

TEXAS ANGLER
EDUCATION PROGRAM

Reel Lines

Issue Number 19

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New & Noteworthy

ANN MILLER –
Aquatic Education Coordinator

New Names and New Pins!

Many thanks to those of you who responded to our e-mail questionnaire about what we should be calling our program. Around 60% of you said you would like to use the name "Basic Fishing" for Junior Angler and "Advanced Fishing" for Master Angler; yet those teaching younger students wanted to keep on calling their program "Junior Angler." So, we came up with a compromise. **You can call the Angler Education program you teach the name that works best for you.**

We've modified the bluegill and pinfish pins for the Basic Fishing/Junior Angler level to say "TPWD Angler" so they will work for both approaches. When we reorder the Master Angler pins (large-mouth bass and spotted seatrout) they will also say "TPWD Angler." Just order the fish pin you prefer. One pin per student at each level.

We also have new certificates that say "Basic" and "Advanced" Fishing. Please go to www.tpwd.state.tx.us/learning/angler_education/instructor for the new, expanded order forms. You may also contact your Angler Education specialist if you have questions or need forms mailed to you.

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It Ain't Bragging if You've Got Pictures!

Alissa Lewis is a three-year-old from Dallas who loves to fish. However, she doesn't get to fish as much as she would like.

Alissa has *Juvenile Dermatomyositis* (JDMS). JDMS is an incurable autoimmune disorder that causes a painful skin rash and weakens muscles in children. She has to go in monthly for treatments; her stays last for several days for each session. Her condition also requires her to stay out of the sun, so shade has to be found or carried. But the disease has also made her into one tough little girl.

When she has good days she will beg to go fishing.

Alissa caught her first fish July 9, 2005. Her luck didn't end there; she caught 37 more fish that morning. Twelve were channel catfish. She earned a **First Fish Award** on a nice bluegill (.16 lbs, 6 3/4 inches). Four of her fish netted her an **Outstanding Angler Award** and a **Catch and Release Award**. She received them in the mail from TPWD and Alissa loved them.

Then weeks later, a big unexpected surprise came; one of her fish was a **State Record!** OK! OK! That was just luck. But luck is all a part of fishing, and you have to catch the fish first before you can think about any awards.

If this little girl has a fish on the line she will *NOT* let you touch the pole. Alissa is an "I-can-do-it-myself!" girl. She will sit and rest if she has to, but hangs onto the pole with both hands. She's lost several good fish. But then, that's part of fishing. She's not allowed to bait her own hook; she's only three for goodness sakes. She's also a lefty and figured out on her own to turn the rod upside down and reel backwards. Plus she has had great luck with cane poles, too. And Grandpa has great pictures to prove it.



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New & Noteworthy

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

Volunteer Background Checks

The State of Texas, and our department, must comply with background checks on volunteers who work with children. The safety of our children is always foremost in our minds, yet we also respect the privacy of our volunteers. Coming in the mail to you soon:

- a letter that explains why and how the background check will be made as well as issues of confidentiality;
- a permission form that must be signed and returned; and
- a postage paid return address envelope.

Please understand that the background check will be done in a completely confidential manner by one staff member in our Human Resources division. No information will be shared with any other staff members. If something of concern does come up, a Human Resources staff member may contact the volunteer directly. Angler Education staff regret any inconvenience this may cause you, but hope that you understand the need to ensure the safety of any youth our volunteers contact. And remember, our policy continues to be at least two adults that are always present when working with children. Please feel free to contact me at (512) 389-4732 or ann.miller@tpwd.state.tx.us if you have any questions about this new policy.

Maintaining our Funding

The federal aid auditors are tightening up on our record keeping. You may remember that part of our funding comes through a federal grant supported by the Sportfish Restoration Act. We must have paper copies, **signed by each volunteer**, to record volunteer hours. To make sure that we capture those signatures, our Class Report Forms now have a back side. For classes taught by just one volunteer, the signature and volunteer hours reported on the front of the form will be sufficient, but if more than one volunteer helps to teach the class, then their signatures and hours must be reported separately on the back of the form. We will continue to provide postage paid return envelopes for sending in those forms, but you may also fax them (front and back) to me at (512) 389-8042. Because we must have a signature, e-mailed forms will not help us accumulate those important volunteer hours.

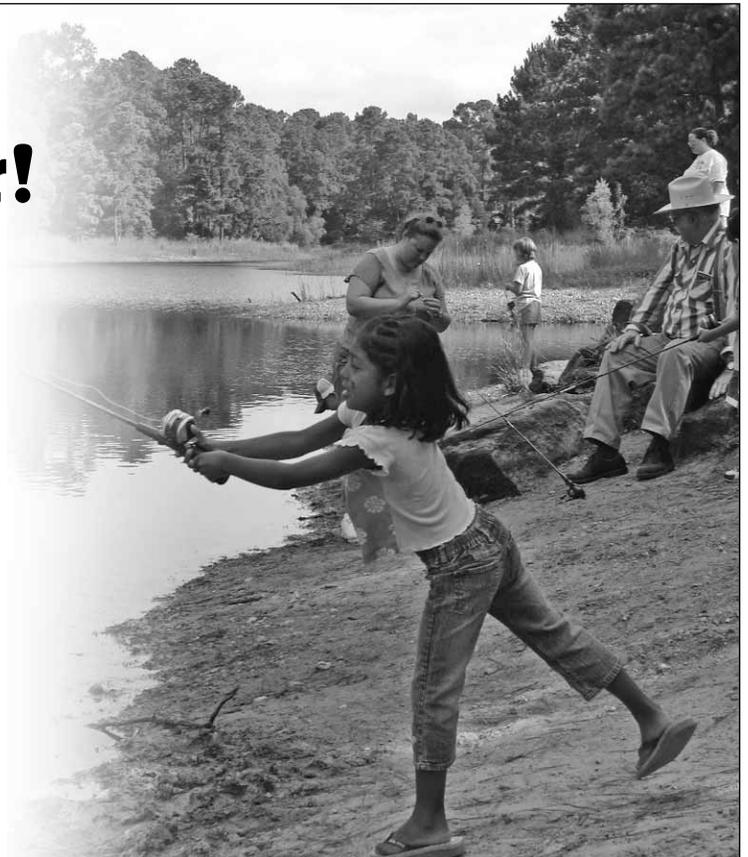
Brenda, Steve and I continue to be amazed at the wonderful reports we hear from you as you introduce Texans to the great outdoors. Please keep those stories coming to us! We are looking forward to a busy spring and summer of fishing and working with you!

Get Involved this Spring and Summer!

- Send in your background check waiver – article above
- Attend an Angler Education meeting – page 3
- Volunteer at state parks – pages 4 & 5
- Support Guadalupe bass restoration – page 8
- Volunteer at Flyfish Texas 2006 – page 10
- Raise the water I.Q. of your community – page 12
- Visit new facilities and programs at TFFC and Sea Center – pages 16 & 17

Looking for ways to share your love of fishing and the great outdoors?

Contact your Angler Education staff – page 8.



Decide Early! Don't Get Left Behind

This spring AED instructors have the opportunity to choose between two special AED meetings and advanced training opportunities.

