

CURRENTS

February / March 2020



CAUGHT REDHANDED

*In San Antonio Bay
alone, 300
oyster boats
dredged public reefs.*

Advocacy Need For Change, Continued

HB 2321: Regulations on oyster dredging now underway

On February 20th in Victoria, the House Committee on Culture, Recreation and Tourism plans to meet to discuss House Bill 2321, which relates to the regulation of oyster harvesting on public oyster reefs.

The bill, sponsored by Representative Geanie Morrison (R-30) and Senator Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa (D-30), was passed in effort to clean up language in the statute regarding the harvest of undersize oysters and increase penalties for commercial oyster fishing in closed waters. The hope was an enhanced penalty structure for recurrent or egregious violations would deter commercial oyster fishers from violating regulations established to create a sustainable oyster fishery.

Sadly, these efforts are continually undermined by the commercial oyster fishery. During a week-long operation in mid-December 2019, Texas Parks and Wildlife Texas Game Wardens worked with border patrol, customs officers, United States Coast Guard (USCG) and Calhoun County Sheriff's office to conduct water safety, seafood sales inspections, along with recreational and commercial fishing compliance. Law enforcement officials made 644 contacts, resulting in hundreds of citations and warnings for regulation violations. On a single day of observation, an estimated 300 oyster boats were dredging public oyster reefs in San Antonio Bay alone.

The combined effort by law enforcement officials resulted in the following:

- A total of 644 contacts were made resulting in 93 citations and 239 warnings being issued.
- A total of 3 citations for over the daily bag limit of oysters were filed.
- A total of 4 subjects were arrested for possession of undersize oysters-3rd or more (Class B misdemeanor).
- Approximately 8 pounds of shucked oyster meat was discovered on a commercial oyster vessel.
- A total of 4 boats containing 11 subjects were arrested for oystering at night in San Antonio Bay (Class B Misdemeanors).
- A total of 22 vessels were cited for possession of undersized oysters ranging from 10-28% undersized.
- 533 sacks of live oysters weighing 58,300 pounds were returned to San Antonio Bay.
- USCG and TPWD cited nineteen vessels for the 75/25 rule (no more than 25% unlicensed seamen aboard a vessel) with 1 undocumented alien referral to Border Patrol and 2 Non-US Master License Violations.
- TPWD inspected 51 fish houses and dealers. A total of 6 citations and 10 warnings were issued.
- A total of 4 subjects were arrested for oystering within a Health Department restricted area. Two of the subjects with previous oystering violation convictions for the same charge will be enhanced to state jail felonies.



Caught Redhanded

An estimated 300 oyster boats were dredging public oyster reefs in San Antonio Bay alone. Law Enforcement officials made 644 contacts, resulting in hundreds of citations and warnings for regulation violations.

- A total of 2 subjects were arrested for offering sale a total of 13 plastic bags containing oyster meat not properly labeled. One of the subjects also attempted to sale 10 ten bags of shrimp.
- A total of 2 subjects on oyster boats were arrested for possession of a controlled substance (methamphetamine).

Prior to this season, San Antonio Bay was closed for two years to allow it to recover from previous fishing pressure. TPWD conservatively estimates that 2.75 million pounds of oysters with a wholesale value of \$1 million were removed from San Antonio Bay on a weekly basis during December 2019. CCA Texas members have counted in excess of 400 oyster vessels docked in Seadrift on the weekends, so it is likely that the harvest levels are higher than estimated. Repeatedly issuing Class C misdemeanors is not a deterrent for oyster fishing violations and the mindset of the fishermen is that the risk is well worth the reward.

As highlighted by our article "Need for Change" in the June/July edition of Currents, time and time again the commercial oyster fishery has demonstrated that they can't self-regulate and have little regard for the sustainability of public oyster reefs.

We appreciate our Texas lawmakers taking a hard look at the effectiveness of recent legislative actions. Perhaps some new approaches are warranted. Perhaps some regulation and resource education for the fishermen is needed. Perhaps the individuals and vessels that continually violate the regulations should be excluded

from the fishery. One thing is certain, we should not accept the status quo and should work towards a sustainable and accountable commercial oyster fishery.

We'd like to extend a special thank you to our Texas Game Wardens and their enforcement partners for their remarkable work on San Antonio Bay to clean up this dirty fishery. Next time you see a game warden, be sure to tell them how much you appreciate their conservation efforts!



*Texas Game Wardens, Serving Texans since 1895
Law Enforcement Off the Pavement*



Enhancing Flounder Stock Enhancement

By: Hunter Bailey and Lee A. Fuiman

In response to a declining trend in the Southern Flounder population, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) has undertaken efforts to revive flounder stocks in Texas waters. Among those efforts is a stock enhancement program, which began in 2009. Many factors influence the success of a stock enhancement program, among them, post-release survival is paramount. The performance of young fish after release, especially predator evasion and searching for food, is critical to their survival. It is important to take steps to ensure hatchery produced fish stand the best chance at surviving in bay waters after stocking. Research conducted at the Fisheries and Mariculture Laboratory (FAML) of the University of Texas Marine Science Institute in Port Aransas, Texas has shown that anti-predator performance of redfish larvae depends, in part, on the nutrition that adult redfish receive leading up to and during the spawning season. Preliminary research suggests the same may be true for Southern Flounder. A new research project, supported by the TPWD and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, aims to determine the extent to which different diets affect egg quality and larval performance of Southern Flounder, with the goal of improving hatchery methods used for the stock enhancement program.

Omega-3's may be key

Most people are aware that essential fatty acids (EFAs), especially omega-3's, are important for human health, but they are also crucial for fishes, especially during early development. They are considered "essential" because fish, like humans, cannot produce them in sufficient amounts to meet their nutritional needs and so they must obtain these EFAs from their food.

Adult female flounder use nutrients from their diets to create the yolk in their eggs, and the yolk is the material the young fish use to develop and grow before they start catching their own food about 6 days after the eggs are fertilized. This is a critical period for young flounder because it is when they begin developing their organs and tissues. That development continues after they start feeding on their own, but if the appropriate nutrition is not present in the yolk, there can be severe consequences such as deformities, incomplete development, or even early death.

It is important, therefore, to know whether the adult diet of southern flounder can be optimized to improve egg quality and larval performance so that when young flounder are released, they have better chances of survival. The primary goals of this research project are to understand how different diets fed to adult flounder affect the EFA composition of eggs, and in turn, the performance of young flounder in the ecologically important activities of foraging and predator evasion.

In a recent pilot study, Dr. Lee Fuiman and former grad-

uate student Corinne Burns began to explore some of these questions. Their work revealed that the omega-3 fatty acid known as DHA appears to be important for predator evasion in flounder larvae. One-month-old flounder that had higher amounts of DHA in their body were better able to escape a simulated predator than larvae that had lower amounts of DHA in their body. Interestingly, the researchers also found that the amount of DHA in the body of larvae may be determined by the amount of a different EFA (known as DPA) in their eggs, and this was true even when the larvae were feeding on a diet that contained plenty of DHA (Figure 1). This reinforces the critical importance of the adult diet and egg quality and the complicated relationship between adult diet and performance of young fish. These findings, published in the *Journal of Experimental Marine Biology and Ecology*, laid the foundation for the research project that is beginning now.

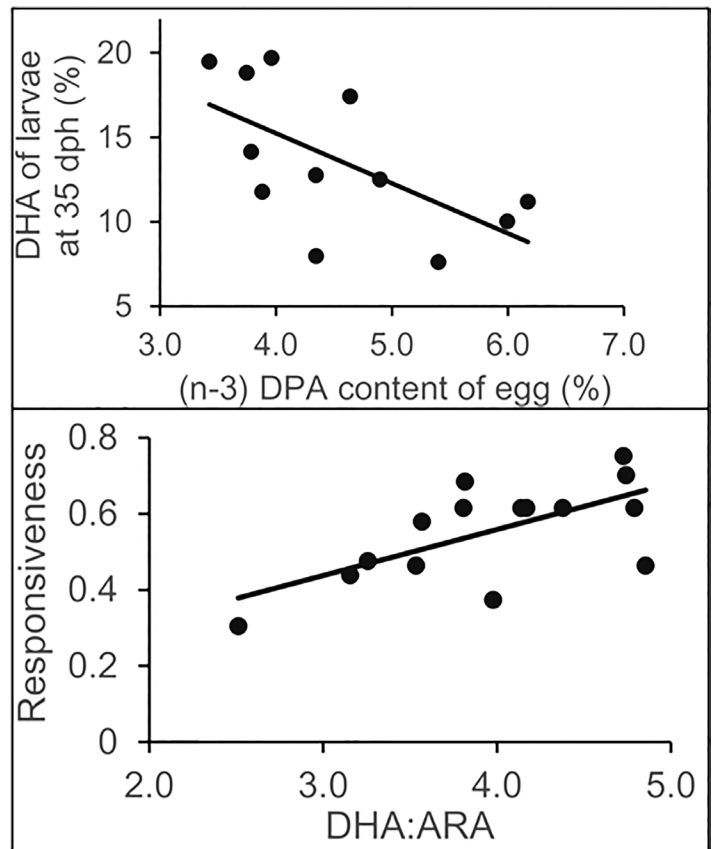


Figure 1. (A) DHA in 35-day-old Southern Flounder larvae is negatively correlated with the amount of another fatty acid (DPA) in eggs. (B) Responsiveness of larvae is positively correlated with the amount of DHA in larval tissue. Adapted from Burns and Fuiman, 2019

Current Research

Dr. Fuiman and graduate student Hunter Bailey are collaborating with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department facilities at the CCA Marine Development Center (Corpus Christi) and Sea Center Texas (Lake Jackson). Their research will examine several critical steps that connect adult diet to larval performance.

