

# CURRENTS

December 2023 / January 2024



*John Blaha doing hands-on research.*

*John is a CCA Texas Assistant Director and Director of Habitat Today for Fish Tomorrow. Photo courtesy of Jen Blaha*

**CURRENTS IS INTERACTIVE!**

*This issue is equipped with clickable links. Try clicking one to open it in your browser.*

# Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission Motions for New Spotted Seatrout Regulations

Shane Bonnot, Advocacy Director

As you may recall, Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPWD) conducted public scoping meetings in October to gather input from stakeholders and constituents concerning spotted seatrout management options. The meetings were held in Port Arthur, Texas City, Port Lavaca, Rockport, Corpus Christi & Port Isabel.

A total of 275 comments were received at these meetings and via email. Additionally, on behalf of TPWD, Texas A&M University conducted a randomized email survey with over 10,000 saltwater anglers and 1,000 fishing guides, receiving 1,584 responses (see Figure 1 below).

After the scoping meetings, TPWD staff presented fisheries data and public responses to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission (TPWC) at their November 2023 meeting. Subsequently, the TPWC discussed options for the fishery moving forward.

If you'd like to view the work session on this agenda item, you can [click on this link](#) and scroll the timeline forward to 6:27:43. Observing the linked video, you'll notice a significant amount of concern expressed regarding the effects of the 2021 freeze, elevated pressure on the resource, and the overall trajectory of the fishery.

Most notably, for the past 3 years, spring gill net catch rates in the Matagorda and San Antonio Bay Systems have experienced  $\geq 30\%$  declines from the previous 10-year mean. After much discussion, the TPWC directed staff to publish a proposal to modify the coast-wide bag and size limit on speckled trout to a 3-fish bag limit with a 15-20-inch slot size and allowance of one fish over 25-inches to be part of the 3-fish bag. This proposed regulation change would provide the fishery with an estimated 26.7% increase in spawning stock biomass over the lifetime of a



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trout (7-8yrs), with the goal of recovering the fishery from recent declines and enhancing the fishery's readiness to face specific challenges.

You can expect TPWD to hold public meetings along the coast to gather comments on this proposal, likely in the second week of January. Additionally, once the proposal is published, TPWD will accept comments online through their public comment portal and via email. CCA Texas will communicate the details of these meetings, opportunities for public input, and our position on this proposal after it is published. If you care to speak directly

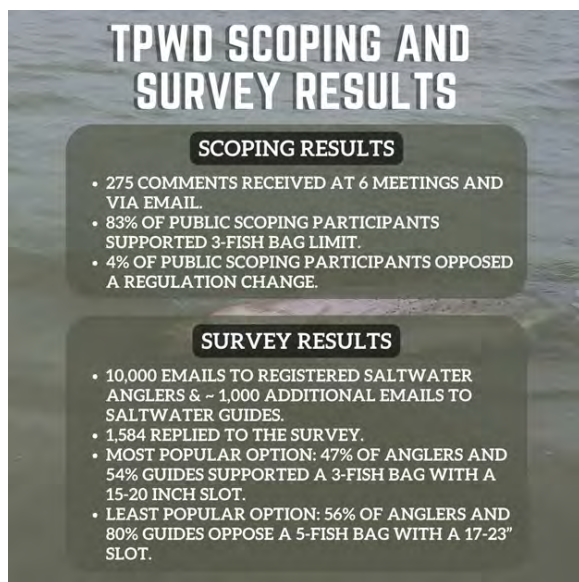


Figure 1: Texas Parks and Wildlife Scoping and Survey Results on Trout Fishery.



Figure 2: Texas Parks and Wildlife Seatrout Proposal

to the TPWC regarding this proposal, you may do so on January 25, 2024, in Austin at their scheduled meeting.

As we approach this opportunity to shape the future of the speckled trout fishery, it is important to keep a few things in mind.

- From 2013 to 2023, All-water Guide License sales have increased by 62%, from 1,060 to 1,720.
- From 2013 to 2023, Salt-water License sales have increased from 1.2M to 1.4M.
- The Texas population has increased by nearly 4M people since 2013 and is expected to reach 55M people by 2025.

2023 Spring Gill Net data shows that nearly every bay system is seeing recent declines in catch rates, with Matagorda and San Antonio Bays at an alarming 32% and 34% decrease from the previous 10-year average.

It is imperative that the angling public participate in this upcoming opportunity to have their voices heard, and as you do so ask yourself this question: Do you want the speckled trout fishery managed with a vision for the future or would you prefer the tides of circumstance to carry this fishery into uncharted waters?

Questions or Comments? Feel free to email me at [sbonnot@ccatexas.org](mailto:sbonnot@ccatexas.org)

