



For the past 26 years Lake Fork Sportsman's Association has been Preserving the Legend that is Lake Fork with their Live Release Boat at tournaments releasing catches back healthy in the lake, planting new grasses, and establishing fish habitat.



**Lake Fork Sportsman's Association**  
*Preserving The Legend*

Meetings are held the 2nd Tuesday of each month beginning at 6:30 pm at Jamie's Restaurant off Hwy. 17N

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*"Every child deserves a chance to fish!" Children diagnosed or who have experienced a life-threatening illness or accident sometimes do not have that opportunity. Now through the "Wish to Fish Foundation" they can have that day in the sun with their family. Any family with a child between the ages 3 to 18 years of age that has been diagnosed or treated for a life-threatening illness or accident is invited to come fish Lake Fork for any species of fish at **NO COST!** Lodging, meals, and fishing are provided for. This allows the family to spend quality time together fishing without worries or expenses. The outing includes one night lodging, meals, refreshments, snacks, all on a 26' Tritoon Pontoon, (accompanied with a 9-1-1 chase boat for any emergency that may occur. All bait and fishing equipment provided. If you are, or know of a family that meets the above criteria, contact us! Help us spread the word, we are here for the children!*

*For Scheduling or More Info Contact: Don Hampton, Founder & Program Director  
visit our website: [www.wishtofishfoundation.com](http://www.wishtofishfoundation.com)*



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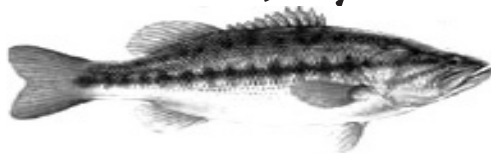
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## Lake Fork Tournament Schedule July thru Sept. 2026



### July

NO NOTIFICATIONS AS YET  
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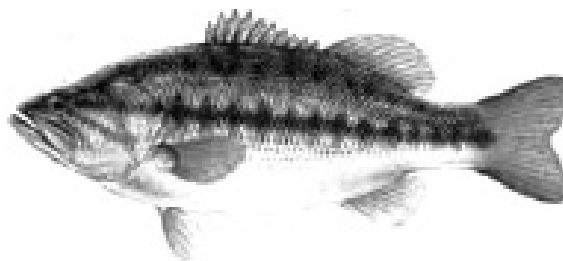
### August

NO NOTIFICATIONS AS YET  
FOR SCHEDULED  
TOURNAMENTS  
IN AUGUST



### September

Sept 5 ~ JC Outdoors Team  
Minnow Bucket  
Sept 18,19,20 ~ Sealy Outdoors  
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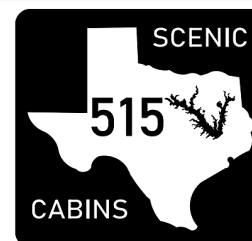
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## Justin Hurst Wildlife Management Area Expands by 2,500 Acres

The Justin Hurst Wildlife Management Area will grow by 2,500 acres thanks to an acquisition from the Ward family through a partnership between the Coastal Prairie Conservancy (CPC) and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD). Funding for the purchase was provided by a RESTORE Act grant to CPC.

Located immediately west and north of the existing WMA land, the property is made up of ecologically significant coastal prairie, wetlands and tidal marsh in Brazoria County along the Texas coast.

The WMA now offers more than 17,500 acres of connected conserved habitat – some of the most ecologically significant remaining coastal prairie, wetlands, and marsh habitat on the Texas coast. The land supports species such as the Black Rail and Mottled Duck in addition to other migratory waterfowl, shorebirds, and coastal wildlife. Long-term plans for the 2,500-acre property include incorporation into the broader Justin Hurst WMA public access framework. The WMA currently offers year-round

access to the Jones Creek and Live Oak Nature loops, along with special permit hunts and scheduled tours.

"This project permanently protects an extraordinary piece of the Texas coast," said Mary Anne Piacentini, President and CEO of the Coastal Prairie Conservancy. "Conserving this property expands the Justin Hurst Wildlife Management Area, strengthens habitat connectivity to nearby conserved landscapes, including the San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge, and ensures that future generations will continue to benefit from the wildlife, natural resources, and resilience these lands provide."