First, they will examine how the fatty acid composition of eggs varies when adults are fed different diets. At FAML, adult flounder exclusively consume either brown shrimp or

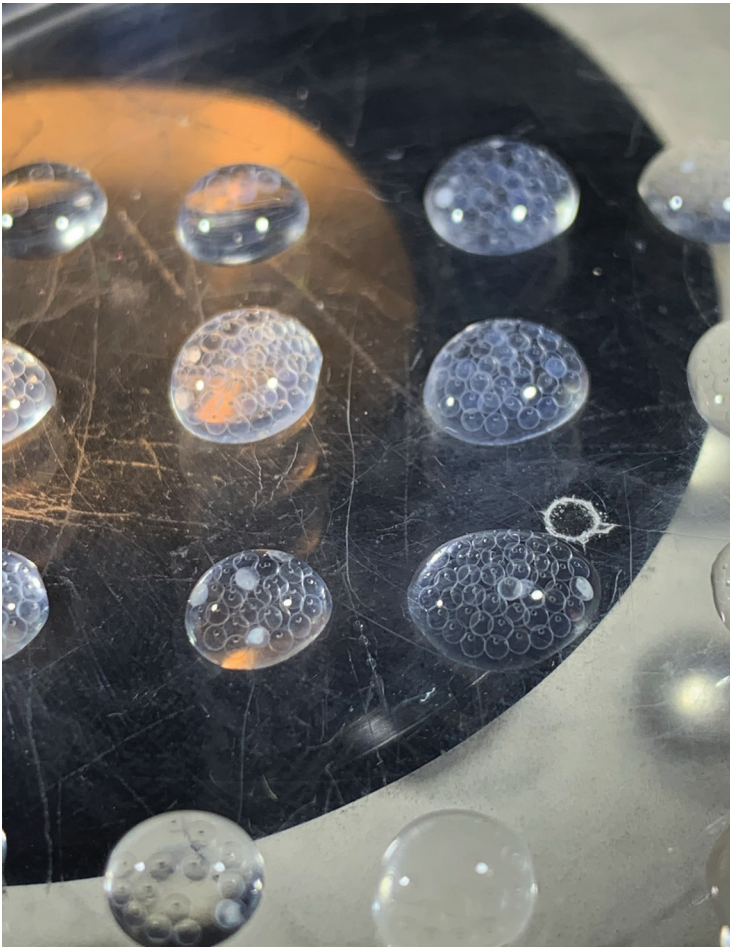


Figure 2. Eggs from southern flounder may allow researchers to understand which EFAs are most important for larval performance. Photo: Hunter Bailey



Figure 3. Researchers at FAML strip-spawn a southern flounder to obtain eggs to assess egg fatty acid composition and its relation to maternal diet. Photo: Hunter Bailey

Spanish sardines while at the two TPWD facilities flounder are being fed a combination of shrimp and squid. By comparing the fatty acid profiles of eggs from these different sources with the fatty acid profiles of the different diets, the researchers will determine whether egg composition varies with diet and which of the 27 fatty acids that are found in eggs can be altered by adjusting the adult diet of adult fish.

The researchers will also assess the quality of eggs from these different sources. Quality is measured in terms of the number of eggs produced (Figure 2), fertilization rate, hatching success rate, and the size of larvae at hatching. Knowing whether a particular diet produces higher quality eggs could lead to improvements in hatchery practices.

To obtain the eggs for these experiments, researchers mimic the natural seasonal progression of daylight (photo-period) and temperature to simulate the spawning season and get the adults into breeding condition. Once the fish are ready to spawn, females are gently pressed so that they release their eggs into a beaker. The same technique is applied to males to release their milt to fertilize the eggs. This process, known as strip-spawning produces 1000,000 or more very small eggs. (Figure 3).

In the third phase of the project, larvae will be reared from eggs obtained from the different adult diet groups. The survival skills of larvae will be measured at two stages, 15 and 35 days after hatching. Those survival skills relate to foraging – the rate at which young fish are able to encounter food – and predator evasion – the likelihood that a larva would be able to escape from an attacking predator. Since larvae from all adult diet groups will be reared in the same way and on the same diet, any differences in survival skills between the groups will be due to the effects of the mother's diet.

This project will take nearly two years to complete, but the overall objective is to provide science-based information that will inform decision-makers on feedstuffs and hatchery practices that could improve survival of released fish and make the stock enhancement program more effective.

"The views and conclusions contained in this document are those of the authors and should not be interpreted as representing the opinions or policies of the U.S. Government or the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and its funding sources. Mention of trade names or commercial products does not constitute their endorsement by the U.S. Government, or the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation or its funding sources."

Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission Discusses Southern Flounder

The Texas Park and Wildlife (TPW) Commission met on January 22, 2020 to discuss status of the southern flounder and reviewed options they have at their disposal to neutralize or reverse declines in the fishery. The TPW Commission will likely vote at their March 25-26th meeting and potentially seek to adopt regulations changes.

Unfortunately, due to the timing of this publication, we are not able to communicate the exact proposals that the TPW Commission seeks to adopt. After the TPW Commission announces an official proposal to change southern flounder regulations, CCA Texas will be able to develop a position statement – this will require a vote by the board. That vote will either take place at the State Board of Directors Meeting to be held on February 25, 2020 or sooner via email to the Executive Board, depending on the timing of regional TPW public meetings.

We all should recognize that something should be done to help southern flounder populations as we are experiencing repeated recruitment failures in the fishery. We hope that when public hearings and public comment opportunities are announced that you take the time to participate in the regulatory process. We will email CCA Texas members when these meetings are announced.

Please visit the flounder resource and information page - <https://ccatexas.org/flounder-information-and-resources/>

And as always, feel free to call or email me if you have any questions regarding southern flounder data or the regulation process. —**Shane Bonnot** 281-953-6612 sbonnot@ccatexas.org



Photo: Sam Caldwell, underwater Olympus TG-6

Abandoned Crab traps 2020

*Sixteen years: more than 33,000 derelict traps removed.
Here comes seventeen.*

More than 33,000 derelict traps have been taken out of the water in the past 16 years, preventing the wasteful loss of as many as one million blue crabs, as well as untold numbers of fish and other marine life that would have fallen prey to "ghost" crab traps that continue killing after abandonment.

The crabbing closure period is **Friday, February 21 to March 1, 2020**. Help is needed throughout the closure, but **Saturday, February 22** will be the main mobilization day, with **Saturday, February 29** the bad weather backup day. Please save the dates on your calendars.

The plan for 2020 will be similar to last year. For Port O'Connor area workers, be aware that there will be a celebratory party at Hooper's Boat Grille in Port O'Connor on Saturday evening, February 22.

Removing abandoned crab traps is a wet and dirty job. Wear appropriate clothing and wet gear, such as waders. Some items that can greatly assist in the removal of traps include tarps, trap hooks and gloves and can be provided by your local TPWD Coastal Fisheries office. You will be required to sign a volunteer liability release form at the collection site. And don't forget, organisms like crabs may not be retained in these traps. —**Sam Caldwell**

For more information about the Abandoned Crab Trap Removal Program, please contact **Zack Thomas** at 512-389-8448. You may also contact the TPWD field stations listed for specific details on collection sites. *Drop off locales are on page 6.*



The Camo Crab Trap Boat in 2019: Retriever Chester assists Chris Smisek in boating an abandoned trap in San Antonio Bay. Photo: Sam Caldwell, Olympus TG-6

Abandoned Crab Trap Drop Off Locales:

Sabine Lake: Port Arthur Field Station (409) 983-1104

Galveston Bay: Dickinson Marine Lab (281) 534-0105

Matagorda Bay: Palacios Field Station (361) 972-6253

San Antonio Bay: Port O'Connor Field Station (361) 983-4425

Aransas Bay & Corpus Christi Bay: Rockport Marine Lab (361) 729-2328

Upper Laguna Madre: Corpus Christi Field Station / (361) 825-3353

Lower Laguna Madre: Brownsville Field Station / (956) 350-4490

Allen Berger, San Antonio Bay Partnership:

We need more boats out of Charlie's and Seadrift. We have made significant progress on the POC area. Organized efforts will also occur out of Rockport, Port Lavaca, and Palacios, so you will have plenty of places to chose from. Planning is in progress, more to come later. The main volunteer effort to remove traps is Saturday, February 22.

Here is what is new for the February 21-March 1, 2020 closure: I am requesting all boats use a smart phone app to mark each trap and collect certain data. I suggest a member of your crew be assigned this role. Training will be provided.

There are opportunities to sign up for adjacent bays (Aransas, Lavaca, Matagorda). To sign-up, email me at allanrberger@outlook.com and tell me your preferred area and date. If you need crew, I will attempt to match you with volunteers who are boat-less.

RSVP for the Celebratory Party at **Hooper's** in Port O'Connor

on Saturday evening, February 22 (sponsored by GBRA). Please include the number of people attending.

Send the email address of the data coordinator in your crew so we can create a username and password for accessing the data program. And, the mobile phone of the Captain for last minute changes and on-the-water emergencies.

See the **San Antonio Bay Partnership Crab Trap Removal Program** for more details.

Looking forward to the event—it will be fun again! Call or email questions.

—**Allan Berger**

allanrberger@outlook.com 713-829-2852



Nearshore Reefing Efforts Continue Along the Texas Coast

Nearshore reefing efforts continue to grow along the Texas coast. CCA Texas partners, Friends of RGV Reef (FRGVR), continue to lead the way in reefing efforts, and are currently in the middle of another large deployment that began in early January. CCA Texas has also partnered with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's (TPWD) Nearshore Reefing Program for two efforts that will take place in 2020 at Galveston's Big Man's and Kate's Reef areas, and in Sabine at the Sabine HI20 site. These partnerships remain a driving force in the effort to create and restore critical marine habitat in the nearshore waters along the Texas coast.

FRGVR has set the standard for reefing efforts along the Texas coast. At 1,600 acres, the Rio Grande Valley reefing site is the largest nearshore site in Texas waters. The current effort will deploy 10,000 tons of materials in the 400 acre nursery area called the CCA Nursery. This deployment will consist of 54 low relief reef patches. Each patch is made up with 25 tons of concrete railroad ties, 25 tons of broken concrete and 6 pallets (420 blocks) of cinderblocks. In addition, there will be 16 patch reefs made up of 250 tons of concrete railroad ties each in a line north of the reef to provide protection to the nursery reef. Capping it all off will be another 1,500 tons of material placed in the SE corner of the reef site, known as the CCA corner.

To date, CCA Texas and Building Conservation Trust have pro-



Photos courtesy of Lisa Laskowski



vide \$611,000 in funding to reefing efforts in the Rio Grande Valley Reef site.