Our first meeting is scheduled on March 1-2 at Oak Island Lodge on Trinity Bay. It will focus on saltwater fishing. In addition to some great fishing, staff is working on some special saltwater presentations and a field trip.

Then, on May 6-7, our meeting will focus on freshwater fishing and water resource issues. Again, special presentations and field trips are being planned. That meeting will take place at our popular Parrie Haynes Ranch location on the Lampasas River near Killeen.

Both meetings will include great food, a chance to get to know fellow instructors better and updates about our statewide program and its partners. Both meetings will also include a special session on Sunday morning for Angler Education Area Chiefs, those special instructors who will help us train other AED instructors. Having volunteers help us with instructor training is critical as our program grows, but the number of AED staff does not. More folks all the time are asking for our program and our staff want to help those folks ... but we are so few and our state is so big!

We urge you to consider stepping up to that next level of involvement with Angler Education and helping us provide this program to more people. Being an Angler Education Area Chief gives folks a chance to give something back in a big way.

For more information about becoming an Area Chief or about these two meetings, contact an Angler Education staff member listed on page 8.

We can take up to 40 people at each of these meetings. To sign up for one (only one) of these meetings (no charge to certified AED instructors), please phone or e-mail Karen Marks at (512) 389-8183 or karen.marks@tpwd.state.tx.us.



The pier at Oak Island Lodge



Gilbert Duran and Guy Harrison fly tying (and telling stories) at last year's meeting.



Mark Carpenter (top left) shows off angler awards with some of his scouts.

The "100 Club" for FY '05

We are proud of the work of all of our instructors, and everyone who turned in class rosters last year should have received a small thank you from TPWD. The volunteer instructors listed below went above and beyond, each one with over 100 documented volunteer hours. Think of all the lives these volunteers have touched!

Aquatic Education staff salutes these remarkable volunteers.

Mark Carpenter – Dallas

Sandra Sanchez – La Porte

Kenny Fletcher – San Antonio

Joey Saye – Flower Mound

Scott McClure – Coppell

Matthew Strawn – Austin

Mike Petrick – Plano

Brenda Talley – Corpus Christi

Daniel Raymundo – La Porte

Janel Varvil – Frisco

Texas State Parks Face Funding Shortfall

This month, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is cutting back on staffing in state parks across Texas. The agency is also reducing hours, temporarily closing camping loops and taking other actions to save money at dozens of state parks across Texas.

Like all other state agencies, the Texas Parks and Wildlife operating budget was reduced for the 2006-2007 biennium and we've had to make some adjustments to make ends meet. Over the last five years the state parks operating budget has eroded to the point that we don't have adequate dollars to continue operating at previous levels.

The erosion of quality in our state parks is a concern for many reasons. Besides their value for natural and cultural resource conservation and reasonably-priced family recreation, recent research proves state parks draw visitor traffic from outside their host counties to boost local tourism.

A Texas A&M University study reported in 2005 the economic value of 80 Texas state parks. Based on interviews with more than 11,000 visitors, the research showed those 80 parks generated an estimated \$793 million in statewide sales, \$456 million impact on Texas residents' incomes and 11,928 jobs.

However, our state park system economic engine has not been adequately maintained. For the past five years, the adjusted annual operating budget, what it costs to run all Texas state parks, has stayed around \$50 million. But during this same time, park system costs have significantly increased.

In spite of the recent cutbacks, no state parks in Texas will close, and many visitors may not notice most changes. In a way, this is part of the problem. Our state parks have done such a good job of getting along with less for so long that many people are not aware there's a problem.

What can people do to help? Visit your state parks and buy an annual Texas State Parks Pass. Visitor fees are an important source of park revenue. Enjoy your state parks, talk to the staff and superintendent and get familiar with the needs and the issues facing the park. Consider joining a local friends group to support the state park of your choice. Ask the staff for more information. A statewide support option is Texans for State Parks. See their Web site for details (www.texansforstateparks.org).

Visitors enjoy fishing and other outdoor recreation opportunities at Bastrop State Park



Take Me Fishing ... In Texas State Parks

If it's fishing, state parks are the place to be. Not only can you fish without a license at a state park, but some state parks now have tackle that you can borrow and programs that teach both basic and advanced fishing skills.

Last summer, fishing event coordinators at Purtil Creek, Bastrop, Buescher, Fairfield Lake, Brazos Bend and Inks Lake state parks held 15 events for around 300 youth and adults. Not only did folks get to learn fishing basics, but they also came home with free equipment, tackle and angler education materials. These photos tell it all – of first fish being caught and happy families learning and sharing good times on the water.

Last summer's fishing event coordinators did such a good job that ten state parks will be able to hire part-time fishing event coordinators in 2006. Events will be scheduled from March through the summer. Angler Education Volunteer Instructors can contact the parks listed to offer help with these events. Of course, you might plan to take your family or community group and help spread the word about these special fishing opportunities.



Top right: Billy Autrey imparts the basics of fly fishing at Fairfield Lake State Park.

Above: Janet Bohanan explains her 3-D fish habitat model at Inks Lake State Park.



Above: Bill Brooks helps bait hooks at Bastrop State Park.

Right: Jennifer Killian teaches knot tying at Brazos Bend State Park.



Look on the Web site for special events to be held at the following state parks in 2006:

- Bastrop SP/Buescher SP
- Inks Lake SP
- Blanco SP
- Brazos Bend SP
- Galveston Island SP
- Fairfield Lake SP
- Lake Whitney SP
- Eisenhower SP
- Bonham SP
- Sheldon Lake SP



BRENDA JUSTICE
Aquatic Education –
Houston/Galveston

This is the story of one of our volunteers who took an idea and provided troubled youth a chance to learn the lifelong sport of fishing.

Harris County Youth Village: Fishing for Better Lives

I have always been inspired by the dedication and uniqueness of every TPWD Angler Education volunteer. What they give back to the youth and parents in their communities is not just about wetting a line or catching a fish. In some cases, they can touch the life of a youth just by taking time out of their busy lives to share a sport that can be therapeutic and so much more. This past year, a group of Angler Education volunteers in Harris County used the program to do just that and showed how networking with others only enhances fishing opportunities for youth. This is the story of one of our volunteers who took an idea and provided troubled youth a chance to learn the life-long sport of fishing.

The Harris County Juvenile Probation Department operates residential facilities for youth who have been adjudicated by the court and placed in the care of the Chief Juvenile Probation Officer. One such facility is the Harris County Youth Village in Seabrook. Male youth ages 15-17 reside at the Youth Village. They are provided educational, medical and therapeutic services with emphasis on personal responsibility, appropriate expression of anger, positive decision-making, leadership and self management of one's own behavior. Volunteers from the nonprofit organization, Crossroads: Community Partnership for Youth, help Youth Village staff provide additional opportunities for those youth.