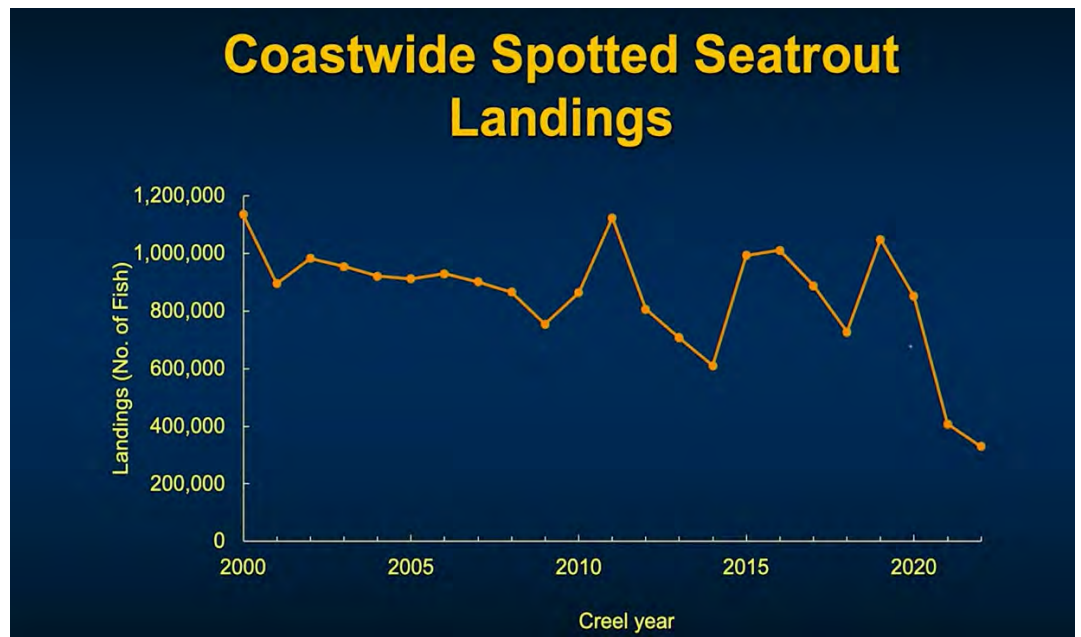


Figure 3: Recent Spotted Seatrout Landings Data

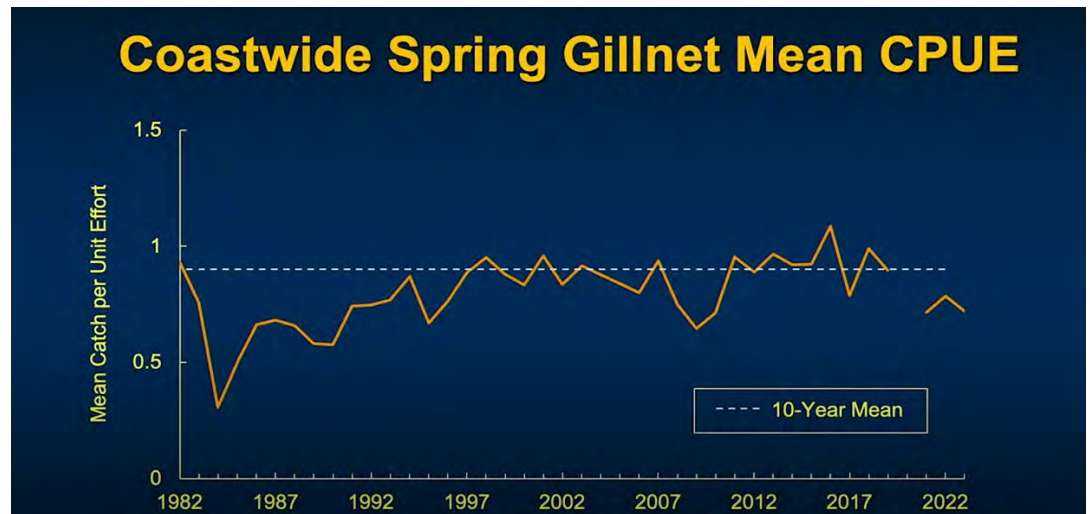


Figure 4: Coastwide Spring Gillnet Average 1982-2023



TPW Commission Chairman Jeff Hildebrand encourages TPW staff to move expeditiously on the proposal.

SPECIES PROFILES

# SPOTTED SEATROUT

[*Cynoscion nebulosus*]

Spotted seatrout (*Cynoscion nebulosus*), known as speckled trout, is a popular game fish targeted by anglers along the Texas coast. This species is a member of the drum family (Sciaenidae) and is closely related to red drum, black drum, sand seatrout, and Atlantic croaker. Distinguishing characteristics include a dark gray or green back and silvery-white below, with distinct black spots on its back, fins, and tail. The inside of their mouth is yellow; typically, they have one or two prominent canine teeth at the tip of their upper jaw.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MAC ELLIOT



**Habitat:** Spotted seatrout reside in shallow bays and estuaries near marsh edge, seagrass beds, oyster reefs, or rock formations that attract prey items.



**Salinity:** Spotted seatrout are euryhaline, meaning they can tolerate a wide range of salinity, and have been found in salinities ranging from 0.2 ppt – 75 ppt.



**Temperature:** Spotted seatrout can live in a broad range of temperatures. They can tolerate water temperatures from 39 – 91° F if they are acclimated gradually to the extreme of these ranges. Along the Texas Gulf Coast, sudden and extreme temperature decreases accompanying cold fronts often result in mass mortalities of spotted seatrout. The rate of temperature change and acclimation period may be more important than how low the temperature drops. Thermal stress mortality occurs when they are exposed to water temperatures lower than 45° F for over 24 hours. However, fish exposed to temperatures between 45–50° F for short periods can recover and survive.



**Growth:** Spotted seatrout growth rates are different for males and females. Females grow faster and larger versus males in the same age class. Studies also reveal there is a high degree of variability that exists in spotted seatrout growth rates in bays along the Texas Coast. They can live to be 9 to 10 years of age and can reach lengths of more than 30 inches. Although rare, the oldest documented spotted seatrout in Texas was a 12-year-old, 25 inch male.



**Reproduction:** Spotted seatrout reach sexual maturity as early as age one. Spawning takes place from April through September when water temperatures range from 70°– 90° F. Females can spawn multiple batches per season (9 batches per season assumed in the table below), and the number of eggs produced is dependent upon their size. Small fish are capable of releasing over 100,000 eggs, and larger females can release over 1 million eggs, per spawning event. Two-, three-, and four-year-old fish make up the bulk of the spawning population. When spawning commences, males will surround females, bumping or nudging the stomachs of females to induce them to release eggs. Once eggs are released, males will release their milt (sperm) which fertilizes the eggs. Fertilized eggs hatch in 20 to 24 hours. Research indicates that spotted seatrout spawn between dusk and dawn and broadcast spawn within coastal bays, estuaries, and lagoons. Peak spawning takes place around new and full moon periods when large tidal swings carry their buoyant eggs and larvae into shallow seagrass beds, which provide critical nursery habitat offering cover from predators and abundant food resources.

| AGE (YRS) | FEMALE TOTAL LENGTH (IN) | EGGS PER BATCH | EGGS PER SEASON |
|-----------|--------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1         | 12 in                    | 304,495        | 2,740,458       |
| 2         | 16 in                    | 736,001        | 6,624,006       |
| 3         | 19 in                    | 1,249,726      | 11,247,530      |
| 4         | 21 in                    | 1,699,232      | 15,293,088      |
| 5         | 23 in                    | 2,242,589      | 20,183,297      |
| 6         | 25 in                    | 2,899,561      | 26,096,045      |
| 7         | 26 in                    | 3,270,027      | 29,430,247      |
| 8         | 27 in                    | 3,670,137      | 33,031,232      |
| 9         | 28 in                    | 4,104,822      | 36,943,399      |
| 10        | 29 in                    | 4,569,150      | 41,122,350      |

|                          | AGE (YRS) |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|--------------------------|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
|                          | 1         | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 |
| MALE TOTAL LENGTH (IN)   | 12        | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 20 | 21 |
| FEMALE TOTAL LENGTH (IN) | 12        | 16 | 19 | 21 | 23 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |

**SPORTFISH CENTER**  
CENTER FOR SPORTFISH SCIENCE & CONSERVATION

For more information scan code or email:  
[sportfish@tamucc.edu](mailto:sportfish@tamucc.edu)



# CCA Texas Commitments to Conservation Efforts Top \$5.942 Million in 2023

By John Blaha

The grassroots efforts of local CCA Texas chapters have set the organization up for a monumental year in conservation dollars awarded for projects up and down the Texas coast. The success of CCA Texas continues to be the efforts of the 60 local chapters across the state, and the unwavering support of the membership, donors, and supporters. Local community support and a desire to ensure Texas's coastal resources are conserved have been the focus of the organization since the first day fourteen concerned recreational anglers first sat down to discuss the common concerns. What started as fourteen has grown to over 75,000+ CCA Texas members from all walks of life and communities across the state. At the time of this article, CCA Texas State and Executive Boards have approved \$5,942,466 for conservation efforts in 2023.