"The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department thanks the Ward family and Coastal Prairie Conservancy for entrusting us with stewardship of this special piece of Texas," said David Butler, TPWD's Project Leader for the Central Coast Wetland Ecosystem Project. "By joining it with the Justin Hurst Wildlife Management Area, the department will manage the property with many of the same land-use practices employed by the Ward family over the years.

The family's heritage of cattle grazing, prescribed burning, and recreational hunting to conserve the property's habitats and wildlife populations will continue under the Depart-

ment's stewardship."

The property, known within the Ward family as "Down Below," has been owned and stewarded by the family for generations. The Ward family traces its roots to Emily Austin Perry, Stephen F. Austin's sister, whose family was among Austin's "Old Three Hundred" settlers. Through decades of ranching, hunting and land stewardship, the family worked to maintain the property's ecological character while preserving it as a working landscape.

For the Ward family, permanently conserving the land honors the legacy of the late Lee Taylor Ward, a lifelong rancher, outdoorsman, and conservation-minded steward who cared deeply about the future of the Texas coast. By protecting the property as part of the Justin Hurst WMA, the family is guaranteeing that the landscapes and wildlife that shaped generations of memories will remain intact for future Texans.

"He loved that land," said Emily Ward. "He loved getting up every morning and going out there. He believed this landscape mattered, not just for our family, but for wildlife, for ranching, and for the future of the Texas coast."

Established following the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, the RESTORE Act, which made Gulf Coast restoration funds toward projects that restore and protect coastal ecosystems and communities. Conserving this property advances those coastal resilience goals by protecting

coastal prairie and marsh habitat that store floodwaters, improve water quality and help buffer coastal communities from severe storms.

"Protecting these 2,500 acres of coastal prairie, wetlands, and tidal marsh through the RESTORE Act is a significant win for Texas conservation," said Steven Schar, Governor Abbott's designee to the RESTORE Council and Deputy Executive Director of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

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# "The Drop Shot Rig" (Continued from Page 6)

get structure, let the weight hit the bottom, and tighten the line just enough to feel the weight without lifting it.

Instead of aggressively dragging the rig, drag it slowly or give it subtle shakes with the rod tip to let the soft plastic dance. Keep your movements minimal—often, letting the natural current

or boat movement do the work.

When you detect a bite, start reeling and let the rod load up and just set hook with your forearms, usually is

best. A quick hook-set will often times miss the fish and a hard set could break your braid to fluorocarbon leader. Happy Independence Day #250!

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32	O	33	T	34	S	35	U	36	S	37	A	38	V	39	O	40	Y	41	R	42	A	43	H	44	31
37	T	38	H	39	E	40	L	41	T	42	T	43	L	44	E	45	P	46	R	47	I	48	N	49	C
41	I	42	R	43	A	44	M	45	E	46	Y	47	E	48	R	49	E	50	N	51	E	52	E	53	D
44	S	45	U	46	N	47	R	48	I	49	S	50	E	51	S	52	B	53	B	54	C	55	E	56	57
48	E	49	D	50	T	51	A	52	U	53	T	54	I	55	S	56	M	57	P	58	H	59	I	60	N
52	P	53	H	54	I	55	N	56	E	57	A	58	S	59	T	60	B	61	L	62	U	63	S	64	T
58	A	59	A	60	R	61	E	62	T	63	A	64	R	65	O	66	K	67	I	68	O	69	N	70	A
61	S	62	L	63	A	64	G	65	E	66	V	67	A	68	D	69	E	70	V	71	O	72	L	73	T
64	S	65	O	66	N	67	E	68	A	69	P	70	E	71	D	72	E	73	P	74	O	75	S	76	77

## Up, Up and Away Word Find

Search up, down and diagonally to find and circle each of the "high-flying" words in the puzzle below. Ready for takeoff?