When Dr. Blair McDonald became a Crossroads volunteer at the Harris County Youth Village in Seabrook, he wanted to teach the youth a skill they could take with them when they left. Since the Youth Village has a lakefront campus in the Clear Lake area, Dr. McDonald and a staff supervisor, Mr. Johnson, proposed that the sport of fishing would be a great fit into the programs at the facility. Mr. Johnson passed away at the age of 38, but the fishing program continues to bear his name which is titled Big "Js" Fishing Club. In order to start a fishing program, their first step was to gather some equipment, so they contacted Roxanne Coleman with Shakespeare fishing tackle, who generously supported the program. Roxanne in turn told them about the TPWD Angler Education program. Dr. McDonald and Mr. Sallam, a supervisor at the Youth Village, became certified instructors in 2004 and the next year 12 staff members at the Youth Village also became certified in order to help teach Basic Fishing in their summer program

Continued on the next page



Harris County Youth Village, continued

schedule. Big "Js" Fishing Club uses the TPWD Basic fishing program in their club activities and from the beginning the club has received unflinching support by Mrs. Loretta Tigner, the Youth Village Superintendent.

In the past, the Youth Village and Dr. McDonald conducted five-week TPWD Basic Fishing classes for 12 residents at a time. But this year, over a two-day span, 120 young men had the opportunity to learn to tie fishing knots, cast a rod and reel in the gym and much more. Staff at the Youth Village divided up the curriculum into five sessions and groups of around 12 youth rotated to each session taught by the new TPWD Angler Education Instructors. The class was offered as a privilege and good behavior was expected before they were even allowed to participate. Once the youth were trained, they had opportunities to go fishing with Dr. McDonald or staff at later dates throughout the rest of the summer.

For me, the days I spent at the Youth Village helping the staff teach Basic Fishing were days I will always remember. I was definitely out of my comfort zone. Teaching in a building with locked doors and bathrooms and not being allowed to bring my multi-purpose fishing knife to Basic Fishing classes were out of the norm for me. However, what I will remember the most is the dedication and drive of the staff and volunteers, like Dr. McDonald, who never give up on these kids. Like most of our instructors, they didn't have to take the time and effort to provide fishing education for the youth, but they did it because they care and realize how great it is for young people to learn more about the outdoors. I may not ever know how many of the 120 lives were touched in a positive way that day, but I like to think that most of those young men will take advantage of all the wonderful personal benefits of outdoor recreation opportunities such as the sport of fishing.



Angler Ed a Big Plus for Ag Science Class

JEFF WITTE – Angler Education Instructor

If you're really looking to add some excitement to your Wildlife and Recreational Management Class, I would highly recommend adding the Basic Fishing and Beginning Fly Fishing certifications that your students can get by using the TPWD curriculum materials in addition to your regular curriculum.

This without a doubt is the best thing I have ever done for my students in the Wildlife and Recreational Management class. They absolutely love it. They now want to form their own Fly Fishing and Tying Club here at Lockhart High School.

I really don't know who is having more fun with it, me or them. It has been extremely rewarding for me as an instructor. The students are coming up all the time now wanting to know if they can practice casting or tie a fly. The response from the students and their parents has been nothing but positive. One of the parents came to me the other day and said her son had finally found his niche.

In the future I hope to add to the class by actually taking them fishing. I would also like to set up a school-sponsored club; I know the students want it. Many of the students say they are trying to talk their parents into getting them a fly rod for Christmas. I can't recommend adding this to the Wildlife and Recreational Management Class curriculum enough.



Guadalupe Bass Restoration Initiative

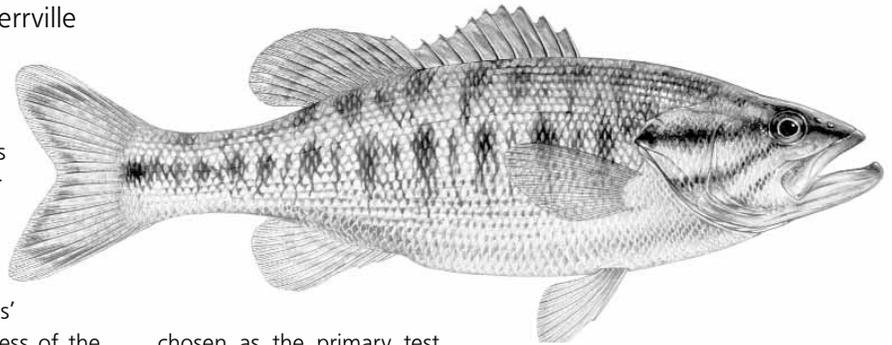
GUY HARRISON – Angler Education Area Chief, Kerrville

A healthy population of Guadalupe bass not only provides a recreational resource for anglers, but also emphasizes the quality of the rivers and streams in which it lives. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), the Upper Guadalupe River Authority, the Federation of Flyfishers, Hill Country Fly Fisherman and others are joining together in a project to reintroduce pure strains of Guadalupe bass into stretches of their native habitat. This project will assure the Guadalupe bass' survival in the Guadalupe and will raise the public's awareness of the unique value of this natural resource in the Texas Hill Country.

The Guadalupe bass (*Micropterus treculi*) is a Central Texas native, endemic to the Edwards Plateau region. The native range includes streams of the Guadalupe, San Antonio, Colorado and Brazos river systems. The Guadalupe bass is also a popular sport fish in the Texas Hill Country. In 1989, the Texas Legislature recognized the unique character of both the Guadalupe bass and its habitat by designating it the State Fish of Texas.

The numbers of Guadalupe bass have decreased in recent years due to a variety of factors, primarily hybridization with smallmouth bass (*M. dolomieu*). Smallmouth bass are similar in life history to Guadalupe bass and the two species lack reproductive isolating mechanisms. The non-native smallmouth bass has been stocked throughout the range of Guadalupe bass and have become established in some areas, including the Upper Guadalupe River in Kerr County. An unforeseen result of the stocking program was hybridization between the two fishes. This genetic introgression may ultimately prove to be the most serious threat to the existence of the Guadalupe bass.

TPWD has undertaken remedial stocking of pure Guadalupe bass into genetically contaminated areas in an effort to reduce or replace hybrid swarms. A tributary of the Guadalupe River, Johnson Creek, was



chosen as the primary test site to determine the effectiveness of remedial stocking because it was found to have 34% hybrids in a downstream section and none in an upstream section. This location was judged to have the highest probability of success among known genetically contaminated streams because there was only a partially hybridized population.

This effort has proven effective, but to ultimately succeed, it must be expanded to the main stem of the Upper Guadalupe River as well as the tributaries of the North Fork and South Fork. Annual stocking of 225,000 fingerlings in the river will be necessary to complete the program. In this way, pure Guadalupe bass will be restored and remain secure in the Guadalupe River.

A five-year plan has been developed to reintroduce Guadalupe bass. The plan is to stock 225,000 pure-strain Guadalupe bass fingerlings per year for five years. TPWD would breed, raise and stock the fingerlings and would also assess the effectiveness of the stocking program by sampling and genetically testing the bass population in the streams.

To cover the cost of this project, funds will be raised through grants and by donations in addition to the contributions of partners. For more information about how you or your club can contribute to this effort, contact Guy Harrison at (830) 895-8696 or Gunyon003@aol.com.

ANGLER EDUCATION CONTACT INFORMATION

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With Baited Breath

STEVE CAMPBELL
Aquatic Education –
North Texas/
Panhandle

**Of course
there are
fish in the
“cement
pond.”**

**Plenty
of kids
figured
out how
to catch
them!**

Sidewalk Fishing

It comes but once a year, or so I keep repeating to myself. Expo that is – The World’s Fair of Texas Outdoor Activities. And once again it was the Friday before the first Saturday in October and I stood in a parking lot at TPWD Headquarters ... fishing.