## **\$125,000 – Texas A&M University at Galveston Gulf Research Institute for Highly Migratory Species**

Funding for the Institute will support research initiatives to aid in the conservation of highly migratory species in Texas and throughout their range in the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Ocean. This gift will help scientists unravel the unique life histories of these ecologically and economically valuable top predators. Additionally, the funding will support the preparation and training of the next generation of fisheries scientists.

*Local community support and a desire to ensure Texas's coastal resources are conserved, have been the focus of the organization since the first day fourteen concerned recreational anglers first sat down to discuss the common concerns.*

As funds are raised, new studies will launch, including acoustic and satellite tracking of fishes during the juvenile phase, captive holding and spawning of dolphinfish and cobia in the Texas A&M University at Galveston Sea Life Center, and a Gulf-wide assessment of trophic transfer of contaminants, including microplastics, to coastal and offshore fishes.

## **\$82,000 – TPWD Game Warden's Floating Cabin in Baffin Bay**

CCA Texas has a long history of supporting TPWD Game Wardens up and down the Texas coast. This support often comes in the form of equipment, intern salaries, and in this particular grant, a floating cabin that will give the wardens adequate access to the waters of the Upper Laguna Madre, Baffin and the northern end of the Land Cut areas. Both floating cabins in the Laguna Madre system suffered significant and or total losses after Hurricane Hanna in 2020. Since

then, the wardens have felt the loss of these vital assets in reduced efficiency of boat fuel, maintenance, and patrol hours. When overall fishing and water safety cases were compared from the two years prior and two years post loss of the floating cabin in the Baffin area, wardens observed a 28% drop in efficiency. When only speckled trout violations were compared in the same period, wardens incurred a 62% decline in citations written. While other variables play a role in these numbers, wardens can attest that they would have been largely mitigated by the presence of a floating cabin that can allow them to stay on station longer.



As an example of great CCA Investments, here's a favorite recent CCA investment: The TPWD floating cabin in Baffin Bay is currently under construction, and nearing completion. This cabin replaces one of the floating cabins destroyed by Hurricane Hanna in 2020 and will restore TPWD Game Wardens presence in the area.

### **\$39,000 – CCA Texas Conservation Billboards**

Hundreds of thousands of people travel the highways of Texas daily. Public outreach and education are one of the major tenants of CCA Texas, and the coastal highways provide a great outreach opportunity. CCA Texas has funded forty-eight billboards on an annual basis to educate the general population of Texas about the importance of coastal conservation and where you can find information about projects and advocacy efforts of CCA Texas.

### **\$225,000 – Harte Research Institute (HRI) Oyster Reef Monitoring Program**

CCA Texas has long been a strong advocate for better management and conservation of oyster resources along the coast. CCA Texas played a very active role in the effort to see the Mesquite Bay complex closed permanently to all forms of oystering in November of 2022. As an advocate for this effort and with a desire to see sound management in the future, CCA Texas funded \$225,000 to HRI over a three-year period to monitor the changes in the reefs in this closed bay system so that a baseline can be established for these types and closures and the benefits they will bring. This project will include monitoring twice a year for a three-year period.

### **\$200,000 – Friends of RGV Reef Causeway Reef and MU775 Reefing Efforts**

Friends of RGV Reef (FRGVR) has been a shining example of local grassroots efforts and partnerships for many years now. With its incredible efforts to construct a 1,600-acre reef off South Padre Island almost filled, FRGVR continues to work on reefing efforts in the area and to support those up the coast in the Corpus area. This request for funding will help reef materials on hand into the new Causeway Reef site off South Padre Island and in the MU775 site, located just off the Packery Channel in Corpus Christi. This reefing will take place in the first half of 2024 and CCA Texas is proud to continue supporting the efforts of great nearshore habitat along the Texas coast.

### **\$19,000 – TPWD Seagrass Billboards**

CCA Texas partners with TPWD on outreach efforts often and the TPWD Seagrass Billboards have been long supported. These billboards point the general public to information that is important to the conservation of this important habitat.

### **\$7,860 – TPWD Game Warden Equipment**

TPWD Game Wardens are the front line of defense for our coastal resources. CCA Texas has a long history of supporting the wardens and helping fund the necessary day-to-day equipment that they need to execute their jobs.

### **\$10,000 – Coastal Brigade of Texas Brigades**

CCA Texas has been a supporter of Coastal Brigade since its inception in 2016. This 5-day program encompasses coastal habitat management, fisheries management, coastal ecology and saltwater fishing. The tried-and-true Brigades model of leadership development, education, and empowerment continues at Coastal Brigade and CCA Texas is proud to continue its support for the future generations that will support and conserve Texas's coastal resources.

### **\$80,000 – HRI Bringing Baffin Back Work Boat**

CCA Texas proudly supports HRI's staff and the initiative, Bringing Baffin Back. In 2022, CCA Texas approved \$225,000 (\$75,000/year for three years) to primarily fund continuing water quality sampling and studies. In an effort to improve accessibility and safety, CCA Texas has funded the purchase of a new boat for the HRI staff to use as part of the Bringing Back Baffin initiative and other research projects that HRI is a part of.

### **\$110,500 – TPWD Coastal Fisheries Internships**

CCA Texas continued its longstanding support of TPWD Coastal Fisheries interns by funding 17 interns for the 2024 year. These internships include eight fisheries management team positions, one each in Lower Laguna Madre, Corpus Christi Bay, Aransas Bay, San Antonio Bay, Matagorda Bay, Galveston Bay, and Sabine Lake ecosystem offices. Additionally, four ecosystem resources team positions; one each in Corpus Christi and Dickinson, and two to be determined. One genetic research team position is funded in Palacios and four hatchery technicians, two each at Sea Center Texas and CCA/CP Marine Development Center.

### **\$15,600 – TPWD Summer Game Warden Interns**

TPWD Game Wardens are the front line to the protection of Texas's coastal resources. CCA Texas proudly continues its support of the TPWD Summer Game Warden interns and has funded \$15,600 which will be used to place six interns in the TPWD Game Wardens Summer Intern program.

### **\$28,506 – TPWD Game Warden Upper Coast Boat Motor and Night Vision**

CCA Texas continues to support the efforts to conserve the oyster resources of Texas. Recent funding was approved that will fund \$21,000 to the upper Texas coast Game Wardens to purchase a new 250 HP Suzuki outboard motor and \$7,506 for the purchase of night vision goggles and the helmets and mounts for them. This equipment is critical in their continuous enforcement efforts especially those under the cover of dark when some of the most egregious violations take place.