CCA Texas and Building Conservation Trust have partnered with Texas Parks and Wildlife on two projects in the Upper Texas Coast. CCA Texas, BCT and Shell Oil Company are providing \$329,000 in funding for reefing efforts in the Galveston Big Man and Kate's Reef areas that will provide an additional 155 pyramids and additional low relief modules. This additional funding will supplement a \$1.5 million effort by TPWD that will deploy 845 pyramids and 180 low relief modules in these two sites. Funding Partners CCA Texas, BCT and TPWD will deploy 150 pyramids into the Sabine HI20 Site. This \$230,000 project will be funded by \$100,000 from CCA Texas and BCT, \$100,000 from Sempra Energy, and \$30,000 from Cheniere Energy.

CCA Texas will continue to work with these local partners and Friends of Sabine Reefs to provide marine habitat along the nearshore coastal waters. These partnerships are crucial, and CCA Texas is proud to be a part of the efforts.

If you have any questions about CCA Texas and Building Conservation Trusts habitat efforts, please contact John Blaha at jdblaha@ccatexas.org for more information.





PROUD PARTNERS IN CONSERVATION

7% of the proceeds from each CCA-branded item sold goes to support habitat restoration.



Academy[®]
SPORTS+OUTDOORS

A dark grey t-shirt with a logo that reads "19" on the left, a stylized orange fish jumping in the center, and "77" on the right. Below this, the word "COASTAL" is written in large, teal, block letters. Underneath "COASTAL", the words "CONSERVATION" and "ASSOC" are written in smaller, white, block letters, separated by two teal wavy lines.

19  77
COASTAL
CONSERVATION
ASSOC

A navy blue t-shirt with a logo that reads "19" on the left, a stylized yellow fish jumping in the center, and "77" on the right. Below this, the words "COASTAL CONSERVATION ASSOC." are written in white, block letters, and "USA" is written in white, block letters at the bottom, all enclosed within a thin yellow rectangular border.

19  77
**COASTAL
CONSERVATION
ASSOC.**
USA

THE TEXAS GULF COAST INITIATIVE



THE TEXAS GULF COAST NEEDS YOU NOW.

Your gift to CCA's National Habitat Program, the Building Conservation Trust (BCT), is vital to make a positive impact on marine habitat creation and restoration, from coast to coast. Every dollar you give to BCT is leveraged multiple times to create a conservation impact far beyond your initial gift. Start making a difference now for marine habitat, fish, outdoorsmen and future generations by making your gift to BCT's Texas Gulf Coast Initiative.

Don't wait. Call BCT at (713) 626-4234 today to speak with our fundraising staff for your area.



Since the creation of Habitat Today for Fish Tomorrow (HTFT) by the CCA Texas Executive Board in 2009, CCA Texas has been a partner in 36 projects along the Texas coast with a total contribution of over \$5.6 Million. Project partners include: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Galveston Bay Foundation, Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program, Harte Research Institute, Aransas County, San Antonio Bay Foundation and Texas Ducks Unlimited.

BUILDING
CONSERVATION
TRUST 

CCA's National Habitat Program



Upper Coast

By Capt. Ralph Frazier

Think Shallow, near Deep

After 45 years of guiding in Galveston Bay and off-shore, you'd think I'd be tired of it. Every day at the boat ramp I listen to all the old guides saying, "Well, this is my last year." But as a new year comes and goes, they are still here. However, some things have changed. Our bodies don't function as great as they used to, the cold hurts more and the wind makes it terrible. What I'm saying is, you younger guy's better enjoy it while you can.

We don't have as many fish as in 1973, but there is one constant, with few exceptions: to catch a lot of fish as well as big speckled trout in the winter, you need to get out of the boat. The big trout in the winter are still in the same places--shallow water near deeper water. And, no matter which bay, find the bait and you'll find the fish.

I see people in the winter using whippy rods that don't allow a quick hook set. Okay for top water lures, but subsurface lures such as 51 series Mirrolure's, Corkys or Bass assassins need a stiffer rod with the light bites we get in the winter.

Be sure to pay close attention to your surroundings. In cold weather, if I see two or three mullet, I know I'm near the fish. Presentation is important; may be hard to remember after a couple of hours without a bite, but that can be the difference in catching a limit. The number one thing when I crank the 350hp Suzuki on my 26' Blue Wave is to look for a little deeper water with shallow water close that has some bait.

I hope you catch a lot of fish in 2020, but only keep what you'll eat. See you on the water. I'm never retiring to wake up every morning looking at all God's creations, beautiful sunrises and meeting so many wonderful people that I may be in Heaven.

—Capt. Ralph Frazier 281-337-0321

Ralph2fish@aol.com

Middle Coast

By Capt. Tommy Countz

Slow—and give topwaters a fling

It's hard for me to lump February and March fishing together. That's like comparing Winter and Spring. February is normally our coldest time of the year—but it may be the best time to catch that lifetime speckled trout. Water temperatures for the most part are going to be in the mid-to low 50's. Fish are going to be less aggressive, so you need to slow down the tempo. It's a great time to throw Corkys. I also like throwing Down South Color X, rigged on a 1/16 oz lead head. The light head allows you to lift a bait through the grass and work it slower. Heavier heads sink too fast in shallow water.

Our other mainstay is drifting scattered shell, mainly on the west end of East Bay. We'll be looking for off-color streaks of water. Now using heavier heads is the ticket (1/4 or 2/8 oz). I normally rig them with brighter color worms like Electric Chicken or chartreuse.

March can be an entirely different ball game. The same drill of drifting East Bay can produce some really nice fish. Water temperatures should be sneaking up quite a bit as we get towards the middle and end of March. Wading for big trout is still going strong, but now we start to key on bait fish and slicks. Warmer water means more aggressive fish. Don't be afraid to tie on a topwater and give it a fling.

Wading the south shore of Matagorda Bay for reds starts to fire up in March. Work the mouth of drains especially on a falling tide. Topwaters and 1/16 oz lead heads on Glo/chartreuse Little Johns can be deadly. Whatever you decide, pick some good weather, get out there and fire at 'em!

—Capt. Tommy Countz

281-450-4037 837 tcountz@sbcglobal.net

Lower Coast

By Capt. David Pena

Catch that dream trout—safely.

With deer season coming to an end, our minds and efforts turn towards fishing. I'm already seeing that this year is going to be a very productive fishing year as our winter has been fairly mild I have been focusing my fishing time on the chase for big trout.

Now, when I say big trout I am referring to 25-inch plus. Not exactly the best table fare, but definitely the kind that gets your heart pumping. I have been concentrating my efforts around the Yarbrough area, sticking to the east side drop offs and grass lines. The few exceptions to this have been windy days. Those days, I'll move to the Spoil Islands and work the calm side along the grass pockets. Of course, you will send the really large spotted ladies back for further duty, after getting a CPR photo as they swim safely away.

My go-to lures this time of year have been either Paul Browns, Corkys in the High Cotton Color on the clear water days, or Plumtrueuse on darker days. These lures are both available in sinking and suspending models. I will use both depending on the water temp and depth. Remember that cold weather makes any mis-adventure more serious, so be sure you and your crew are equipped for any unpleasant incident. And, watch out for fellow boaters needing help. Could be you next time.

I hope this bit of information helps you catch that dream trout. Don't forget to take your camera and get some good pictures and measurements for your taxidermist. Please be careful not to handle these fish too much and use your lip gripper to minimize the number of handlings. Know and obey the regulations.

Good luck, and hopefully I will see you out on the water! Look for me, I will be in my new boat, a 13-foot yellow inflatable.

—Capt. David Pena 361-765-0388

captaindavidpena@yahoo.com

Early morning top water action produced this beautiful 62-spotted, 21" redfish. CPR'd, of course, said angler Dustin Nichols.



CCA EDUCATION EDDY

EACH YEAR CCA TEXAS PROUDLY FUNDS:

- 15 Texas Parks and Wildlife Internships
- 4 Texas Parks and Wildlife Game Warden Internships
- 3 Marine Graduate Scholarships at UT Marine Science Institute
- 2 Marine Graduate Scholarships at A&M Corpus Christi
- 2 Marine Graduate Scholarships at A&M Galveston

Texas Parks and Wildlife Summer Internship

*Dear Coastal Conservation
Association Members:*

I would like to deeply thank you for providing the funding that allowed me to pursue this internship. Without the help of your organization I would never have been able to complete this great life experience.

I have gained so much valuable experience from this internship that will be helpful in my pursuit of a fisheries management career once I graduate from Texas A&M Galveston. The experience I gained in fisheries sampling techniques such as gill nets, gulf and bay trawls, seine nets, oyster dredges and bottom long line trips, as well as the experience I gained in identifying the various organisms in Galveston Bay and the Gulf of Mexico is invaluable and can be the difference in being hired for a fisheries position.

More importantly, your funding allowed me to have an unbelievably fun summer doing what I truly love to do with people who share my passion. I have made memories that will last with me for a lifetime and that was made possible by you. Thank you for providing me the opportunity to gain such a valuable and rewarding life experience.

Sincerely, Christopher Gunn

CCA Graduate Scholarship Texas A&M University Corpus Christi

Dear CCA Texas Scholarship Committee:

I am a master's student working in the lab of Dr. Benjamin Walther at Texas A&M – Corpus Christi, and a recent recipient of the CCA Texas Graduate Scholarship. Upon graduation, I plan to pursue employment through an organization such as NOAA's Marine Fisheries Division. I thoroughly enjoy the fisheries field and am happy to work in it in any capacity I can.

Currently, I am researching the migration behavior of red drum using the chemical signatures of their scales. Like the rings of a tree, fish scales grow in rings, and as they grow they trap elements in their structures. The amounts of these elements vary based on factors such as salinity, so we are interested in using them to explore how often red drum use freshwater environments. This research has a bonus as well. In the past, this kind of analysis has been done using the muscle tissue and otoliths of the fish.

Otoliths are the inner ear stones of a fish and removing them or muscle tissue is a process that kills the fish. Scales are advantageous structures to analyze because removing them doesn't kill the fish.

Tuition is always something I must borrow money for, and always a significant source of stress each semester. For the first time in my graduate education, I did not have to borrow money, and that is due to this scholarship. Thank you so much for funding this scholarship. It has absolutely changed my life.