Well, that’s not exactly right. I was going through a supply of rods and reels, determining which were still functioning and which could be repaired, if they could be repaired at all. The only way to truly ascertain a reel’s functionality is to tie a casting plug to the end and cast.

As I busied myself with this simple but mindless task, the parking lot before me was a near flurry of activity. People trotting here and there, mules and golf carts whizzing by and blank stares of disbelief on the faces of everyone watching me. Here they were, breaking their necks trying to ready everything, and there I was “playing” with my rods and reels.

Had they known what I was going to be doing over the next two days – backyard bass – I might have been spared the barbs and jokes tossed my way by unwitting passersby.

If one has ever worked backyard bass, one knows that it is an activity not easily done under the shade of a tent or any other form of shade for that matter. It is done in the open and under the direct supervision of the sun. And it’s work – hard work.

I heard comments such as, “How’s the fishing today?” and “Are they biting?” or the ever popular “Whachafishinfor?” Each question was followed by howls of derisive laughter, and not a bit of it coming from my lips. I just smiled, waved casually and continued working with my rods and reels.

The entire process took nearly two hours to complete. I had my tackle set up in carriers, but because the equipment was still visible, those that hadn’t commented before thought they had their chance. Who knows, perhaps it took them two hours to come up with something.

But by this time, I was ready, willing and able, simply biding my time for the next question. And I didn’t have to wait long.

I had a 30-minute monologue about fishing the “cement pond” before me.

“How’s the fishing? My victim asked.

“It was great earlier. I couldn’t keep ‘em off my hook. I was holing sand bass and rock bass. Heck, I even made a few wild casts into that planter over there. And wouldn’t you know it? I hooked into some grass carp and log perch!”

“But dang it,” I continued, “People just keep on insisting on driving through my spot and scaring all my fish away. That’s why nothing’s biting now.”

At that moment someone came down the parking lot on a golf cart at a pretty good clip. As he passed I shouted to him, “Hey! Fella! This is a no wake zone!!”

I picked up my tackle and walked toward my exhibit tent, leaving this last person in silent, slack-jawed amazement.





PHOTO BY LARRY HODGE



PHOTO BY LARRY HODGE

Fly Fish Texas, March 4, 2006

WALTER MCLENDON – Angler Education Area Chief, Lufkin

Fly Fish Texas is an annual event that started in 2000. TPWD and fly fishing clubs from all over Texas join together at the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center in Athens to conduct a day of activities to share our love of fly fishing. About 120 volunteers gather in Athens to offer free demonstrations, classes, seminars and actual fishing opportunities.

Quality speakers present hourly programs in the Dive Theater, as well as hands-on instruction outdoors. Fly tyers demonstrate the art of fly tying and in special ponds where folks can closely view the fish at eye level through clear walls, fly casters demonstrate casting so that folks see fish in the act of taking the fly. Individual casting instructions are offered all day. TPWD Certified Angler Education Instructors teach two 3 1/2-hour classes where people ages 10 and older can learn all aspects of fly fishing. Graduates receive a certificate and special pin upon completion. Vendors demonstrate their products and food vendors serve snacks and lunches. Raffles are conducted for fly fishing equipment and guided fly

fishing trips. Fly Fish Texas is the best event offered in Texas and we work towards making it better every year.

As great as this event is, there are always challenges. Finding 120 volunteers and coordinating their work is a monumental task. We promise every year that our volunteers will only work a half day and play the other half, but we seem to run out of volunteers, thus overworking many who love teaching and sharing.

My purpose in writing this article is to solicit more volunteers for our next event, Saturday, March 4, 2006. I appeal to all TPWD Area Chiefs and Angler Education Instructors to come join us. We will provide you with a gate pass, nametag, a nice lunch and the opportunity to teach. That's what we are all about, right? If you enjoy teaching, then we have your students. To volunteer, contact Walter McLendon at waltermc@sprynet.com or (936) 875-3726.



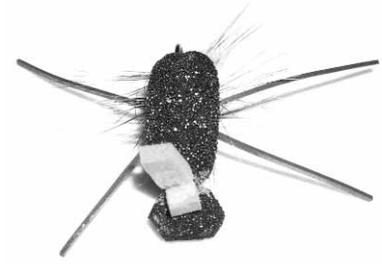
FLY FISHING IN TEXAS?

Most Texans ask the age-old question "Where do you fly fish in Texas?" and our simple answer is always "Anywhere there is water!" Most people associate fly fishing with trout, but in Texas we go for all species of fish, freshwater and saltwater. Fly fishing as a sport is rapidly growing, especially in saltwater on our coastline. More and more cities are opening fly shops and organizing fly fishing clubs. At last count, we have about 22 clubs in Texas and some are as large as 300 members.

Even though history tells us that fly fishing is actually over 1,800 years old, it is still new to many people today. It is a sport that actually changes your viewpoint about nature and increases your enjoyment of fishing. To the oldest generations in Texas, fishing was a meat-gathering event to provide food for the family table. Nowadays, fly fishing has evolved into a combination of many considerations. We often fish for sport, not food. But, we know that taking too many fish from our local waters negatively impacts the populations of fish. Using appropriate catch and release techniques has become an integral part of the education of fly fishers. Fly fishers are involved in preservation, conservation and the wise use of our water resources as well as having healthy, outdoor family fun.

Tie a Fly & Catch a Fish

GUY "DOC" HARRISON – Angler Education Area Chief, Kerrville



The Gotcha Beetle

When summer arrives in the hill country the hatches of aquatic insects begin to fall off. The fish now begin to look for terrestrials that fall or are blown by our summer winds into the water. Beetles, ants, grasshoppers and crickets make up the majority of these insects.

The Gotcha Beetle is tied using foam sheeting for the body, adding hackle, rubber legs and, if desired, mono eyes adds to the attractiveness of the fly. It is simple to tie and a real fish getter on our local hill country streams.

Materials:

Hook – 9480 dry fly or 3906 wet fly size 12-8

Thread – 6/0 of desired color

For the body: Strip of foam sheeting of desired color, cut to the width of the gap of the hook

For the Ribs: hackle feather of desired color

For the Legs: thin rubber pieces of desired color

Indicator: yellow yarn, combed out or a thin strip of yellow foam

Mono Eyes: extra small or small eye pieces if desired



STEP 1

Secure thread on hook shank one quarter the length of the hook shaft behind the eye of the hook. Wrap the thread back to slightly below the bend of the hook. Wrap the thread forward to the tie-in point then back and forward twice more. This creates a thick thread base to cement the foam underbody to the hook. Apply head cement liberally over the thread base.



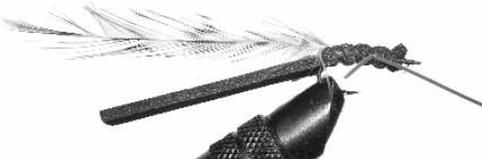
STEP 2

Bind a strip of foam starting at the tie-in point back to slightly below the bend of the hook by creating 5 to 6 segments about 1/10 inch apart. Use 2 to 3 snug wraps at each segment to secure the foam to the shaft of the hook.