FLYING	KITE	LIFT
AIRPLANE	SHUTTLE	HELICOPTER
JET	PILOT	COCKPIT
WINGS	BALLOON	
BIRD	GLIDER	

K W D B H N G S P D X E  
 I S I U I N R H F I E S  
 T L H N I R T E E N N H  
 E G J Y G I D S A O W U  
 I R L E P S T L O R G T  
 S F Y K T O P L O N L T  
 E E C A O R L F D R I L  
 D O S T I A H O N D D E  
 C V L A B M R I T L E O  
 H E L I C O P T E R R D  
 E P H M F M F P I L O T  
 A O N D I T H H R A L D



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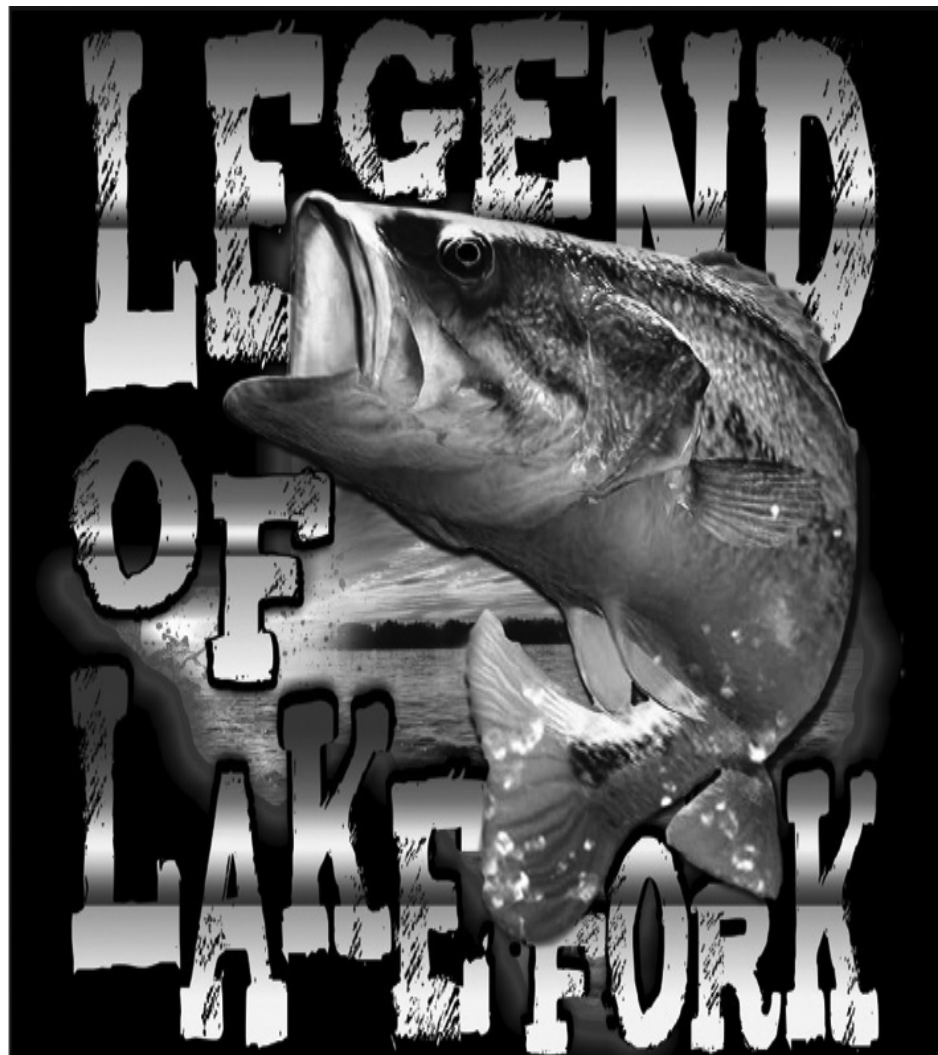
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WHEN I

GET TO

FISH.



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## Game Warden Field Notes

The following items are compiled from recent Texas Parks and Wildlife Department law enforcement reports.