Sincerely, Ethan Taubee Master's Student



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Chapter Updates

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We hope your New Year is off to a good start! Chapter planning is already in progress for 2020. We have put together our pre-banquet schedule for our **2020 Anglers' Night Out events. They will be: Tuesday, March 3; Tuesday, April 7; Tuesday, May 5; and Tuesday, June 2. We meet at 7:00 p.m. at Spring Creek BBQ in Pearland.** Come early if you plan to eat before the meeting starts. We are still working on scheduling our speakers as this is written, but stay tuned, we always have great folks in the line-up.

We have a tentative date for our 2020 Fund-raising Banquet. It will be held in June, but we are still waiting on confirmations to set the final date. We will firm up all the details in the next CURRENTS update. This is also the time of year we invite chapter members to consider joining our board. If you think you may have an interest in getting more involved with CCA and your local chapter, shoot us an email at **AlvinPearlandCCA@yahoo.com** to get the details. We work pretty hard putting our events together, but we always have a good time in the process!

The best way to stay up to date with our latest chapter events is to follow us on Facebook at **facebook.com/alvinpearlandcca** or go to our chapter website at **ccatexas.org/alvin-pearland**. We hope to see you at one of our Chapter Events this year! Don't forget to invite a friend to join you!

Aransas Bay
Bud Kittle 210-279-7309
ernestkittle@gmail.com

Happy New Year! It's that time of the year again! **Registration for Babes on the Bay 2020 is OPEN at babesonthabay.com!** It's time to book your



Another beautiful evening on Copano Bay, Rockport, Texas

guides, reserve your place to stay and get your teams prepared to fish the largest one-day tournament in the USA!

If you need assistance finding a guide, you can visit **ccatexas.org** or **cbga.org**. A team consists of a maximum of four women and one guide or boat driver. Please look at the website to find complete rules and tournament details. **Mark your calendars for May 15-16, 2020! Early registration ends April 15, late registration ends April 30!** The Babette Division (16 & under) is back, as well as Fly Fishing Division. We will be awarding prizes for the overall best dressed team and Redfish with the most spots again this year!

If you are interested in being a sponsor, please contact us ASAP to join an incredible group of sponsors! We are excited to announce that **Waterloo Rod Company is back again, Anastasia Musick Art Co, Big Tree Realty, L&F Distributing, Coastal Innovations, Orvis Swan Point Landing, Foreverlast, Smith Optics, Reel Skipper** and more! Babes on the Bay 2020 is going to be off the hook! You don't want to miss this! If you have any questions you can text Jen at 361-205-0182 or e-mail me at **ccababes@gmail.com** any time!

Our monthly meetings are held at Poor Man's Country Club the second Tuesday of the month at 6:00 p.m. Join us for updates, good conversation and Anglers' Nights Out with special guest speakers! We are a fun, welcoming group who is always looking for new volunteers! Tight lines, friends!

Austin
Jeff Beck 512-656-2964
ccaauspres@gmail.com

Welcome to the New Year fellow CCA members! Thank you for the great support in 2019, y'all did fantastic. With your support, the Austin Chapter was able to have another record-breaking year in 2019. **The 2020 Austin Banquet is just around the corner. Mark your calendar, purchase your table, and plan to rally for your organization on May 7, 2020.** The Austin Board has already started work to make things bigger and better than ever for CCA Austin's 41st Banquet! We are putting together a great lineup of top-notch food, drinks for all and quality entertainment on stage. Top bidders and lucky ticket holders will have the opportunity to win exotic trips, tons of guns, fishing gear, Yetis, boats, trucks and over \$100,000 worth of raffle items. With all this on the agenda the evening will prove to be exciting. Go to **ccaaustin.org** for table, individual and boat ticket sales. Seating and boat tickets for this ban-

quet are sure to sell out, so don't delay in purchasing!

A special thanks goes out to all of our generous sponsors. It's through their commitment to CCA that the Austin Banquet shines like no other. Space constraints don't allow us to acknowledge all of our sponsors in this newsletter, but please take a minute and check out the complete list of sponsors at **ccaaustin.org**. These folks support the mission of CCA and as members of CCA please support their businesses as often as possible.

I am honored and excited to take the position of President for the CCA Austin chapter. I look forward to working with our newly elected chairs and the Austin board to continue our chapters great work bringing coastal awareness to central Texas through our events.

Our next ANO is being planned for February please watch for your newsletter, we are planning an awesome event. If you want to put some good work into a great organization, we would love to have you join our Austin board. Please be sure to "like" CCA Austin on Facebook and Instagram, spread the word. See you on May 7!

Bay Area
Curtis Anderson 832-435-0257
cla1965@att.net

Brazoria
Kim Lamont 979-482-1456
Kklamont93@yahoo.com

Brazos Valley
John Ben Strother 979-220-1738
jbsunlimited@yahoo.com

Happy New Year. Hope everyone had a great Christmas holiday. Brazos Valley Chapter is gearing up for our **28th annual banquet, to be held Friday March 6, 2020 and doors open at 5:30 p.m. at the Brazos Center in Bryan, TX.** Our committee members are working diligently gathering sponsors. We are fortunate to have a base of sponsors who have been supporting us for years and we appreciate their dedication. We are also seeking new sponsors to come on board.

Please come join us for a night of fun, including a wonderful pork chop dinner catered by **C & J Barbeque** (who did a fantastic job last year with lots of compliments). Also, there will be lots of neat prizes and items to fill your fishing or hunting desires. Contact Drew Adams at 713-626-4222 or John Ben Strother at 979-220-1738 for more info. Tickets can be purchased online at **ccatexas.org/brazos-valley**. See you at the banquet. Until then, good fishing and ask a loved one to go too. *[For a great whooping crane and fishing photo, see GREAT PHOTOS, page 25]*

Brenham
Brandon Marth 979-277-0151
brenhamironworks@sbcglobal.net

Brush County
Brenda Ballard 361-296-4037
brendagballard@hotmail.com

Centex
Si Hanna 254-723-1922
shanna@rdoequipment.com

Central Houston
Todd Buster 713-545-189
tbuster@busterandcogdell
builders.com

Colorado Valley
Eugene Ulrich 979-249-7425
zeke.ulrich@gmail.com

Greetings from the Colorado Valley! We sincerely hope that everyone had a wonderful holiday season and spent some time on the water as well. Our chapter is very busy preparing for our upcoming **20th anniversary banquet which will be held in La Grange on March 26, 2020 at the KC Hall**. Please contact any of our board members for tickets, tables and raffle tickets: Eugene Ulrich, Danny Olenick, Trish Kubena, Gary Janda, Dave Fehlker, Kendall Rhode, Kenneth LeFrance or Jeff Burgh. Wishing bent rods and tight lines to all!



Corpus Christi's 2020 Bull Red boat and 2020 Golf Cart prizes.



Corpus Christi
Clifford Johnstone 361-816-7338
cjohnstone@higginbotham.net

Happy New Year from South Texas. I hope everyone had a great holiday season and is ready for 2020. Our chapter is off to a fast start with one of the year's earliest CCA banquets on **March 19, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. Our 42nd Annual Fundraising Banquet will be at the American Bank Center**. Our banquet committee chairpersons have been very busy organizing our team and we thank all of our board members and volunteers for their services. Our expectation is that our banquet

will be sold out as it has been the last 9 years. **Saltwater Grill** will be our food caterer with multiple buffet stations and **House of Rock**, our beverage caterer, will be serving adult beverages all night long!

We truly appreciate the sponsorship support from all of our donors throughout the years. Our banquet would not be possible without their help. A special thanks goes out to our Gold and Silver Level Sponsors. So far, our **Gold Sponsors** are **Andrews Distributing, L&F Distributing, Flint Hills Resources and Academy Sports + Outdoors**. So far, our **Silver Sponsors** are **Premier Yamaha/Majek Boats and Corpus Christi Cycle Plaza**.

Our **Bull Red Raffle**, sponsored by **Andrews Distributing**, features a **2020 Majek 22.6 ft Illusion M2** with a **200 HP Yamaha Four Stroke and Coastline trailer**. The boat tickets are \$50 each and only 1,500 are available for purchase. Boat tickets may be purchased at Premier Yamaha Boating Center on SPID or by calling Courtney at 361-882-5199 or at the banquet. You do not need to be present to win!

Our **Sow Trout Raffle**, sponsored by **L&F Distributors**, features a **custom 2019 Yamaha 6 seat golf cart** with a **12-ft diamond C bi-fold ramp gate trailer**. The custom Yamaha golf cart tickets are \$20 and only 1,500 are available for purchase. You may purchase your raffle tickets by calling Courtney at 361-882-5199 or during the banquet. You do not need to be present to win!

If you want to be involved with our banquet committee, we meet every Tuesday night at 6 p.m. at the Executive Surf Club/Surf Museum. Our last meeting will be on March 10, 2020. Come and join us on Tuesdays for \$2.00 beer pint night and live music! For more information call Courtney, CCA Banquet tickets sales at 361-882-5199 or email at ccacorporuschristi@gmail.com, check out our CCA Corpus Christi Facebook page, look at our CCA Corpus Christi page at ccatexas.org/corpus-christi or contact our Banquet Chairman/President Clifford Johnstone (info above).

Lastly, we are already getting calls regarding the 2020 CCA Poco Rojo Kids Fishing tournament! Our chapter is excited to announce that our CCA Poco Rojo Kids Fishing Tournament will be held on Saturday April 25, 2020 at the CCA Marine Development Center, located on the Topaz Power Group grounds in Flour Bluff. Check in will begin at 7:30 a.m. Fishing will start at 8:00 a.m. and end at approximately 12:00 p.m. Food and beverages are included. **Flint Hills Resources** will be our title sponsor for the event again—thank you! **Registration for**

the kids (under the age of 14) will start April 1, 2020 and you must register on the CCA Corpus Christi website. The event will be limited to the first 100 kids to register online. So mark your calendar and more information will be posted on our CCA Facebook Page, CCA website and emails to members. We hope to see you at our annual Banquet on March 19!

39TH ANNUAL

CCA DALLAS BANQUET

THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2020
 SIXTY FIVE HUNDRED | 6500 CEDAR SPRINGS

\$150 SINGLE TICKET
General admission table seating

\$1,200 RESERVED TABLE
Reserved table for 8, table buyer's name featured in Banquet program

\$2,500 VIP TABLE
Includes Reserved Table benefits (with quarter-page ad for table buyer), table gift for each attendee, brand endorsement on CCA Dallas social media, website and Banquet media presentation.