STEP 3

Wrap thread one segment forward (at the bend of the hook). Strip the fuzzy fibers from the thick part of the hackle stem. Hold the feather by the tip (using left thumb and fore finger) stroke down the shaft of the feather with the right thumb and forefinger so the hackle fibers spring out at right angles to the stem. Bind the bare stem of the feather to the shaft of the hook with 3 to 4 snug wraps. The tip of the feather should be pointing well behind the bend of the hook and the shiny side of the feather is facing the fly tier.



STEP 4

Wrap the thread forward covering the previous wraps to the mid shank. Cut two pieces of rubber leg material about 2 1/2 inches in length. Bind one on each side of the hook shank with 2 loose wraps. Even the legs and position them as desired. Then make a third snug wrap around the hook shank and the legs, securing them in the desired position.



STEP 5

Wrap the thread forward to a position in front of the foam body. Grasp the feather by its tip with hackle pliers and palmer the hackle forward to just in front of the foam body. Tie off and clip excess feather. If mono eyes are to be added to the fly, tie them on just behind the eye of the hook.



STEP 6

Pull the foam strip up and forward and bind the strip to the hook shank just in front of the under body. After making several snug wraps around the hook shank, add a tuft of combed-out yarn or a thin strip of foam and secure it with several more snug wraps. Make a whip finish and apply head cement. Trim the foam sheeting forward of where it is bound to the hook shank and immediately behind the eye.

Your Gotcha Beetle is ready to GO FISH!



"Bug Picking" will be a new activity for school groups at TFFC.

TFFC Gets New Exhibits, Education Building

The Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center reopened to the public on the third of January all shiny and new. For the first time in its nine-year history, the decision was made to close the facility to make repairs and upgrades. The plan for the month of December involved a complete "resealing" of the 26,000-gallon dive tank floor, which necessitated removing and relocating the tank's inhabitants (including Splash, the state record blue catfish), trees and rocks ... LOTS of rocks. The rest of the facility will benefit from the downtime with a general spruce-up.

Probably most noticeable will be the changes in the indoor exhibit gallery. The updated hatchery exhibit will allow visitors to get the latest information on hatchery operations. The newest addition will exhibit examples of exotic species, including plants, invertebrates and vertebrates. This display will address why exotic species are a problem and what can be done to keep these invaders out of our watersheds.

The October completion of the wetland trail—tram connection and groundbreaking for the new education building are outward signs of new things to come for groups that visit TFFC. Soon all group leaders will have easy Internet access to resources to make their field trips more than a fun day out. All the activities are correlated to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) to document their educational value for school curricula.

Our collaborations with Stephen F. Austin State University continue as we work with the interpretive faculty of the College of Forestry, the faculty and technical staff of the College of Mathematics and Sciences and the College of Education faculty. We're excited to have Sylvia Lin, a graduate student, working with us on a comprehensive interpretive plan. All of the people we've worked with from SFASU have been generous with ideas and information.

We're in for an exciting new year at the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center.

What's Your Water I.Q.?

NANCY HERRON – TPWD Outdoor Learning Programs

Do you know where your drinking water comes from? According to recent research by the Governor's Task Force on Water Conservation, 72% of Texans don't know. It's more than trivia – research also shows that the more Texans know about the source of their drinking water, the more likely they are to conserve it.

And with the population projected to double by 2050, Texan's thirst for water is on the rise. Without strong conservation measures put into place, we simply won't have sufficient water to meet the demands of people and wildlife. "Knowing your water encompasses not just awareness of the source and how to conserve, but also why we must conserve," said State Senator Robert Duncan (R-Lubbock). "Without conservation, water will become a budget issue, a public health issue and an economic issue for Texas."

The Texas Water Development Board is spearheading a water I.Q. effort (www.water-IQ.org) How can you help? As angler education instruc-

tors, talk about the importance of water and healthy aquatic habitats. Be a model for good conservation practices during classes and in your everyday life. Talk about how to use water wisely. Find out where your drinking water comes from and let your students, friends and neighbors know. Help them understand that each person can help conserve and protect water resources. Limit run-off down storm drains that dump directly into our streams, decrease your household water consumption, plant low-water use plants and lawns or get involved in your community's water planning. Raise the water I.Q.

Together we can make a difference in the future of Texas' water!

Bruce Almighty

If you've ever watched the credits scroll across your television screen after each episode of the "Texas Parks and Wildlife" show on PBS, perhaps you've noticed the name Bruce Biermann. Bruce has recently found a new passion beyond lighting, shooting, sound mixing, directing and editing; he loves fly fishing.

Bruce and his wife, Nancy Michalewicz, won a guided fly fishing trip at a benefit for a sick co-worker. The trip was to be led by Steve Hall, TPWD Education Branch Manager. All was set, except for one small, minor detail. Neither of the Biermanns knew how to fly fish.

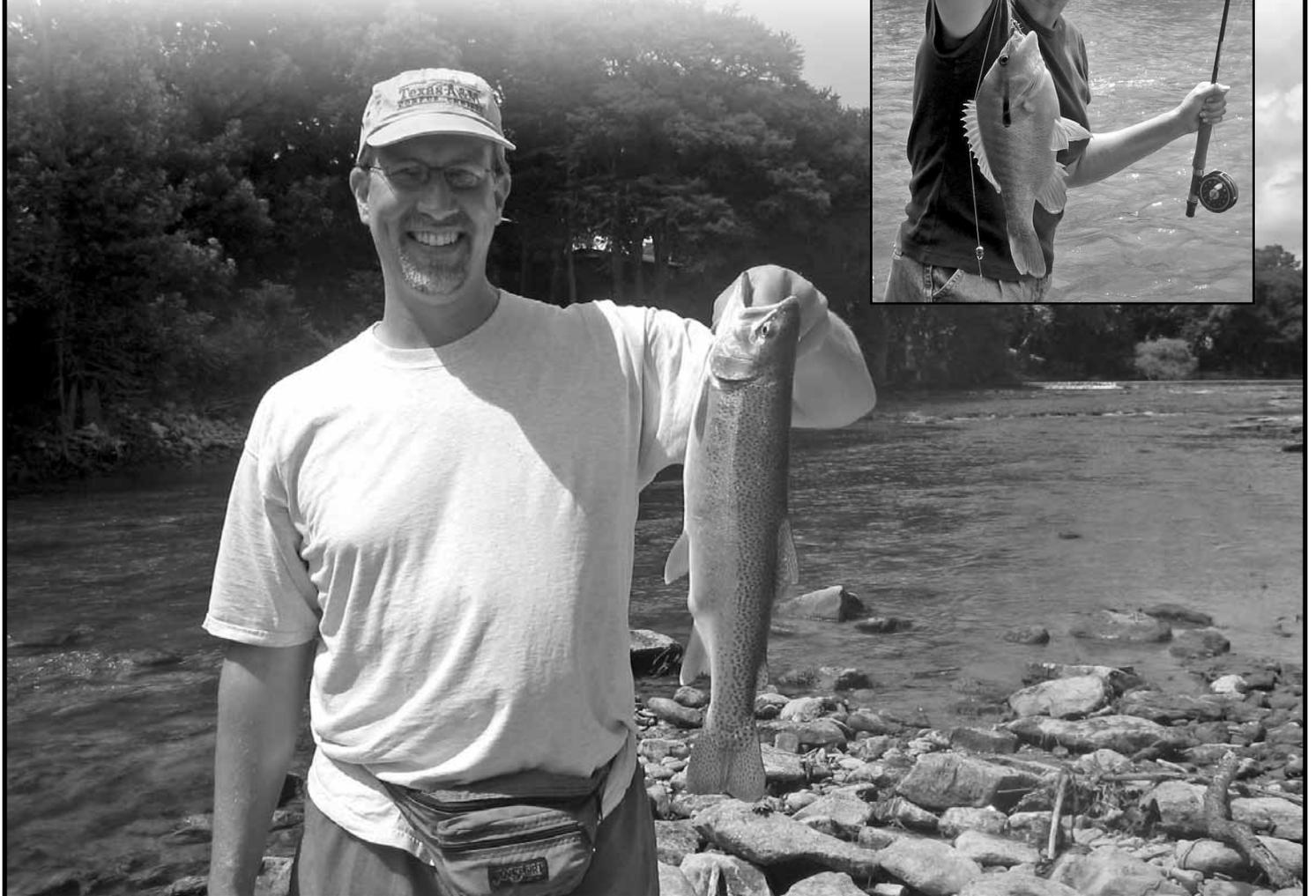
Steve spent some time with them in the how-to department. In short order they were casting flies.