### **\$5,000,000 – Oyster Reef Restoration Along the Texas**

**Coast /** Being at the forefront of oyster reef conservation and management, CCA Texas has also stepped up to the forefront of private funding. CCA Texas's Executive Board approved \$5,000,000 that is earmarked for oyster restoration efforts in areas closed to oystering along the Texas coast. These funds will be used to help restore critical reefs lost over time due to natural and man-made forces. CCA Texas looks forward to being a leader in these efforts and this grant cements our commitment to the oyster resources of Texas. CCA Texas looks forward to a successful 2024 and shares in the excitement of the local chapters as they all collectively make a difference in the conservation of Texas's coastal resources.

For more information about CCA Texas, be sure to visit us at [www.ccatexas.org](http://www.ccatexas.org), <https://www.facebook.com/CCATexas/>, [@CCA\\_Texas \(Instagram\)](https://www.instagram.com/CCA_Texas/) and [@CCA\\_Texas \(X - formerly Twitter\)](https://twitter.com/CCA_Texas).



# HABITAT TODAY FOR FISH TOMORROW

## CCA Texas Projects

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| 1. Cedar Bayou/Vinson Slough Restoration   | \$1,600,000 |
| 2. ** Nearshore Reefing - Rio Grande Valley Reef                                     | \$1,061,000 |
| 3. Nearshore Reefing - Sabine Pass   | \$ 906,000  |
| 4. ** Oyster Reef Creation - St. Charles Bay (Rockport)                              | \$ 711,250  |
| 5. Nearshore Reefing—Port O'Connor   | \$ 700,000  |
| 6. Oyster Restoration - East Galveston Bay   | \$ 500,000  |
| 7. Nearshore Reefing - Galveston / Big Man & Kate's Reef                             | \$ 329,000  |
| 8. HRI Nearshore Reef Enhancement Study  | \$ 250,000  |
| 9. Dagger Island Shoreline Protection & Marsh Restoration (Redfish Bay)              | \$ 250,000  |
| 10. Shoreline Stabilization - Oyster Lake (West Galveston Bay)                       | \$ 230,000  |
| 11. ** Mesquite Bay Oyster Reef Monitoring (HRI)                                     | \$ 225,000  |
| 12. Oyster Restoration—Deep Reef Sabine Lake   | \$ 215,000  |
| 13. Nearshore Reefing - Matagorda  | \$ 200,000  |
| 14. Shoreline Stabilization - San Bernard NWR  | \$ 200,000  |
| 15. Sink Your Shucks Oyster Recycle Program  | \$ 152,000  |
| 16. Marsh Restoration - Bird Island Cove (West Galveston Bay)                        | \$ 150,000  |
| 17. Shoreline Protection/Marsh Creation - Moses Lake (Galveston Bay)                 | \$ 138,000  |
| 18. Baffin Bay Serpulid Reef Habitat Conservation/Restoration Study                  | \$ 135,000  |
| 19. Oyster Restoration—Pepper Grove / Galveston (BCT)                                | \$ 130,000  |
| 20. Aransas National Wildlife Refuge Shoreline Protection (San Antonio Bay)          | \$ 125,000  |
| 21. HRI Oyster Restoration Site Locator Mapping Study                                | \$ 120,000  |
| 22. Marsh Restoration - Dickinson Bayou  | \$ 100,000  |
| 23. Nearshore Reefing - Corpus Christi   | \$ 100,000  |
| 24. Bahia Grande Restoration (Port Isabel / Brownsville)                             | \$ 95,000   |
| 25. ** Marsh Restoration - Brazoria & San Bernard Wildlife Refuge                    | \$ 91,000   |
| 26. Oyster Reef Restoration - Aransas Bay (Rockport)                                 | \$ 75,000   |
| 27. Oyster Reef Restoration - Copano Bay (Rockport)                                  | \$ 75,000   |
| 28. Marsh Restoration - Egery Island (Copano Bay/Bayside)                            | \$ 70,000   |
| 29. Marsh Restoration - Matagorda Island   | \$ 70,000   |
| 30. Nueces Bay Delta Water Management Gates  | \$ 70,000   |
| 31. Nearshore Reefing - Freeport / Vancouver   | \$ 60,000   |
| 32. Nueces Bay Demonstration Oyster Reef   | \$ 60,000   |
| 33. ** Newcomb Bend Marsh Restoration (TPWD)   | \$ 50,000   |
| 34. Marsh Restoration - Goose Island (Rockport)                                      | \$ 50,000   |
| 35. Nearshore Reefing - Port Mansfield   | \$ 50,000   |
| 36. Shoreline Stabilization - J. D. Murphree WMA                                     | \$ 50,000   |
| 37. Shoreline Stabilization - Cow Trap Lake (Brazoria County)                        | \$ 50,000   |
| 38. Dollar Bay Shoreline Protection and Marsh Restoration                            | \$ 50,000   |
| 39. Galveston Bay Foundation Headquarters Living Shoreline Restoration               | \$ 50,000   |
| 40. Marsh Restoration - Oxen & Gang's Bayou (Galveston)                              | \$ 42,000   |
| 41. Trinity Bay Discovery Center Living Shoreline                                    | \$ 40,000   |
| 42. Sweetwater Preserve Shoreline Protections and Oyster Reef Enhancement            | \$ 30,000   |
| 43. Marsh Restoration - Nueces Bay (Corpus Christi)                                  | \$ 24,000   |
| 44. Marsh Restoration - Snake Island Cover (West Galveston Bay)                      | \$ 20,000   |
| 45. Weed Eradication for Water Flow Restoration (Guadalupe River Delta)              | \$ 15,000   |
| 46. Sink Your Shucks Oyster Recycle Programs Trailer                                 | \$ 10,000   |
| 47. Bay Debris Removal - Aransas Pass  | \$ 5,600    |
| 48. Building Conservation Trust's Texas Habitat Fund (BCT & CCA Texas Secured Funds) | \$ 399,066  |

\*\* 2023 Projects Contributed to as 08/9/23

**TOTAL FUNDED THROUGH 2023: 10,128,916**

If you are interested in contributing to our Habitat program,  
Contact John Blaha at [jdblaha@ccatexas.org](mailto:jdblaha@ccatexas.org)

# HABITAT TODAY FOR FISH TOMORROW

**CCA Texas and Building Conservation Trust  
Nearshore Reefing Support**

|   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| • Sabine Pass HI20 (2021 deployments: Culverts & pyramids)    | \$ 906,000         |
| • Rio Grande Valley (2021 deployments: Railroad ties & boats) | \$ 861,000         |
| • Port O'Connor   | \$ 700,000         |
| • Galveston Big Man & Kate's (2021 deployments: Pyramids)     | \$ 329,000         |
| • HRI Nearshore Reef Enhancement Study                        | \$ 250,000         |
| • Matagorda   | \$ 200,000         |
| • Coprrpus Christi  | \$ 100,000         |
| • Freeport / Vancouver  | \$ 60,000          |
| • Port Mansfield  | \$ 50,000          |
| <b>Total contributions to Nearshore Reefing:</b>              | <b>\$3,456,000</b> |

## HABITAT TODAY FOR FISH TOMORROW

*A Natural Partnership*

**BUILDING  
CONSERVATION  
TRUST**  
CCA's Habitat

**COASTAL  
CONSERVATION  
ASSOCIATION  
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

- Completed
- Upcoming
- Ongoing



# A FISHING STORY

By Dexter Peacock

He woke up before the alarm went off, opened the motel door and looked up. A lot of stars visible. Not much wind either. Port O'Connor is a small town, and there was already some traffic, folks headed for jobs elsewhere. He got dressed and went across to Josey's, a small Mexican food shop. It opened early, catering to a group of old men who met there every morning to drink coffee and talk about the weather and whatever else was on their minds. He had a couple of egg tacos. He felt good.