**--Peeling Back the Onion--** What appeared at first glance to be a few paperwork errors ended up being a significant attempt to circumvent Texas deer regulations by a group of out-of-state hunters. While inspecting a New Braunfels taxidermy business, game wardens noted several entries in the resource log containing conflicting information. The business owner assisted

in identifying the individual hunters and helped locate the corresponding antlers on hand. Three of the out-of-state hunters used Special Non-Resident 5 Day licenses, which are not valid for hunting white-tailed deer. A fourth non-resident hunter harvested a deer and posted images and video on social media on Oct. 18, but records showed he did not purchase a hunting license until Oct. 22. Subsequently, the four sets of antlers corresponding with these hunters were seized and citations for hunting white-

tailed deer without valid general non-resident hunting licenses were issued. Wardens then interviewed the landowner where these four deer had been harvested and during an inspection of the property's deer harvest log found the landowner had claimed the buck killed by the unlicensed hunter and used his hunting license information instead. The landowner was cited for allowing a person to hunt under his license. Wardens then checked the hunting license status of all the hunters listed on the

*(Continued on Page 24)*



# A Summer Salad Surprise

By Sue Hampton

As the temperatures heat up, avoid hot and heavy meals with a cool, crisp twist on a traditional summer salad.

Creating a pasta perfect salad is easier than ever when using Swanson Broth to provide surprisingly light and refreshing flavor without adding unnecessary fat



Try this simple and satisfying summer salad at your "4th of July" celebration! Have a great summer and be safe.

to the meal. Swanson Chicken Pasta Salad is a lively and delicious dish that combines the season's freshest produce with the time-tested taste combination of pasta and Parmesan. This salad can be served as the main course in a picnic lunch or as an accompaniment to a warm weather family feast.

Simple and satisfying, salads are a great solution to your summer mealtime dilemmas. With just twenty minutes of prep time and a few easy steps,

you can create a dish that brings together the best the summer has to offer, and still have plenty of time to go outside and enjoy the sunshine.

## Swanson Chicken Pasta Salad

Prep Time: 20 min.

Chill Time: 2 hrs.

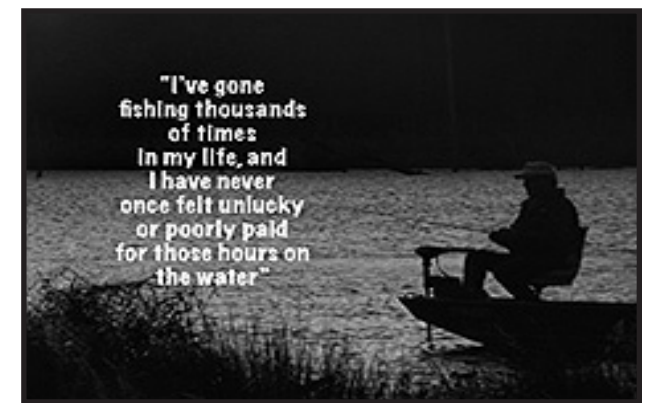
1 can (14-1/2 oz.) Swanson Chicken Broth (1-3/4 cups)  
 1/2 cup mayonnaise  
 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese  
 1 tsp. dried dill weed  
 3 cups cooked cork-screw pasta  
 1 cup cherry tomatoes

cut in half  
 1 cup peas, cooked  
 1/2 cup sliced mushrooms  
 1 small red onion, chopped  
 2 cups cubed cooked chicken  
 Lettuce leaves

MIX broth, mayonnaise, cheese and dill weed.

TOSS pasta, tomatoes, peas, mushrooms, onion, chicken and broth mixture until evenly coated. Cover and refrigerate at least 2 hrs., stirring occasionally. Serve on lettuce. Serves 4.

*Practice C.P.R.*



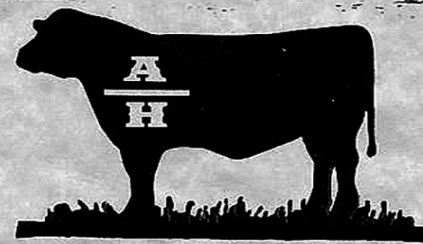

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## Game Warden Field Notes (Continued from Page 22)

landowner's harvest log and found another out-of-state hunter who had harvested a deer on this property also used a Special Non-Resident 5 Day license. A warden from that hunter's home state was contacted and asked for assistance in locating this subject. The out of state warden made contact with the hunter and was able to determine that the subject had taken two white-tailed deer in Texas illegally. The warden seized the antlers from these two deer and returned them to the Texas wardens. Two additional citations for hunting white-tailed deer without valid general non-resident hunting licenses were issued. Cases and civil restitution now pending.