Steve took them to a stretch of the Guadalupe River near Sattler, Texas. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and Trout Unlimited stock the Guadalupe with rainbow trout; some of these are larger than those stocked in other water bodies across the state. Along this particular course of the river, fishing is restricted to artificial baits and flies and the harvest limit is a single trout in excess of 18 inches. This site has been placed in Trout Unlimited's top 100 streams and is considered the southern most trout fishery in the United States.

After a few hours of fishing in the Guadalupe, Bruce and Nancy netted (pun intended) several fish. Bruce caught a sunfish and two rainbow trout; his largest trout, just a tad over on the legal limit, was served up for dinner that night. Nancy landed a sunfish and three rainbow trout. Bruce is quick to offer up that hers were too small to keep.

Since that fateful day on the river, they have come to embrace fly fishing. Bruce has conquered flounder with a fly rod on the Gulf coast. They've been to Oregon to take a fly fishing float trip down the Umpqua River. Bruce said that they were after steelheads, but all they caught were small rainbows. No doubt they enjoyed the trip nonetheless.

Bruce ended his conversation with that time-honored adage, "A bad day fishing is better than a good day at work."



Welcome New Instructors!

Listed are the new instructors. If we have accidentally left someone off, please let us know. We encourage you to team up to teach. It's fun, easier and a great way to support each other. Just call the Austin office if you would like to team up with one of these new instructors.

SCOTT BREWER	ACKERLY	ERNEST JOHN	FRIENDSWOOD	MARCUS OCONNOR	LA PORTE
ELIZABETH ROTOLO	ALVIN	TARA ALLRED	FORT WORTH	MEGHAN MARLER	LEAGUE CITY
KEVIN BOHLIN	ARGYLE	JENNIFER BELL	FORT WORTH	CHRISTINE KLEBBA	LEWISVILLE
TIMOTHY CULBERSON	ARGYLE	BLAIR BUTLER	FORT WORTH	TOMMY SNOOK	LIVINGSTON
GARY HANKS	ARLINGTON	STEVE COFER	FORT WORTH	JOE TARTER	LLANO
ELLEN STRINGER	ARLINGTON	CINDI COLLINS	FORT WORTH	JAMES HAYNES	LORAIN
SHANNON LAYMAN	AUBREY	LAURIE CRADDOCK	FORT WORTH	LYNITA FOSTER	MADISONVILLE
JAYNE CAMPBELL	AUSTIN	JULIE HARRIS	FORT WORTH	KEVIN BERRIGAN	MAGNOLIA
MICHAEL CATES	AUSTIN	VICKI HOPKINS	FORT WORTH	BRANT LEE	MINEOLA
DAVID CLAUSS	AUSTIN	LAURA LECKMAN	FORT WORTH	MATTHEW BUCKNER	NORTHLAKE
BEN COCHRAN	AUSTIN	CYNTHIA MCMAHON	FORT WORTH	STEVEN MONKRES	PARIS
LORI DAVIS	AUSTIN	NATALIE MOFFITT	FORT WORTH	OBI NWELCE	PEARLAND
GREGORY DODSON	AUSTIN	VICTOR PYLE	FORT WORTH	ADAN URESTI	PEARLAND
CECELIA DUCKWORTH	AUSTIN	MARTHA RUNNELS	FORT WORTH	DARRELL KURTZ	PEARSALL
NICOLE GARCIA	AUSTIN	MICHELLE SHILLING	FORT WORTH	RANDELL GLASCOCK	PILOT POINT
TRACI GARLINGTON	AUSTIN	ANN SNODGRASS	FORT WORTH	KENNETH ALLISON	PORTER
THAIS GURICH	AUSTIN	KENNETH WENDEL	FORT WORTH	PAMELA KEMPEN	POTEET
RAYMOND HOLDRIDGE	AUSTIN	THOMAS LINTON	GALVESTON	RICKY KING	RHOME
LESLIE HUVLER	AUSTIN	ROBIN KOLTON	GEORGETOWN	KATHLEEN DUNIKOSKI	ROANOKE
JACOB JOHNSON	AUSTIN	ROBERT CROMWELL	GIDDINGS	DAVID ERB	ROANOKE
SHYMANIC JONES	AUSTIN	GAIL GIDDENS	GRAND PRAIRIE	JOE GUERIN	ROANOKE
ROSS KEELING	AUSTIN	JILL MARTINSON	GRAND PRAIRIE	MICHELLE GUERIN	ROANOKE
DEVIN KLASER	AUSTIN	DALE McDANIEL	GROESBECK	MATTHEW MCMILLAN	ROUND ROCK
KEITH KREITNER	AUSTIN	JOSEPH LILES	HALLAND	CHELSEA ALLISON	SAGINAW
TAHLYA PAYNTER	AUSTIN	JOSEPH OLINGER	HALTOM CITY	MARSHALL MILES	SALADO
HALEH PEDRAM	AUSTIN	MICHAEL BROUSSARD	HAMSHIRE	DANIEL KEMPEN	SAN ANTONIO
KIMBERLY PFIRRMANN	AUSTIN	DAYNA HORAK	HASLET	LORIE KEMPEN	SAN ANTONIO
LISA ROBERTS	AUSTIN	TAYLOR BLISS	HOUSTON	RICHARD MATHENEY	SAN MARCOS
RONALD ROBERTS	AUSTIN	CARLOS CRUZ	HOUSTON	CARLOS RODRIGUEZ	SAN MARCOS
MIRIAM ROCHA	AUSTIN	GREGORY CUMMINGS	HOUSTON	MICHAEL BLAND	SANTA FE
LEIGH ANN SEDAM	AUSTIN	JAMES DAVIS	HOUSTON	JOSHUA ANDERSON	SEGUIN
EMILY WILLIAMS	AUSTIN	CEDNIC ENGLISH	HOUSTON	KRISTIE WELLER	SEGUIN
ERIC WILLIAMS	AUSTIN	BILLY GILBERT	HOUSTON	JILL RYAN	SOUTHLAKE
KENNETH BENSON	BARTLETT	SENECA JOHNSON	HOUSTON	SHAYNE ELLIS	SPRING
LAURA KLEKAR	BENBROOK	ABEL LARA	HOUSTON	WENDY KENNEDY	SPRINGTOWN
DENNY BARNHART	BURLESON	ANDY LOPEZ	HOUSTON	ADAM LAMPMAN	ST HEDWIG
LESLIE CROOK	BURLESON	DOMINIC MAZUCH	HOUSTON	D'ANNA GREEN	STEPHENVILLE
AMANDA PEART	BURLESON	JAMES OLIVER	HOUSTON	DENISE CARTER	TEMPLE
PHIL GARRETT	CANTON	DENISE REID	HOUSTON	STEVEN RIEVES	TEMPLE
RICHARD NEW	CHESTER	VICTOR RIVERA	HOUSTON	CARLTEN BEARD	TEXAS CITY
RUFFIN NELMS	COLLEGE STATION	SEDRICK WESTBROOK	HOUSTON	GARY ALLEN	TRENTON
CHRISTENE HELTON	CONROE	VON WILSON	HOUSTON	MISAIL TSAPOS	TROPHY CLUB
TIMOTHY ROBERTS	CONROE	JAMES HILL	HUNTSVILLE	MICHAEL SWEARINGEN	WEBSTER
TEDDY LEVRON	CYPRESS	PRASAD DASARI	IRVING	JACK CARTER	WHITNEY
CHE HENDRIX	DECATUR	TREY ALEY	JUSTIN	BILL EDNEY	WILLIS
JASON BARNES	DEER PARK	TERESA HOLEYFIELD	JUSTIN		
MARIA JENNINGS	DEL VALLE	MIKE DAVIS	KATY		
JOE WALDRUM JR	DEWEYVILLE	BRIAN JOHNSON	KELLER		
MARK DAIGLE	EAST BERNARD	JAMES LOVERN	KELLER		
RAUI DARA	FLOWER MOUND	CLARA SILBERNAGEL	KELLER		
JUSTIN TOMASCIK	FRANKLIN	LEE FRITSCH	LA GRANGE		