EARLY BIRD SPECIAL!
TABLE BUYERS: RESERVE AND PAY FOR YOUR TABLE BEFORE MARCH 1, 2020 AND RECEIVE A CHANCE TO WIN A YTD ROD AND 13 FISHING REEL!

WIN RAFFLE PRIZES!

PRIZES INCLUDE:

- Beretta Shotguns
- Kayak
- TPO Rods
- Fishing Reels from Shimano, 12 and Squalier
- Fishing Gear

BID ON AUCTION ITEMS!

ITEMS INCLUDE:

- Argentina Hunting
- Offshore Fishing Tackle
- Texas Bay Fishing Tackle
- A weekend dining table
- And more!

LIVE AUCTION • SILENT AUCTION • DINNER • DRINKS • RAFFLES

CONTACT US TODAY FOR MORE INFORMATION!
 DREW ADAMS | 713.626.4222 | dadams@ccatexas.org
 GREG RESNANSKY | 214.356.9995 | ccadallasboard@gmail.com
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Dallas
Greg Resnansky 214-356-9995
ccadallasboard@gmail.com

Join us at **CCA Dallas' 39th annual banquet April 16, 2020 at Sixty Five Hundred, located at 6500 Cedar Springs near Love Field**. Individual tickets and tables are on sale now and the 2020 banquet promises to be bigger and better than ever. Table buyers who purchase and pay for their table by March 1, 2020 will be entered into a special early bird raffle for a chance to win a Temple Fork Outfitters rod and 13 Fishing reel.

This year's banquet will once again be emceed by **Big Billy Kinder**. Thanks to **Beretta Gallery, Miles & Miles Outfitters, Griffin Fishing Charters, Mariner Sails and Temple Fork Outfitters** for sponsoring the banquet. If you are interested in purchasing a ticket or table, becoming a sponsor or joining the Dallas Chapter board, please e-mail Greg Resnansky at ccadallasboard@gmail.com.

East Texas
Dr. James Norman 936-554-3165
jnorman7@suddenlink.net

Fort Bend
Jim Black 979-240-5010
jimblack@nov.com

Hello everyone, our Ft. Bend committee members have been on the ball this year making plans and coming up with some great ideas for our 34th annual banquet. To mix things up a bit this year our **Grand**

Prize will be a 2020 JH Performance Outlaw 185x with Evinrude 115hp ETEC and a Coastline single axle aluminum trailer. There will also be four other chances to win some fishing gear so be sure and get your tickets, I'm sure they're not going to last long!

As usual, our gracious donors are doing all they can to help make this year's banquet a huge success. **It is scheduled for April 30, 2020 at the American Legion Hall in Rosenberg, TX. Doors open at 6:00 p.m.** to preview auction items and begin silent auction bids with dinner served around 7:00 p.m. Contact either myself (info above) or Blake Tumlinson at 979-332-2236 for details. For table reservations you can also contact Blake or myself and we'll get you fixed up. Hope to see you all there!

I'd like to give a special thanks to **Sport Marine** in Richmond for all they did for us on this year's boat, what a great group to do business with. Another thanks to **Steve Onstad and The Swinging Door** in Richmond for allowing us to hold our monthly meeting there for all these years.

Finally, some dates for other upcoming events: **CCA Kidfish will be July 25, 2020** and the **"Ladies Only" fishing tournament, The Lingerie on The Bay**, both held in Matagorda, TX, will be **September 11 & 12, 2020**. Flyers and Entry forms will be posted at matagordabay.com and ccatexas.org/fort-bend/ so be on the lookout for these events. Remember to keep the waterways clean and be respectful to your fellow anglers. Hope to see you on the water!

Fort Worth
Brad Wallace
817-988-8926
brad@northtexasmarine.com

Galveston
Dr. Ken Ellis 713-962-7731
drkenellis@aol.com

Golden Triangle
Kevin Picard 409-658-5246
kevinjpica@yahoo.com

First and foremost, we would like to thank everyone who came out and supported the Golden Triangle Chapter in 2019. We had a very successful year and every individual who attended the banquets had a direct role in our accomplishments, we thank you! For the upcoming year, we will once again have our **Angler's Night Out with Shane Bonnot as our guest speaker on February 25, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. at 434 Fannin in Beaumont. Tickets are on sale right now at ccatexas.org/golden-triangle.** Purchase includes admission, prime rib dinner and cold drinks. Join us for a night of conservation, great food and raffles.

Also, on **May 21, 2020 be sure to mark your calendars for our annual banquet**; we are hoping to have another record-breaking year! Once again, thank you for the support and we will be looking forward to seeing everyone again. Cheers!



Flounder caught in West Bay on Chicken Boy Lure

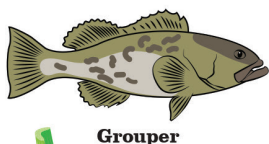
Greater Sugar Land
Mike Bracikowski 291-928-3128
m.bracikowski@tritool.com

I hope that everyone has enjoyed the holidays and we wish all our members a prosperous and Happy New Year!

We look forward to the warming weather and our **next general meeting on February 5, 2020 at Otto's Barbeque** located at 11222 Fountain Lake Dr. Stafford, TX 77477. We will have CCA Texas Advocacy Director, Shane Bonnot, with us to discuss recent CCA conservation efforts.

Please remember to mark your new calendar with our **upcoming banquet date on April 2, 2020**. Registration is now

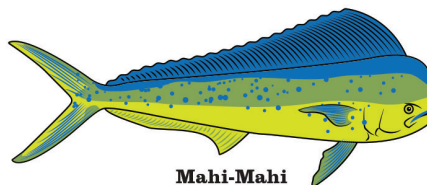
Gulf Identification Guide



Grouper



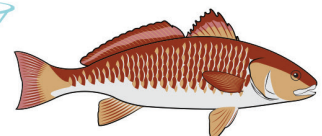
Tito's All-Time Favorite



Mahi-Mahi



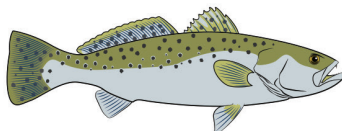
Tito's Martini



Red Drum



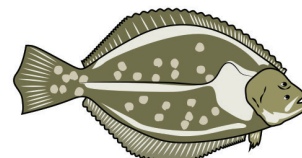
Hair of the Dog



Speckled Trout



Tito's Salty Dog



Flounder



Tito's Screwdriver



Tito's Handmade Vodka is a proud supporter of CCA Texas



HABITAT TODAY FOR FISH TOMORROW

1. Sabine Lake Deep Reef Oyster Restoration
2. Sabine HI20 Nearshore Reef
3. Sabine Lake Oyster Reef Expansion
4. J.D. Murphree Breakwater
5. East Galveston Bay Oyster Reef Restoration
6. Trinity Bay Discovery Center Living Shoreline
7. Dickinson Bayou Marsh Restoration
8. Moses Lake Shoreline Restoration
9. Sportsmans Road Wetlands Restoration
10. Big Man's Reef
11. Bird Island Cove Marsh Restoration
12. Snake Island Cove Marsh Restoration
13. Oyster Lake Shoreline Stabilization
14. Vancouver Nearshore Reef
15. Cow Trap Lake Shoreline Stabilization
16. San Bernard NWR Shoreline Stabilization
17. Matagorda Nearshore Reef
18. Port O'Connor Nearshore Reef
19. HRI Nearshore Reef Enhancement Study
20. Weed Eradication for Water Flow Restoration
21. HRI Oyster Restoration Site Locator/Mapping Study
22. Matagorda Island Marsh Restoration
23. Cedar Bayou/Vinson Slough Restoration
24. St. Charles Bay Oyster Restoration
25. Aransas Bay Oyster Restoration
26. Goose Island Marsh Restoration
27. Copano Bay Oyster Restoration
28. Aransas Bay Debris Removal
29. Nueces Bay Marsh Restoration
30. Nueces Bay Delta Water Management Gates
31. Nueces Bay Demonstration/Restoration Oyster Reef Project
32. Corpus Christi Nearshore Reef
33. Baffin Bay's Unique Serpulid Study
34. Port Mansfield Nearshore Reef
35. Rio Grande Valley Reef
36. Bahia Grande Restoration

A Natural Partnership



Habitat Today for Fish Tomorrow



available online through the CCA Texas website and additional information can be found on our Facebook page: CCA Texas Greater Sugar Land Chapter. Please join us for some crawfish and your opportunity to participate in the live and silent auction items.

Our members now have the opportunity to order CCA Texas Greater Sugar Land shirts either by check or credit card. If you would like to order a new shirt please reach out to our Vice President, John Breland, at john.breland@cmg.com. We look forward to seeing you out on the water and we'll catch you on the next incoming tide!

Greater Woodlands
Charlotte O'Dell 832-368-8263
choctawcharlie69@gmail.com

Guadalupe Valley
Adam Arroyo 361-350-0026
Ctown75@aol.com

Hays County
Tim Young 512-573-7939
tim.haysco@gmail.com

Heart of the Hills
Kelly Parks 210-669-3732
bucksdelucks@yahoo.com

Helotes
Johnny Rayburg 210-535-6810
jrayburg@sbcglobal.net

Howdy Helotes CCA members, the chapter is staying busy as usual. This December we once again participated in the Helotes Cowboy Christmas parade. Thanks to all our volunteers for helping us put together a great showing in the community and getting some good press for our Polaris Ranger Crew raffle prize.

Tickets for the Polaris Ranger Crew are available from any of the committee members or our Assistant Director, Blake Burnside. With only a limited amount of tickets available the odds are very good you might win. Look for the Polaris around town on the weekends, as we will be selling tickets at several Helotes hot spots. You should also be able to find some at **Jupe Mills Feed Store** and at our booth in the **February and March Market Days in Old Town**.

Our **3rd Annual Banquet is set for March 19, 2020 at the Helotes Ag Activity Building**. Ticket sales for the event are already well underway. We've sold out the first 2 years and this year will be no different. Get your tickets early before they're all gone.

Our chapter meets at Bobby J's at **6:30 p.m. on Mondays up until the Banquet date**. Please join us, we'd love to have you become an active part of the chapter. Take a kid fishing, it will put a smile on

their face and yours.