**--Trigger Happy--** A San Augustine County game wardens deployed a white-tailed deer decoy setup to catch would be road hunters near the Banister Wildlife Management Area and the Angelina National Forrest. At about 10:45 p.m. the wardens observed a pickup truck drive past the decoy and

come to a stop. The truck turned around and returned at a slow rate of speed. As the pickup approached the decoy, one of the wardens observed a red beam of light that appeared to be a laser. The pickup pulled alongside the decoy and fired a shot. A warden approached the vehicle and before he could finish announcing himself the road hunters fired a second shot at the decoy. Charges were filed for various hunting related violations at the San Augustine County Jail.

**--Can't Go Back in Time--** As one non-resident deer hunter learned the expensive way, purchasing a hunting license after you take to the field is not an option. He was about to enter his trophy-sized Texas white-tailed buck in a prestigious big deer contest when this individual got pulled over by a local police officer in Freer for a traffic violation. A game warden happened to be on hand and saw the big buck in the bed of the man's truck. The warden noticed the man was acting nervous

about his presence and made contact for a routine compliance check. The warden verified the subject had a valid non-resident hunting license, purchased at 6:15 p.m. on Dec. 28, and had properly tagged his kill. The warden reached out to his colleague in Live Oak County where the trophy was taken and a subsequent call to the manager of the ranch the hunter noted on his license harvest log. The ranch manager validated the hunter's account and texted the warden a photo of the kill, which showed the deer deceased at 5 p.m. based on the digital time stamp, indicating the hunter bought his license after the fact. When asked about the timeline discrepancy the hunter stated that he had applied for a hunting license prior to going hunting, but it hadn't been approved until that evening. The warden informed the hunter that there is not a vetting/application process for a hunting license in Texas and that it is valid upon purchase. Cases were filed and restitu-

*(Continued on Next Page)*

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WITHOUT IT,  
I'M BASICALLY A  
2-YEAR-OLD  
WHOSE BLANKIE  
IS IN THE WASHER.**

tion is pending. The deer was scored at 187 2/8 on the Boone & Crocket scoring system.

**--Snail's End--** A Travis County game warden was contacted by a U.S. Department of Agriculture APHIS Smuggling Interdiction Trade Compliance officer to assist in having a local resident surrender some Giant African Land Snails. The Giant African snails are a highly-regulated invasive species considered to be one of the most damaging snails in the world. If fruits and vegetables are not available, they will eat a wide variety of ornamental plants, tree bark and even paint and stucco on houses. These snails are known to carry organisms that can cause diseases in humans and livestock.

**--Not Shooting Straight--** During a compliance check at a meat processing facility in Refugio County, a game warden noticed a couple of deer harvested by a woman were brought in within a few days of each other. An employee stated the deer were actually brought in by a man claiming to be the hunter's son. The workers never saw the

woman whose tags were on the deer. The warden made contact with the hunter and when asked what she shot, the woman stated she had shot a buck and a doe with a 30-06 caliber rifle. When the warden asked to see her hunting license, the woman stated her license was at her son's residence. Contact was then made via telephone with the son later that day. The son said that his mom had shot two bucks with a .270 caliber rifle. Wardens met with the son at his residence and after some more contradicting statements, the truth finally came out. He admitted to shooting two bucks using his mother's license tags. In addition to hunting under the license of another, it was discovered that he had shot a total of four bucks. Cases are pending for hunting under the license of another, over the bag limit of white-tailed deer buck, and no harvest log. Civil restitution was also filed.