FLY FISHING INSTRUCTORS:

ROBERT HENKE	FREDRICKSBURG
DIANNE WILLIAMS	KERRVILLE
BILLY ELGIN	KERRVILLE

Abilene PALS EXPOse Their True Colors

LARRY CONDRA – Angler Education Instructor, Abilene

Texas Parks & Wildlife Expo 2005. Wow!! What a wonderful event for outdoor enthusiasts like me who enjoy fishing, boating and bird hunting. TPWD's Expo (this year was my second visit) is a wonderful place to see new innovations in the outdoor industry and meet new people to network with.

But more importantly, I was able to bring with me my PALS this year. PALS are high school students in a class that I teach titled, "Peer Assistance & Leadership Skills" (PALS). These students mentor elementary students by teaching them fishing, camping, outdoor cooking and orienteering.

Of course, my PALS often have to learn these skills first themselves. A TPWD Coop grant enabled me to purchase equipment for this class so that I could begin teaching my PALS those skills. I am grateful for that opportunity. This is the beginning of our third year in the program we call the Abilene High School PALS Outdoor Adventure.

At Expo, my PALS got to experience all the fun outdoor activities that they will share with younger students, but they really showed

their true colors when they lent a hand at the Junior Angler tent. They volunteered for four hours on Saturday, introducing young ones to fishing. They did a fabulous job and I am very proud of them. Expo increased their enthusiasm for the outdoors and for teaching elementary students outdoor skills. Thanks to TPWD for a fun, informative Expo and thanks to Aquatic Education for allowing us to have fun with them the first Saturday of October.

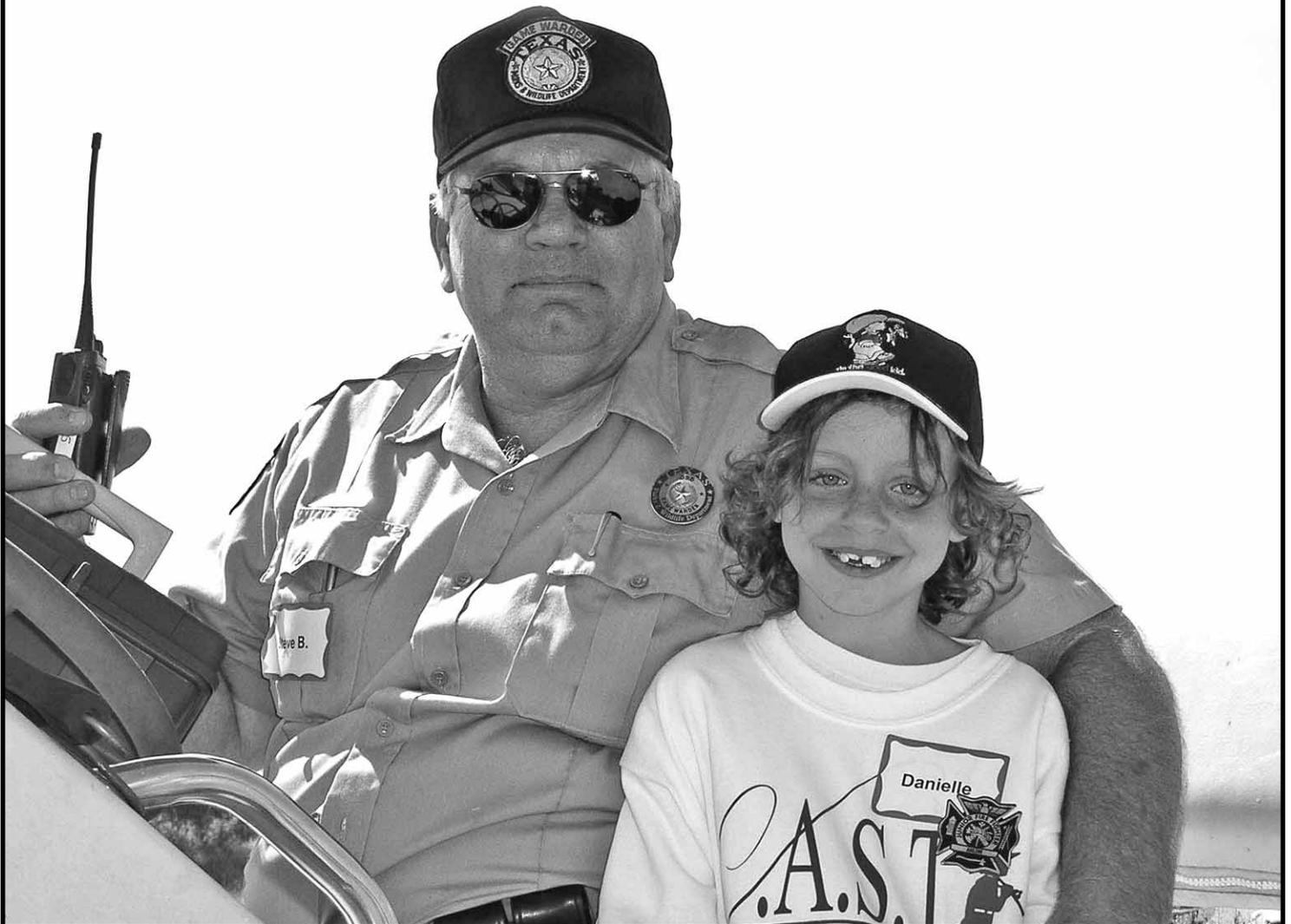


*Thanks to all those who
volunteered at Expo. YOU
made the event a success!*

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sea Center Texas in Lake Jackson