There were a few dark cumulus clouds over the Gulf, but in the Texas summer, there often were. He picked up his boat, launched and headed out to a pond he had found two weeks ago that had held some redfish. Maybe they were still there, maybe not. You never knew, but he was going to give it a try.

He was a little worried about finding the slough that led to that pond. There were a lot of sloughs opening up on that shoreline. He cruised slowly along the grassy edge. Besides the putting engine, the only sound was the licking of the ripples on his bow. He found the opening, or was pretty sure he had, cut off the engine and poled in. The slough splayed out, with tendrils heading every direction, most of them finishing in grassy dead ends or unpassable sand bars. But when he saw it, he remembered the cut. It was barely wide enough for his boat to pass. He poled through, and there it was—a small lake, surrounded by mangroves. He could smell the salt. The water was clear, and despite the low light, he saw them—three pods of tailing reds. Their tails were flipping, glinting pink and orange. From the size of their tails, they looked like good fish. There were shrimp jumping all around them. He anchored as quietly as he could, and waded toward the closest pod. He hooked up on his first cast, and reversed his wade, hoping to pull the fish away from the other pods so they wouldn't bolt. That didn't work. It never did.

He released the fish, about 24 inches, and continued a slow wade. He was looking intensely into the water, not up at the sky, but he eventually noticed that some of those dark clouds seemed to be moving in from the Gulf. Distant booms of lightning began. After a while, he couldn't convince himself anymore that the storm wasn't coming at him.

As the storm moved in, it put the pods down. He waded to the muddy edge of the pond, and laid down his fly rod, worried that it would act as a lightning rod. He squatted on his heels, to leave as little contact with the wet ground as he could. It was a small system but it was moving toward him fast. The rain hit him, first with scattered big drops, then in a torrent. He got soaked in no time, but the rain was warm.

There was nowhere to run, nothing to shelter under and no choice but to

wait it out. He pulled his pack of Red Man out of his shirt pocket, and settled in for a wet chew.

Witnessing a storm like that from underneath was spectacular. It occurred to him that any sane person would be really scared. But strangely, he wasn't, and he wasn't going to leave those fish. Besides, there was nothing he could really do. He figured his boat was a more likely lightening target than he was, anyway. Furthermore, he believed that those tailing reds would just go to deeper water and would get back to their business the minute the squall passed over.

As the rain pelted him and the lightning cracked above him, he asked himself if there were any place, any place in the world, he would rather be right then. He was perfectly at peace.

Sure enough, as soon as it calmed, there they were. Except this time there were five pods. He felt blessed. He caught one each from three of the pods and released them too. By then, there was enough light that he could see into the water. The storm was behind him and the sun had gotten higher in the sky. He could see them swimming now and began to cast to singles busted out of the pods. He landed two more. He strung those. Finally, they got spooky and it was over.

It was an experience that he thought, rightly, he would remember as an old man.

He waded back to his boat. He pulled up the anchor, and slowly putted out of the slough. He cruised back to the launch, cranked his boat onto his trailer, drove to his boat locker and cleaned his fish. It was still pretty early, but he was finished for the day.

He was a happy man. He would be back.

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*Port O'Connor resident Dexter Peacock recognized the plight of the redfish early on and was a primary worker in the struggle to pass House Bill 1000, the "Redfish Bill" in 1981. A Lifetime Member of CCA Texas, he served on the Executive Committee and was Chairman of the Legal Affairs Committee for 19 years.*



*"Reds" by Al Barnes. Artist Al Barnes was one of the earliest donors to the fledgling GCCA. He was a contemporary of Dexter Peacock.*



From: Bill Kinney



BEST IN TEXAS



CUSTOM HOME BUILDERS

## CCA Texas STAR Scholarships – Crossing Over \$8 Million!

**T**wenty-eight years ago, you can bet that in 1995 many asked what do scholarships have to do with marine conservation? The CCA Tournament Committee has said: if we can get our kids off the Xboxes and into tackle boxes, we will leave a legacy for the next generation of conservationists to carry this mission forward, long after we are dead and gone. But, how do you get them “hooked” on the real thing? Answer: offer some BIG scholarships to get Mom and Dad to take them fishing... then let the fish do the rest! God bless those wily fish---it worked. We now have another generation carrying the CCA torch (my son included, and likely yours 🐟 who share our passion. And our responsibility.

As of November 11, we have crossed another milestone never even suspected back then. Our original goal was to encourage the “fishing family” where everyone could win something worthwhile. Together. Little did we know that those substantial scholarships would change the life paths of many of these children, creating opportunities to make a difference in our world. Yes, we have now awarded \$8,100,000 to over 200 winners since that time and the many stories of their future successes are the most gratifying part of all. Kudos to all of you, especially all Moms and Dads (and all family members involved). When I asked the question to the Class of 2023 winners, “raise your hand if your grandfather (fill in the blank) made you keep casting when you were ready to give up!”, most hands went up. Yet all agreed it was worth it. This same persistence and determination are what wins in the biggest event called Life.

Changing the STAR Scholarships to now allow winners to apply not just to “accredited colleges and universities” but also trade and technical schools and vocational training programs is a game-changer. Sadly, many institutions of higher learning no longer emphasize professions geared to life skills, so winners now have more choices choosing career paths. Even better, ALL STARKids and STARteens that make the final Leaderboard are receiving scholarships starting at \$2,500 up to \$30,000. With a cost per “hour” of \$30 at Lone Star College, you can receive quite an education versus at \$3,000 per hour!



BEST IN TEXAS



Thanks to YOU, loyal member, the mission of CCA Texas continues to blaze new territory in our quest to make Texas saltwater the envy of the nation. Because of our grassroots momentum, we will now begin to rebuild destroyed oyster reefs and make what was once dead live again with our recent commitment of \$5,000,000 into oyster restoration. CCA-built hatcheries are cranking pretty much at full production, raising baby fish to go back into the water. On the heels of creating more than 10 off-shore reefs in recent years, and dedicated attention given to the trout fisheries since the freeze, Texas anglers can look forward to a bright future indeed. In the Spirit of the season, we are grateful to you and wish you and yours a most wonder-full Christmas.