Hill Country
Miles Engelke 210-260-8968
engelke@pe-svcs.com

Houston Homebuilders
Jimmy Reid 281-932-3395
jreid@newmarkhomes.com

Houston Real Estate
Dale Couch 281-953-2510
dcouch@txlmortgage.com

Katy
Gary Mancini 281-850-2212
gman091753@aol.com

Laredo
Javier C. Villarreal 956-206-7953
jcvillarreal13@gmail.com

Lee County
Jake Horne 979-540-6117
jake@aubainesupply.com

Live Oak
Taylor Kotrla 979-732-7265
taylorkotrila@hotmail.com



Lower Colorado Chapter President Stephen Zapalac, Helen Elshick, Capt. Jerry West

Lower Colorado
Stephen Zapalac 972-244-6633
szapalac@ykc.com

The Lower Colorado Chapter received a wonderful Christmas present from the Jesse Arsola Memorial Fishing Tournament. Helen Elshick, tournament organizer presented the chapter with a donation to be used in support of a future Kidfish tournament in 2020. Chapter President Stephen Zapalac gratefully said, "We all thank Helen and the Tournament for thinking of the Lower Colorado Chapter and our area kids with this generous contribution. Knowing Jesse, I'm sure he's got a big smile of his face right now and he's saying: 'although I'm not with you, I'm right there with you.' Thanks Jesse,

we miss you."

Chapter member David Sitz in his thank you said, "I know that Jesse is well pleased. His father (Lupe) raised a fine son and will be proud to learn of this." Member Clint Hewitt added, "What a great way to carry his legacy. Thanks for all involved and the many folks who made this happen."

Again, many thanks to the Jesse Arsola Memorial Fishing Tournament and Helen for their kind contribution to Kidfish with the Lower Colorado Chapter, which represents all the creeks, rivers and bays in Matagorda County.

Lower Laguna Madre
Oscar Garcia
956-491-8148
oscar@shallowSPORTboats.com

Mainland
Eric Minor
409-370-7379
eric.minor@anico.com

Matagorda Bays
Chris Bird 979-257-6508
cbird1493@gmail.com

Mid Coast
Wade Harrell 361-935-1125
wcharrell@hotmail.com

Happy New Year from the Mid Coast Chapter! We are excited about what 2020 holds for our chapter and the important work that CCA Texas does for our marine resources! Our last big event of 2019 was the Victoria Christmas parade where we showcased our brand new 2020 Haynie SuperCat raffle boat!

Our chapter will again be partnering with the San Antonio Bay Partnership to assist with the February Abandoned Crab Trap Cleanup in Aransas, San Antonio and Matagorda Bays. The big event will be **Saturday, February 22, 2020 with an after party that evening at Hoopers in Port O'Connor**. We will be working throughout the state crabbing closure period to clean up our bays. If you want to bring your boat and participate, Allan Berger has laid out cleanup routes to follow. You can contact Allan at 713-829-2852 or allanrberger@outlook.com for more information. Last year we had the opportunity to meet and visit with board members from several other chapters, so please come enjoy the day with us!

We are gearing up for our **2020 Banquet the evening of Friday, May 1 at the Victoria Community Center**. Several corporate tables have already been sold! You can purchase tables or inquire about sponsorship opportunities by contacting **Tylar Walyuchow Dick, our banquet chair, at (361) 541-9011**.

Back by popular demand, we will raffle



CCA Mid Coast Chapter Members at the Victoria Christmas Parade



2020 Mid Coast Banquet Raffle Boat - 2020 Haynie 21' SuperCat with a 150 hp Suzuki and custom Coastline Trailer

off a brand new 2020 Haynie 21' SuperCat with a 150 hp Suzuki and custom Coastline trailer. A big thanks to our sponsors including Chris's Marine, Waterloo Rods, Compadres Design and Momentum Rentals & Sales. We have three other exciting raffle prizes as well, including a 9mm Kimber, custom Waterloo rod/reel combo and 65-quart Engel CCA cooler. We are only selling 1,200 tickets at \$50 each and they are going fast, so get them while you can! Please contact Mike Brawner, our raffle chair, at 281-787-1671 or Cheryl Guthrie at 361-935-3342 to purchase tickets.

For the latest chapter updates and information on upcoming meetings, please visit our website at ccatexas.org/mid-coast and our Facebook page at facebook.com/ccamid-coast. We hope to see you out on the bay, at a chapter event or our annual banquet soon!

Northeast Houston
Jason Law 713-898-8594
jlaw1899@yahoo.com

Northwest Houston
Rob Sziy 832-971-1989
sziy@sbcglobal.net

Our next general membership meeting will be held on February 4, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. It will be held as usual at Houston Distributing in the Stein Room. We will have a CCA

representative who will discuss current projects. And of course, will have our usual raffle items so please come and join us and bring some friends.

Coming up in April is our **Annual Member Appreciation Fish Fry with all the fixin's, so bring your appetites on April 7, 2020 also at Houston Distributing**. Our speaker TBA so keep an eye out for our CCA eblast and as soon as we get a confirmation, we will be announcing that as soon as possible.

Our sincere thanks to both Houston Distributing and Academy Sports + Outdoors. They are active sponsors of our meetings and many events. We are especially fortunate to have such great support. See you at the next meeting!

Orange County
Scott Bandy 409-988-3667
scottbandy77@yahoo.com

Our Chapter meets the 1st Monday of the month at Domino's Pizza on MacArthur Drive in Orange at 6:00 p.m. The banquet committee meeting will be starting up, if you would like to be a part of our group come to our meeting and make your voice heard. The **banquet this year will be on August 13, 2020 at the Orange County Convention and Expo Center on Hwy 1442.**

Please check out our Facebook page for more updates on events like the Crab Trap Cleanup and our Anglers Night Out that will be happening over the next few months.

Port Lavaca
Eric Ellison 361-983-4690
fishingsalt@yahoo.com

Port O'Connor
Bill Moore 361-983-4690
wildbm@tisd.net

Happy new year from the members of the POC Chapter. We hope one of your resolutions was to keep CCA in mind and stay involved. Hopefully one of your resolutions will be to attend the **20th Annual POC CCA Banquet. The banquet will again be held at the POC Community Center on Saturday,**

March 21, 2020. Tickets and tables are available from any POC CCA Member or Taylor Rieck at 713-626-4222.

So, make arrangements for tables/tickets as there will be another great meal served, live auction, silent auction, raffle, games and much more. Added to the raffle items this year will be a **Polaris Ranger 570 Crew paired with a 14 Foot Big Tex Trailer with ramp gate.** The raffle will have a total of 4 winners, the other three being a trip to Wimberley and two excellent guns. **Tickets are only \$50 each and a limit of 500 will be sold so get them early!** So, come early and visit some of our POC donors and then join us for a great time on Saturday, March 21 in POC. "Where it all began."

Prairie
Patricia Walters 979-885-7464
manager@wpprint.com

Hope everybody had an awesome holiday with family and friends. We are starting off the New Year with an invitation to our annual chili dinner that will be held at the **Cat Spring Hall Annex on February 6, 2020.** The chili and sides will be prepared and catered by **Hinzes BBQ** from Sealy. Throughout the evening there will be bucket raffles with some great items that will be drawn at the end of the night. Also, we will have a speakers Jack Brandes, Austin County Sheriff and Game Warden Lee Hall.

We are working on our **23rd Annual CCA Fundraiser Banquet that will be on April 2, 2020 at 5:30 in Cat Spring Hall.** A dinner of prime rib, boiled shrimp and chicken breast catered by **Mikeska BBQ** in Columbus.

We will have a live auction with some great trips, prints and more. Our auctioneer will be Mark Switzer. There will also be a silent auction with some great items donated from CCA, Academy Sports + Outdoors and other amazing sponsors. The evening will also have a cap and card game bucket raffle and this year we will have some new games. We are planning on a sell-out so get your tickets early and remember the tickets you purchase include the meal and a one-year CCA membership.

There are also corporate tables available and tickets for a special raffle with 10 different prizes. Prizes include: 2019 Can Am a ATV, pellet grill, gun safe, Engel 123 qt. cooler, S&W 40 cal. pistol, CCA rod & reel, handheld GPS for hunting, camo hunting gear, 4G wireless trail camera and crawfish boiler. Each ticket is \$100 and only 400 will be sold. You can purchase tickets at **Wittenberg Printing in Sealy by calling 979-885-7464 or any of our board members.**

We also are planning our annual **Kid Fish Tournament September 26, 2020 at 4:00 p.m. at Walters Lake in Cat**

Spring everything will be free just bring your fishing pole and chair for more info call 979-877-5598. Have a great year of fun and fishing.

Redfish Bay
Norman Oates 361-758-0266
noates@cableone.net

We hope all chapter members had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! Redfish Bay Chapter is ready to kick off the new year and now it is time to start thinking of helping CCA Texas continue its mission of conservation of our coastal waters.

Our annual **Redfish Bay Chapter Banquet is scheduled for April 25, 2020**. As always, we will do everything in our power to make it a fun and enjoyable family event. Mark your calendars! More info to follow in the near future. Note: we sold out in 2019; so, get your tickets early from a board member or online. We will have tickets ready for sale in five or six weeks.

Our Take-a-Kid-Fishing event will be the first weekend in June. Plan on bringing the young fisher persons to this great "tournament" event. They will enjoy it!

If history rules, we will have our annual Beeville Fish Fry this fall the Thursday before dove season. More information to follow later.

Rio Grande Valley
Boone Stutz 210-906-7676
riograndevalley@gmail.com

Sabine-Neches
409-790-9855

darin@jorgensenmarine.com

We are ready for our **22nd annual banquet Thursday, March 5, 2020 at the Bob Bowlers Civic Center in Port Arthur, Texas!** Join us for a night of fundraising, hot crawfish and ice-cold drinks. Sabine is heating up so I'm sure there will be a story or two told. Hope to see you there! Tight lines to all!
—Darin Johnson

Saltgrass
Buck Stobart 409-782-7934
stobartbuck@yahoo.com

Sam Houston
Brandon Kolaja
281-797-6908
bkolaja@huntsvilletx.gov

San Antonio
Robert Lozano 210-632-4246
robertolozano129@yahoo.com
 Happy New Year! Welcome to 2020! It's time to mark your calendar for a full banquet and event season in the San Antonio CCA market. **March 20, 2020 will be the 7th annual**

"Hooked on Clays" sporting clay shoot at The National Shooting Complex. For more information, contact Tricia Kocurek at **hookedonclays@gmail.com**.