**--Threw the Fish Back...into the Bucket--** While patrolling Matagorda for recreational fishing compliance, game wardens came across two men fish-

ing. When asked if they had caught anything, one man stated, "Yes, but I threw them back because they were too small." After being asked a few more times about having any fish, the gentleman finally said, "Yes, the ones I kept are in that bucket." After inspecting the contents of the bucket, three undersized red drum, one undersized sheepshead, and one undersized black drum were recovered. Citations and civil restitution pending. The fish were donated to a local family in need.

**--Blocking the Roadway--** While patrolling a state highway a Crockett County game warden saw a large well pulling truck blocking the roadway. One of its axles broke in two as the truck tried to merge onto the highway. The warden provided traffic control for public safety and contacted the Texas Department of Transportation for additional traffic control assistance, since it would be a while before the truck could be moved. The warden and other law enforcement officials eventually cleared the roadway.

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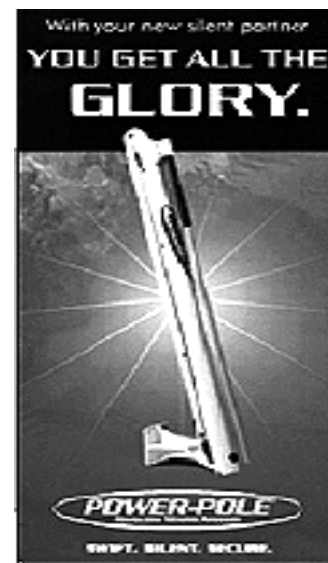
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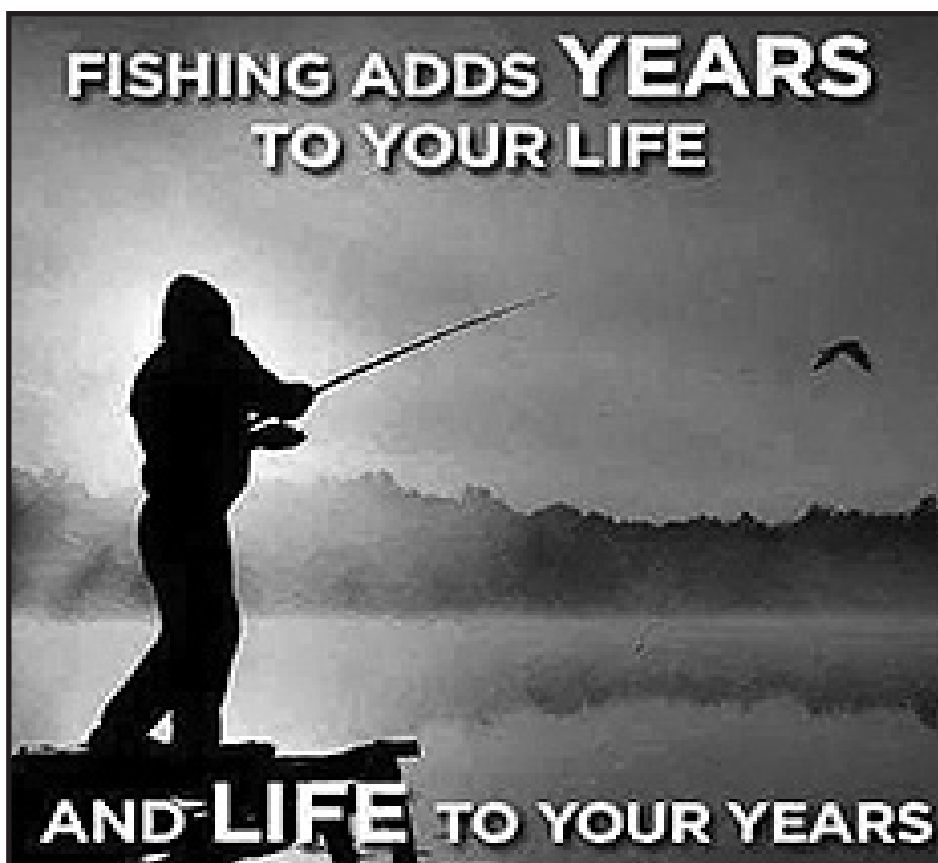
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me to go catch a bass



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