We would like to extend a special thank you to Mr. Tim Chapman for his contribution to the CCA Texas STAR Tournament. On August 3rd, 2023, Tim caught the 7th CCA Texas STAR Tournament red-tagged redfish in the Lower Laguna Madre. We spoke with him before he even reached Port Mansfield with the tag, and he immediately offered to donate his boat to CCA Texas as an auction item. Tim went above and beyond by repowering the boat with a 225hp Mercury motor and adding a T-top and other features courtesy of Chris’s Marine. His generous support will help us continue our mission of marine conservation and habitat restoration. The funds raised from the auction will undoubtedly contribute significantly to the success of our conservation programs. Once again, thank you, Tim and Brown Water Marine!



On next pages, our 2023 STAR scholarship winners



# FINAL 2023 LEADERBOARD



BEST IN TEXAS



## 2023 CCA Texas STAR Awards Ceremony



2023 Scholarship Winners



Carson Saul Winner  
\$25,000  
STAR Youth Scholarship Drawing



# FINAL 2023 LEADERBOARD



BEST IN TEXAS



## KIDS SCHOLARSHIP SHEEPSHEAD DIVISION WINNERS

**Sofia Lara (9) Winner**  
**\$30,000 STAR Kid Scholarship**  
**Sheepshead 5 lbs.7 ozs.**

**Kameron McDowell (8) 1st runner up**  
**\$20,000 STAR Kid Scholarship**  
**Sheepshead 5 lbs. 6 ozs.**



**Beckett Andrews (7) 2nd Runner up**  
**\$15,000 STAR Kid Scholarship**  
**Sheepshead 5 lbs 3ozs.**

Unable to Attend

Unable to Attend

**Heston Singleton (6) 3rd runner up**  
**\$7,500 STAR Kid Scholarship**  
**Sheepshead 4 lbs.14 ozs.**

**Tuf Singleton (9) 4th runner up**  
**\$2,500 STAR Kid Scholarship**  
**Sheepshead 4 lbs 9 ozs.**





# FINAL 2023 LEADERBOARD



## KIDS SCHOLARSHIP GAFTTOP DIVISION WINNERS

**Taylor Barghi (10) Winner**  
**\$30,000 STAR Kid Scholarship**  
**Gafftop 5 lbs. 10 ozs.**

**Allie Parmenter (7) 1st runner up**  
**\$20,000 STAR Kid Scholarship**  
**Gafftop 5 lbs. 8 ozs.**



**Kohen Faickney (7) 4th runner up**  
**\$2,500 STAR Kid Scholarship**  
**Gafftop 4 lbs 14 ozs.**

**Unable to Attend**  
  
**Cade Wessels (10) 2nd Runner up**  
**\$15,000 STAR Kid Scholarship**  
**Gafftop 5 lbs. 7 oz.**

**Unable to Attend**  
  
**Libby Fox (6) 3rd runner up**  
**\$7,500 STAR Kid Scholarship**  
**Gafftop 4 lbs.15 ozs.**





# FINAL 2023 LEADERBOARD



BEST IN TEXAS

**TILSON**  
CUSTOM HOME BUILDERS

**Academy**  
SPORTS+OUTDOORS

## TEENS SCHOLARSHIP SHEEPSHEAD DIVISION WINNERS

**Avery Reisdorph (12) Winner**  
\$30,000 STAR Kid Scholarship  
Sheepshead 7 lbs.6 oz.

**Alex Frederick (17) 1st runner up**  
\$20,000 STAR Teen Scholarship  
Sheepshead 7 lbs. 0 ozs.



**Joseph Ponder (16) 2nd Runner up**  
\$15,000 STAR Teen Scholarship  
Sheepshead 6 lbs 9 ozs.

Unable to Attend

**Ben Brothers (12) 3rd runner up**  
\$7,500 STAR Teen Scholarship  
Sheepshead 6 lbs. 2ozs.

Unable to Attend

**Madison Gray 4th runner up**  
\$2,500 STAR Teen Scholarship  
Sheepshead 5 lbs 7 ozs.



---

**CCA's STAR Tournament has now  
provided \$8,100,00 in  
college scholarships  
to youth from all over Texas**

---

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# Leaving It Better Than You Found It



*Christmas Bay Abandoned Crab Trap Day, 2022.*

## Christmas Bay Crab Trap Removal Day Coming Up

Hello, Team. Exciting news for our CBF traps, the Third Saturday of February. That's February 17 beginning at 8am at Seidler's Boat Ramp across from Peregrine Town Homes off the Bluewater Highway in Brazoria County. We will collect traps from 8am-12pm, then break for lunch and get back on it from 1:30pm - 5pm. — **Jim Olive** 281-802-3597.

Outdoor artist Sam Caldwell will participate in our event. He is donating two of his great watercolor prints. One for the team that gathers the most traps and a second

to the individual with the most interesting story about bringing a trap into the boat, or anything else interesting. There are rumors that Country Western Singer Kevin Black, may also attend.

The Nature Conservancy is sending volunteers from Cor-pus Christi. We will do two sessions on Saturday, one AM and one PM. As always, the Gulf Coast Rescue Squad will be in attendance along with Brazoria County, Andy Lub-etkin with his boat (S). We start promoting this event next month. Should be one of our best attended.

Tight lines! — **Jim Olive**

## The crabbing closure period is Friday Feb 16 through Sunday Feb 25, 2024.

Help is needed throughout the closure, but Saturday February 17 will be the main mobilization day, with Saturday February 24 as the bad weather backup. Please save the dates on your calendars. I will call for volunteers in January.

Volunteers are needed out of Palacios, Port Lavaca, Indianola, Port O'Connor, Seadrift, Austwell, and Rockport. Again, a celebratory party in POC on Sat Feb 17 is planned.

As in 2023, boats are requested to use a free cell-phone-based app, **Field Maps**, to mark location of each trap removed. This data is essential to reducing trap dereliction. Signup is required to obtain requisite ID's and training will be available.

Contact Allan: [allanrberger@outlook.com](mailto:allanrberger@outlook.com) or call 713-829-2852 for assisting out of Port O'Connor, Charlie's, Seadrift, or Austwell.

Contact Janet: [info@lavacabay.org](mailto:info@lavacabay.org) or 361-920-0818 for assisting out of Port Lavaca.

Contact Bill: [bbalboa@matbay.org](mailto:bbalboa@matbay.org) or 361-781-2171 for assisting out of Palacios or Matagorda.

Contact Katie: [katie.swanson@utexas.edu](mailto:katie.swanson@utexas.edu) or 361-749-3106 for assisting out of Rockport.

*Planning is in progress—details to be finalized after the holidays. It will be fun again! Thank you for your help.*  
— **Allan Berger.**



*One of the earliest crab trap removal days.*

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# Caught Redhanded!

Reports from Texas Parks & Wildlife Game Wardens



On 11/12/23, Matagorda Wardens filed on two commercial shrimp boats for possessing flounder during closed season. A total of 52 flounder were seized. Another two gulf shrimpers with a total of over 50 flounder. It never seems to end. Cases pending. —Ronnie Luster

On 10/30/23, a Galveston Game Warden inspected an individual leaving a fishing pier. It was discovered that the fisherman had seven untagged bull reds in his possession and no fishing license. Multiple citations were issued and civil restitution charged.