March 27-29, visit our booth at the San Antonio Boat & Outdoor Expo at Freeman Coliseum Expo Hall.

On April 30, 2020, don't miss the grand event: 41ST ANNUAL CCA SAN ANTONIO BANQUET at Freeman Coliseum Expo Hall. San Antonio banquet committee has already begun its work! The 2020 banquet event should be another record-breaking fundraiser for CCA Texas. If you would like to volunteer as part of our banquet committee, we meet at **Barn Door Restaurant on Tuesday nights at 6:00 p.m.** The 2020 banquet season meeting dates: **February 4 & 18, March 3, 10, 17, 24, & 31 and April 7, 14, & 21.** For more information contact CCA SA co-banquet chairs: **Tom Akin at TomAkin@adkf.com**, or **Byron Buzzini at gunner6770@gmail.com**. For 2020 SA Banquet Reservations information, please contact Joe Eaton at **jeaton@eatoncontracting.com** or at 210-599-3690.

Attention San Antonio Fiesta Medal Collectors: 2020 Limited Edition medals for sale available March 2020. Please contact



2020 CCA San Antonio Fiesta Medal

Robert Lozano at **robertolozano129@yahoo.com** for more information.

Thank you, San Antonio chapter members and volunteers, for your loyalty and support to CCA Texas. Remember, "keep those lines taut" and take a kid fishing. Please share your family and fish photos with us on our CCA San Antonio Facebook page. Hook 'em.

San Bernard
Ross Kutach 281-330-0135
rosskutach@yahoo.com

The San Bernard Chapter will host our **annual fundraising banquet on February 27, 2020 at Riverside Hall in East Bernard.** Meal and raffle tickets are on sale now. The meal will consist of a ribeye steak, mushrooms, buttered potatoes, green beans and salad. Contact a local board member today to reserve your table, donation, seat and raffle tickets. All can be purchased in advance and online payable. For advanced tickets, contact Chris Allison at 832-746-9531 or reach out to the info above and we will reserve your items.

Our raffle ticket contains 10 prizes including the grand prize of a 14' deep and wide Alweld boat, motor and trailer package. Second prize is a Polaris Ranger. The remainder of the ticket consists of guns and rod and reel combos. Live and silent auction items will be available for purchase the night of the event and of course, all adult beverages are included at no charge! Please contact your local board member to check on sponsorship opportunities and to reserve your table now. If you would like to get involved in a great organization that gives back to all conservationists, please

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For every case sold of Tasty Waves in 2018, Karbach will be donating a portion of proceeds to the Coastal Conservation Association.

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contact us and we will happily get you started. We are always looking for good people. Hope to see you all there. Until then, stay safe, tight lines and fish on!

San Gabriel

John Melnar 512- 497-8284

jmelnar@plateaulandgroup.com

Last August we had another phenomenal banquet that set records again in attendance, total revenue, and net revenue. All of which was made possible by a great group of sponsors especially our **Title Sponsor, Don Hewlett Chevrolet**. Our list of major sponsors also includes **PMB, Morris Glass, Aday and Associates, Independence Title, Utz Environmental, Watkins Insurance, Independent Bank, Plains Capital Bank, Champion Site Prep, Liberty Civil, Brown Distributing, and Plateau Land Group**. All of these sponsors have donated generously to our chapter and I hope you do business with them if you have the chance. Not only do these fine sponsors make our banquet successful, each and every person that attends make a difference and we sincerely appreciate their support.

The 2020 banquet is set for Thursday, July 30. So please mark your calendar now and come **join us at the Sheraton Hotel and Conference center in Georgetown for another great event**. If you or your company would like to join our great list of sponsors or would like to get involved with our chapter committee, please contact me (info above).

Southwestern

Veronica Oliver 830-765-6228
ronnimoliver@gmail.com

TAMU

Aaron Richter 361-876-0524
aaronrichter@tamu.edu

Texas State University

Travis James
832-909-5833
travisj0915@gmail.com

Tomball/Magnolia

Matt Maddox 832-963-5215
matt@cribbsconcrete.com

Tri-County

Justin Putz 210-585-0401
putz.stx@gmail.com

Tri County will be holding its **23rd banquet on Friday, April 17, 2020 at the Atascosa County Show Barn**. For advanced tickets contact Justin Putz at 210-585-0401. Thank you.

Trinity Bay

Gerald Payne 281-728-6278
rockin_g_payne@yahoo.com

The Trinity Bay Chapter had a record 2019. Our 29th annual banquet was a sellout and all attending participated in a variety of games, live and silent auctions. The boiled shrimp with all the fixings were again a popular hit with our guests.

With last year being a sellout, keep an eye out for this year's banquet – we will have an early bird sign up for sponsors that will be entered in a special raffle for those that sign up early!

Thanks again to our dedicated board of directors and our supportive sponsors and donors. As always, if you have any interest in joining up with the volunteer committee, please reach out to me (info above) or visit our webpage at ccatexas.org/trinity-bay.

Trinity Valley

John Hebert Jr 936-334-2528
jjhebert@imsday.com

West Houston

Ruben Delgadillo 281-808-1434
ruben@liftpull.com

The West Houston Chapter board will start meeting in January to begin planning our **2020 Banquet, which will be held May 14, 2020 at the Omni Westside Hotel**. We are currently seeking sponsorships and donations for the banquet. These donations and sponsorships offer an opportunity for you or your company to gain visibility and

donate to a good cause. CCA needs your support! For more information about sponsorship opportunities, donations, or to join our chapter, please contact Branon Pesnell at branon.pesnell@transwestern.com or 713-231-1587.

West Texas

Craig McDonnold 432-682-3499
Craig@McDonnold.net Texas Parks and Wildlife Summer Internship

Mark your calendars for our 17th annual CCA banquet on April 15, 2020. After you file your tax extension, come join the other procrastinators for a cold one at **Midland Country Club**. Last years' banquet was our biggest and best-ever, so come out and make this another great year.

Boiled shrimp and crawfish will be expertly prepared by **Enviro Resources, LLC** again this year. A huge thanks to **Vance and Jacob Landry and Tim Macaluso with Enviro Resources** who travel all the way from southern Louisiana to Midland to help.

This event would not be possible without all of our loyal table sponsors. You guys make this job easy, so thanks again for your continued support. You can buy your tables by contacting me (info above) or **Reece Boudreaux 432-770-3536 or reece.boudreaux@gmail.com**.



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Speckled Trout Almondine

By Jackie Liddell

2 speckled trout filets
 1 c -flour + cracker crumbs mixed and seasoned with salt and pepper
 4 T butter / 2 T lite Olive oil / ¼ c slivered almonds
 1 T small capers drained / ½ t fresh minced garlic / ½ -1 T Chopped rosemary and parsley
 ½ T Cavender's All Purpose Greek Seasoning
 2 T fresh lemon juice (juice of 2 lemons)

Rinse and season wet trout with Cavender's before dredging with cracker / flour

Heat oil and 1 T of butter in a frying pan When hot add trout and garlic to cook about 3 minutes on medium heat. Turn fish over and add almonds, more butter, herbs, and the capers . Fish will brown – move to the side of the pan. Add fresh lemon juice to the butter mixture and cook for one to two minutes until it looks and smells wonderful!

Plate it –then pour the sauce over the fish and serve with rice or pasta and salad.



Great Foods Editor, Liz Hewitt

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CCA logo on floor plate

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

Your gun must be picked up from an FFL dealer. Please expect 6-8 weeks for delivery. Guns will ONLY be shipped to addresses in Texas.

You MUST return this form to the CCA office completely filled out to receive your gift (This offer is NOT available online).

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PLEASE SHIP MY GUN TO THIS FFL DEALER

(This form must be completely filled out or your gun will NOT be shipped)

You can pick up your gun from Johnny's Sports Shop (101 Booth Dr. Eagle Lake, TX 77434) or Academy Sports + Outdoors has agreed to accept CCA Texas Life Member guns at all Texas stores with no handling fee charge. If you choose to send your gun to a different dealer, YOU MUST provide a copy of their FFL along with this form.

To pick up your gun from Johnny's Sport Shop, contact Jake Luedecke at (979) 234-3516.
To have your gun delivered to Academy Sports + Outdoors, contact Mylinda Jones at (281) 646-5908 or Candice Buckles at (281) 646-5777 or candice.buckles@academy.com.

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31st Annual CCA State of Texas Anglers' Rodeo

**Early Bird Registration Deadline is
FRIDAY, APRIL 24**

**Register NOW for the Early Bird Drawings
Before You Forget!**

The holidays have slowly faded away and things are starting to get warm between the cold fronts. Many of you are busy out on the water chasing a new personal best speckled trout right now whenever the weather allows, as this time of year can produce some historic catches. While it may seem like a distant thought, this year's STAR Tournament is just a few casts away. The 2020 tournament kicks off at sunrise, Saturday, May 23rd and runs until 5 p.m., September 7th (Labor Day). Now is the time to start honing those fishing skills. Over the coming months, fish will begin their transitions from their deep and muddy winter haunts and start patrolling the flats with regularity. Then as the tournament gets even closer you can follow them to the sand as they prepare to spawn and stay on them as the tournament kicks off. Not only will you get to enjoy time on the water, but greatly increase your chances of catching a winning trout early in the tournament. Historically, the winning trout are caught early in the tournament, so it definitely pays off to follow the fish as they transition through the seasons. Don't let this deter you though, almost every year someone heads to the coast for the first time of the year to fish and ends up catching a winning trout, as late as the end of August... like James Malone on August 28, 2019.

While you can register at any time before, or during the tournament, why would you want to miss out on a brand new Dargel 210 Skout, 150 hp Evinrude



Middle Coast Division Winner James Malone

G2 outboard, on a McClain trailer or twenty other great prizes?? You don't have to worry as long as you register by Friday, April 24th!! You can go home with a beautiful new boat without even having to wet a line! Although, we do highly encourage wetting a line as much as possible for your own sake. Don't believe us? Just look at what previous years' winners have won! Congrats to 2019 winner Jeremy Shimek, of Columbus, Texas.