- 12/5 to 3/15 **Sea Center Texas Visitor Center will be closed** for needed repairs. Staff will be on duty Monday through Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Fish hatchery tours will be available on a limited, reservation-only basis. **Hatchery Tours** – Tour one of the largest redfish hatcheries in the world. Hatchery tours by reservation only Tuesday through Friday. For more information call (979) 292-0100.
- 2/25 **Catch and Release Youth Fishing; 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.**
For more information call, (979) 292-0100 or www.tpwd.state.tx.us/fish
Youth planning to fish will need to bring their own rod, reel, tackle and bait. Cut squid or fresh dead shrimp work well fished on the bottom. Barbless hooks are easier to remove and less stressful to the fish to be released.
- 5/20 **Gordon the Grouper's Birthday Party** – Celebrate with us as kids of all ages are invited to explore coastal mystery boxes and make a fish print. Birthday cake and lemonade will be served. Visitors are assured to have lots of fun and photo opportunities. 10 a.m.-noon; admission is free, but donations are appreciated; call for more information (979) 292-0100.





UPCOMING EVENTS

Sea Center Texas, continued

6/3 **Catch and Release Youth Fishing; 8 a.m. to 10 a. m.** Youth planning to fish will need to bring their own rod, reel, tackle and bait. Cut squid or fresh dead shrimp work well fished on the bottom. Barbless hooks are easier to remove and less stressful to the fish to be released. Call for more information (979) 292-0100.

Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center in Athens

- Dec. to Mar. **Annual Trout Harvest.** Catch and keep trout at the Center's 1.5-acre pond. No fishing license or trout stamp needed. Pay \$5 for the opportunity to harvest five fish – regular entrance fee.
- 3/4 **Fly Fish Texas.** Learn about fly fishing through seminars, demonstrations and hands-on practice. Free with admission. Special programs for junior anglers. For information call (903) 670-2222.
- 4/1 **Mini-Expo.** Various divisions of TPWD will conduct hands-on activities that will build your fishing, hunting, birding and camping skills and tell you where to go to apply them in East Texas. Free with admission.
- 4/23-24 **Digital Photography Workshop.** See the latest equipment from Canon and learn how to use it from TPWD Chief Photographer Earl Nottingham. Fee charged.
- 6/3 **National Fishing Day.** Celebrate with a fun day fishing and learning about the wonders of the aquatic world. Children admitted free.
- 6/18 **Fathers and Grandfathers Fishing Day.** Bring your favorite fishing buddy to TFFC for an afternoon of fun and fishing. Free with admission.
- 7/4 **Fireworks at the Fishery.** See one of the largest fireworks shows in East Texas. Admission is free after 5 p.m. Fireworks begin at dark.
- 7/11-14 **CampFish.** Day camp for youngsters ages nine to 15 to learn about fish and fishing. Fee charged. For information call (903) 670-2211.
- on-going **Catfish Harvest.** Catch and keep catfish at the Center's 1.5-acre pond. No fishing license required. Regular entrance fee plus \$10 for the opportunity to harvest five fish.

Dates subject to change; please call (903) 676-2277 for the latest information.

Angler Education Instructor Workshops

- 1/21 Huntsville – Huntsville State Park.
Flyfishing Instructor Workshop. Brenda Justice:
brenda.justice@tpwd.state.tx.us or (281) 534-0123
- Grand Prairie – North Texas Education Center.
Basic Fishing Instructor Workshop.
Steve Campbell: stephen.campbell@tpwd.state.tx.us
or (972) 263-0427
- 2/4 Brownsville – University of Texas at Brownsville.
Basic Fishing Instructor Workshop.
Dr. Rey Ramirez: reynaldo.ramirez@utb.edu or
(956) 639-3426
- 2/18 San Antonio – Government Canyon State Park.
Basic Fishing Instructor Workshop. Peggy York:
peggy.york@sbcglobal.net or (210) 647-7053
- 2/18 Houston – Gander Mountain at Hwy. 290 and
F.M. 1960; **Basic Fishing Instructor Workshop;**
James Galpin: (713) 463-5814 or
jgalpin@houston.rr.com
- 2/18 Grand Prairie – North Texas Education Center.
Basic Fishing Instructor Workshop.
Steve Campbell: stephen.campbell@tpwd.state.tx.us
or (972) 263-0427
- 3/18 Grand Prairie – North Texas Education Center.
Basic Fishing Instructor Workshop.
Steve Campbell: stephen.campbell@tpwd.state.tx.us
or (972) 263-0427
- 4/15 Houston – Gander Mountain at Hwy. 290 and
F.M. 1960; **Basic Fishing Instructor Workshop;**
James Galpin: (713) 463-5814 or
jgalpin@houston.rr.com
- 4/22 Grand Prairie – North Texas Education Center.
Basic Fishing Instructor Workshop.
Steve Campbell: stephen.campbell@tpwd.state.tx.us
or (972) 263-0427
- 5/20 Grand Prairie – North Texas Education Center.
Basic Fishing Instructor Workshop.
Steve Campbell: stephen.campbell@tpwd.state.tx.us
or (972) 263-0427
- 6/17 Grand Prairie – North Texas Education Center.
Basic Fishing Instructor Workshop.
Steve Campbell: stephen.campbell@tpwd.state.tx.us
or (972) 263-0427



It Ain't Bragging, continued

Alissa has a fishing fundamentals video. In it a dad and daughter are fishing. She has learned that you don't play with hooks, you must wear a life vest, and you don't get too close to the edge. She has copied how the little girl reels in her fish on the video, then lifts her line and swings it over and out of the water. She has also developed the habit of petting her fish.

Now in just a few months, Alissa has four **State Junior Records**, two **State Records** (all ages), and several **Catch and Release, Water Body** and **Outstanding Angler Awards**. We're running out of wall space to hang her certificates. Not bad for a three-year-old girl! Now when she goes in for her monthly treatment, and to get her mind off some of the traumatic procedures, we have the nurses ask her about her fishing and admire her pictures. Happily she is often distracted from the needles and IVs.

Fishing is her therapy and escape and her TPWD Awards are a positive in her life.



Let the truth be known that Alissa has been out-fishing many adults, including a North Texas Angler Education Area Chief (her grandfather). One time, we got into a back-and-forth, one-bigger contest. In the end, she topped my six-pound channel catfish with a seven-pounder! Joe Pool Lake's old record for All Ages and Junior Water Body Record for Rod and Reel was less than six pounds. So watch out for a three-year-old girl with a "Barbie" rod and reel combo, cane pole and maybe a regular size rod and reel – your ego may take a beating! I personally love it when any kid gets the best of me. She has a secret method and bait, but that's another fish story.

Mark Carpenter, Area Chief in Dallas/Fort Worth and Grandpa

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