In October of 2023, Texas Game Warden Casey Willmon who is assigned to Calhoun County responded to a call of suspicious activity at a local fish cleaning table. As the warden arrived on location he witnessed multiple individuals cleaning undersized red snapper. Upon further investigation the suspects were found to have no fishing licenses, in possession of 31 undersized red snapper, over the limit of red snapper, and an undersized gag grouper. Multiple class C misdemeanor cases were filed and are pending.

On 10/20/23, Jefferson County Wardens filed on individuals for untagged Red Drum.



Texas Game Wardens, Serving Texans since 1895



Law Enforcement Off the Pavement

# Gulf Identification Guide



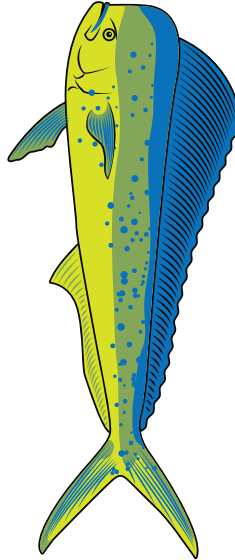
Tito's Bloody Mary



Grouper



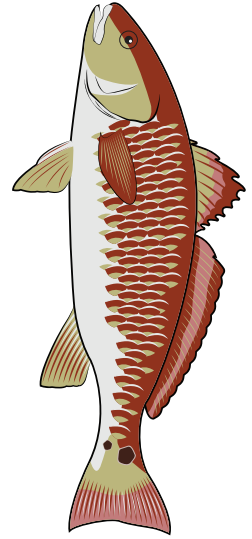
Tito's Martini



Mahi-Mahi



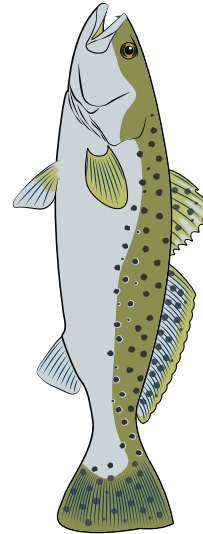
Mo-Tito



Redfish



Tito's Salty Dog



Speckled Trout



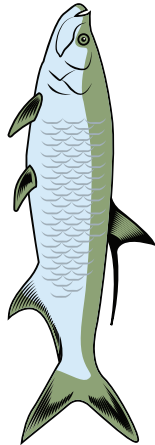
Tito's Screwdriver



Tito's All-American Lemonade



America's Original Craft Vodka



Tarpon



Tito's All-Time Favorite



Flounder



Tito's American Mule

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# marucci

## LIFESTYLE SUNGLASSES

# BUILT FOR THE WATER

In partnership with CCA, Marucci's Limited Edition Lifestyle sunglasses feature an engraved CCA logo on the lens and custom design on the temples.

### GANCIO 2.0

Large, fully-wrapping frame for a secure fit during outdoor activities



100% UV protection from the sun's harmful rays

### OMERO 2.0

Lightweight frames provide all-day comfort for everyday activities



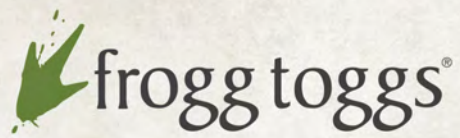
Ri-Pel™ scratch-resistant lens coating repels dirt, oil and water for use in all weather conditions



Impacto lens technology that provides the highest level of durability

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ASSOCIATION

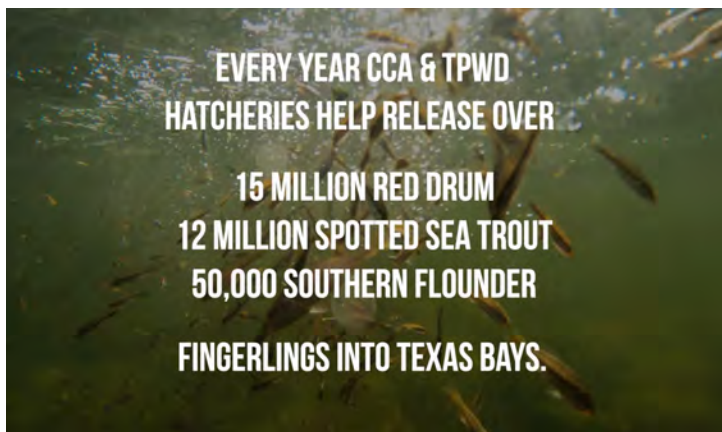
**TEXAS**



# Putting fingerlings back where fish need to be

Hatcheries were an early priority of CCA. Enhancing populations was crucial, but replacing a large percentage of cold-stricken gamefish proved to be a primary benefit of the hatcheries.

Once again, CCA and TPWD are filling the need to mitigate trout, redfish and flounder mortalities. Take a brief voyage with a CCA /TPWD hatchery as technicians replace trout fingerlings. Here's a link to a recent video that will provide an idea of the process: [CLICK HERE](#)







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**CCATEXAS.ORG**

## **Presenting the NEW CCA Texas license plates!**



We are incredibly excited about this new, updated design which proudly displays our CCA logo to show everyone you're a conservation-minded Texas angler.

Get yours TODAY by going to [ccatexas.org](http://ccatexas.org) and clicking the link on the homepage.

For each plate sold, CCA Texas will receive \$22 which will be crucial support for our work of ensuring the health and conservation of our marine resources and anglers' access to them here in Texas. Additionally, by purchasing your CCA Texas license plates for your SUV, truck, car, or trailer, you'll also be raising awareness for CCA and our conservation efforts each time you're out on the road!

## Supporters of CCA Texas

### I have my NEW CCA Texas license plates. Do you have yours?

If not, you can order our NEW CCA Texas license plates with an updated design that proudly displays our CCA logo for everyone to see.

[CLICK HERE](#) to get yours today. Why?

1. Show everyone you're a conservation-minded Texas angler.
2. Raise awareness for CCA and our conservation efforts each time you're out on the road.
3. Support our work of ensuring the health and conservation of our marine resources and anglers' access to them here in Texas. For each plate sold, CCA Texas will receive \$22.

Order yours TODAY by [CLICKING HERE](#).

If you already have CCA Texas plates with the previous design, you can definitely keep them, but you also have the opportunity to get the new one by going to your local county tax assessor-collector's office and ordering a replacement for \$6.50.

Help out CCA Texas and upgrade your car, truck, or trailer by [CLICKING HERE](#) to get your custom CCA Texas plates TODAY at MyPlates.com.