If you get busy and wake up April 25 kicking yourself for not getting entered into the Early Bird drawing don't fret! You can still win the same boat in our Member Bonus Drawing, just like Ty Yates, of Beaumont, TX this year!

A new Dargel may help your fishing situation, but what about the kiddos? Well, we've thought of that too. Any young angler between ages 6 and 17 can win a \$25,000 scholarship in our Youth Scholarship Drawing, simply for being entered! Sounds pretty sweet doesn't it? What if we told you that it gets even sweeter? These young anglers can enter STAR absolutely free, with their \$10 CCA membership!



To be eligible to WIN one of a \$1,000,000 in prizes being offered in Texas' largest, richest, summer-long fishing event, you must be a CURRENT member of CCA, in addition to being registered in the 2020 TEXAS STAR tournament. CCA membership is \$35 annually and the 2020 STAR Tournament fee is \$25, for a total of only \$60. Remember though, **YOUNG ANGLERS FISH STAR FOR FREE.** To be eligible to fish STAR for free, "Youth" members **MUST BE** at least 6 years of age in 2020 and 17 when they enter. It is the "Youth" member's responsibility to make sure their CCA membership is current and that they are registered for the current year STAR tournament.

As you make your plans to head off to stock up on gear if you haven't already, be sure to be on the lookout for a very special bonus from our great sponsor **Academy Sports + Outdoors**, where you can find any gear you might need.



*2019 \$25,000 Scholarship Winner-
Hudson Richard*

**\$6.825 million in college
scholarships to youth
from all over Texas**

After thirty amazing years of STAR, we have been blessed to be able to award Texas youth \$6,825,000 in college scholarships to youth from all over Texas, with angling abilities of all levels. The credit for all of the lives changed through STAR scholarships rests solely in the hands of our great sponsors. Without the support of these sponsors year in and year out, this great event that hosted 51,000+ Texas anglers would not be possible. We only ask that you reward our great partners for showing that they care about, what you care about! To learn more about the tournament (rules, prizes, entry, etc.) or our sponsors, simply head on over to www.startournament.org. What could be a better gift to someone than the chance to win part of way over \$1 million in prizes and scholarships? Sign up now!

CCA TEXAS MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS- On top of helping to make this event what it is, our amazing sponsors continue to add value to your CCA Texas Membership. Remember to take advantage of the following benefits our sponsors provide you with your CCA membership!

Ford X-Plan Pricing- CCA Texas members will again have the great honor from Texas Ford Dealers of using X-Plan pricing. For just a \$35 membership any CCA member can purchase (or lease) a Ford vehicle at Ford employee pricing!!! Depending on your chosen vehicle, this could save you \$100's or \$1,000's!! Our Ford Partner Code # is CCA61; go to www.fordpartner.com, if you are considering a purchase.



BEST IN TEXAS

ACADEMY SPORTS + OUTDOORS- Be on the lookout for a special gift from Academy coming soon!



TEXAS FISH & GAME MAGAZINE "BONUS ONLINE SUBSCRIPTION!"- Not many people can say no to free stuff and "Texas Fish & Game Magazine" is again offering a FREE one-year (12 issues) online subscription to all 2020 CCA Texas STAR participants. This subscription gives you access to the latest and most in-depth outdoors information anywhere. Whether you are lying in bed or sitting in the office, you will always have access. So be sure to include your email address on your registration form to receive your free subscription! If you prefer the print version don't worry! You can still receive a print version, along with online access, for only \$8 a year (vs. \$17.99). Be on the lookout in your email or mailbox for details on how to activate this offer! If you have any questions regarding your past or current subscriptions, please call (800) 725-1134 or email subscriptions@fishgame.com.



TILSON HOMES \$1,000 in FREE UPGRADES!- Every CCA Texas member who purchases a Tilson Home is eligible for \$1,000 in free upgrades such as ceramic tile, hardwood floors, cabinets and more. See their ad in the CCA Texas CURRENTS newsletter for more details or call 1 (888) 540-6705.



Evinrude- Keep your eyes peeled on our social media pages for your boat power needs:



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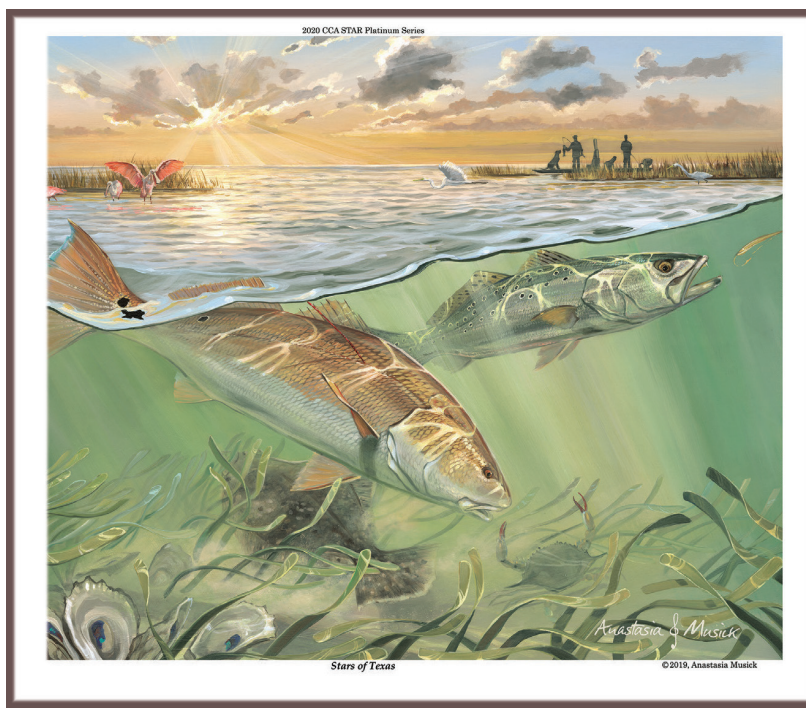
Thank you to our tremendous sponsors who allow us to host this great event:

Texas Ford Dealers, Tilson Home Corporation, Capital Farm Credit, Academy Sports + Outdoors, Whataburger, Mustang CAT, Mercury Marine, Hoffpauir Polaris, Shiner Bock, Evinrude BRP, Shoalwater Boats, Haynie Boats, Mowdy Boats, Dargel Boats, Texas Fish & Game Magazine, Coastline Trailers, McClain Trailers, KTRK-abc13, Costa and Chris's Marine.

For more information, go to www.startournament.org.

Thanks for supporting CCA Texas and the STAR Tournament!!

CCA Texas STAR Platinum Print Membership Package, Series X- Last year's featured artist, Anastasia Musick, sold out in record time! With the success of her 2019 print we are bringing her back again for the upcoming tournament! Along with being an incredibly talented artist, Anastasia has supported CCA efforts across many states in huge ways. We hope you will love this print as much as we do! Your CCA Texas Platinum package includes your CCA membership (new or renewal), your 2020 CCA Texas STAR entry, plus one signed, limited-edition print created exclusively for STAR, all for only \$135!! This one-of-a-kind-print is worth the price alone. If you are considering one, or several, of these limited edition packages, go to: www.startournament.org for more details or to place your order with the STAR staff call (713) 626-4222.





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Great Photos 2020

**Categories: Best In Show
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Important: Send jpegs and include name of subject, title, your name as well as the names of anyone in the photo. Email jpegs to: sam@samcaldwell.com Give us your best shot, and keep CURRENTS an award-winning newsletter.

Great Scenic and Wildlife photo: John Ben Strother wadefishing outside of Fence Lake, Rockport. Get a load of those feeding whooping cranes on the shoreline.



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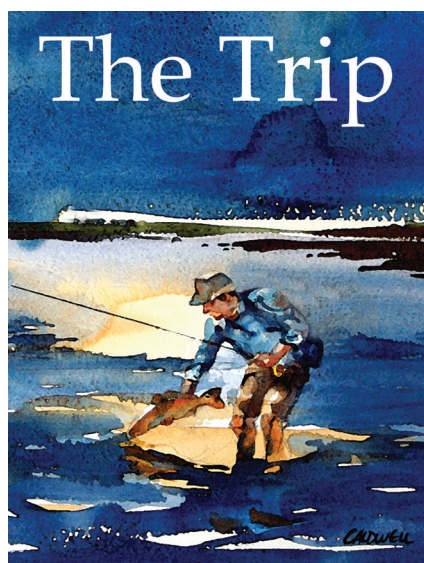
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CURRENTS NEWSLETTER

February/March 2020

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CAUGHT REDHANDED *Oyster boats dredging public reefs*

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Port Aransas: 361-749-5217
Port O'Connor: 361-983-2616
Freeport: 979-233-3801
Houston, Galveston: 409-766-5620
Sabine: 409-971-2195

The Texas Parks & Wildlife website is your starting point for almost anything you need to know about outdoor Texas, including links to many areas.

Visit www.tpwd.texas.gov
To focus on fishing and boating, visit

www.tpwd.texas.gov/fishboat/fish www.tpwd.texas.gov/fishboat/boat

Operation
Game Thief



Current size, bag and possession limits are now available through the Texas Parks & Wildlife website: TPWD has a number to report game violations. **1-800-792-4263**. A partner with CCA in aiding Texas game and Game Wardens is Operation Game Thief. Drop by and put this website on your favorites list: www.ogtx.com



COASTAL CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION TEXAS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION (including STAR Entry)

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LIFE MEMBER:	\$1000	CCA Life Membership piece, print, plus member gifts. Payable in four \$250 installments.
STAR ENTRY FEE:	\$25	Tournament entry fee. Must be a current CCA member.
YOUTH:	\$10	TIDE newsletter, decal. Includes STAR Tournament entry, for members 17 and under.

Age: _____ Date of birth: _____
CONSERVATION MEMBER: \$50 _____ A portion of the proceeds go toward CCA's National Habitat Program, Building Conservation Trust. Includes exclusive Conservation Member decal, one-year subscription to TIDE Magazine and set of CCA and state fish decals.

Credit card number _____ Signature _____

Credit card expiration date _____ By entering this tournament, I agree to be bound by the STAR Tournament Rules, Release and Indemnity Agreement. I understand that there are specific rules governing the conduct of the tournament and that upon request a copy will be mailed to me. 6919 Portwest, Suite 100, Houston, TX 77024 / 713-626-4222 / Website: www.ccatexas.org