Your friend in conservation, —**Robby Byers**  
Executive Director CCA Texas



**In 2015, the U.S. Coast Guard estimated over 760,000 red snapper were illegally fished in Texas and U.S. waters by the lancha fleet from Mexico.**

**REPORT ILLEGAL FISHING!**

**STEALING YOUR FISH. SHORTENING YOUR SEASON.**

**REPORT ILLEGAL FISHING IN GULF OF MEXICO:**  
Inside 9 nautical miles – Texas Parks & Wildlife > 800.792.4263  
Beyond 9 nautical miles – US Coast Guard > 361.939.0450

# Enjoying Your Digital CURRENTS Newsletter

CCA Texas' financial responsibilities and goals are ongoing. For the time being, publishing the CURRENTS newsletter requires the internet. There are excellent reasons, with cost being primary.

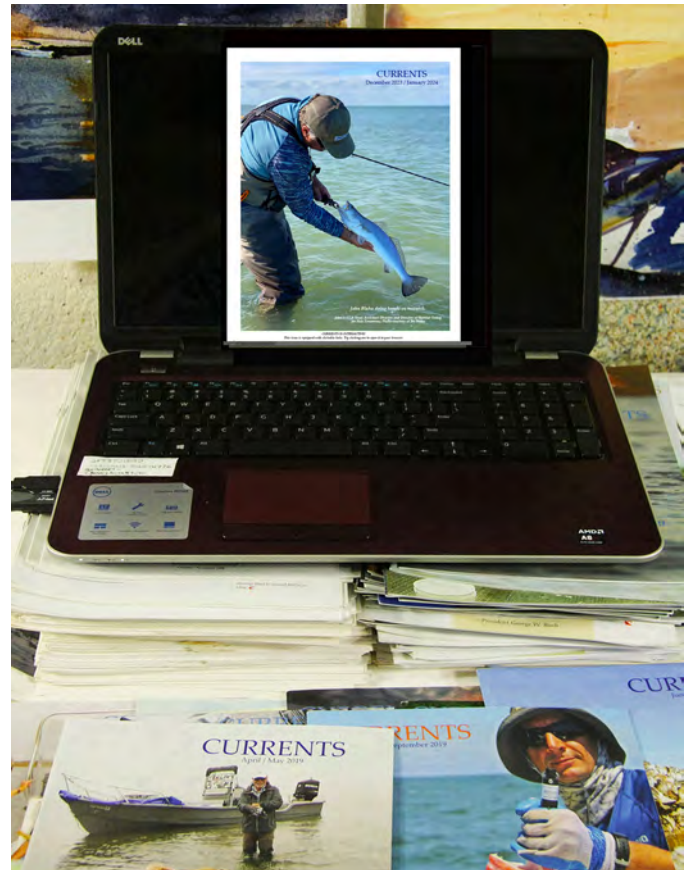
For 36 years, the printed CURRENTS newsletter has provided valuable two-way communication, as well as being an important tool for affecting environmental change. But printing and mailing a full-color newsletter to 75,000+ members is time consuming and expensive.

The online CURRENTS newsletter requires no printing nor postage, and delivery is almost instantaneous. An email to members contains a link, with the full newsletter a click away.

Apart from the cost difference, there are many reasons a member can appreciate an internet version of the publication.

- An e-newsletter can be opened in seconds. Articles can be accessed rapidly. Images can be viewed large. Text can be enlarged for easier reading, blocked, copied and shared. Past issues are a click away on the CCA Texas website.
- A favored article can be forwarded to others, readily accessed later instead of having to search through stacks of magazines, and printed for reference.
- Links can be used to connect to advertisers, as well as cross referencing other articles, writers, photographers and artists.

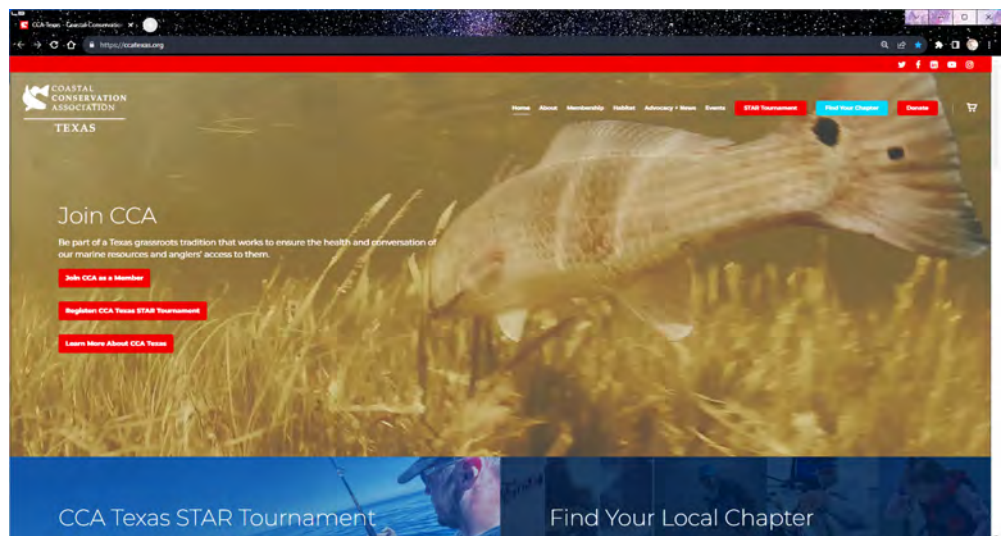
- A link to the CCA Texas website provides comprehensive news and resources. On the website, an array of CCA information is available. View many project-specific videos. Consult the list of CCA-approved guides. Listen to an informative Podcast. [Click here for CURRENTS Newsletters.](#)



*A great way to enjoy indoor time and stay in touch with the outdoors—the CCA Texas website is at your service.*

You'll find news and information about chapter events, advocacy and breaking news, plus videos of the progress we're making along the Texas coast. Need a guide? Want to enjoy a CURRENTS feature from years back? Check in with the STAR program?

Go to [ccatexas.org](http://ccatexas.org) and bookmark it now.



# Follow CCA Texas on Social Media!

The BEST way to stay informed on the latest with CCA Texas is by FOLLOWING us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. We regularly post photo and video updates on our 60 local chapters, conservation projects, member photos, and advocacy efforts to keep you informed and engaged. Our following is **GROWING FAST**, so join thousands of CCA Texas members around the state by following us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#) now! Each time our members FOLLOW CCA Texas and LIKE our posts, it helps raise awareness for CCA and our conservation efforts. And don't be shy, share our posts with your friends and family and encourage them to FOLLOW us as well!

## Featured Social Media Highlights

Join over 32,000+ Texas anglers by LIKING our CCA Texas Facebook page to be the first to know about important updates, see awesome photos, and watch cool videos! LIKE us on Facebook TODAY and help us out by sharing our posts!



**CONSERVATION IN ACTION** 🌊 ARANSAS BAY AND AGGIELAND CHAPTERS

**ROAD TO BAY COASTAL CLEANUP**  
 1 SOUTH ROCKPORT, TEXAS

THE CCA ARANSAS BAY CHAPTER RECENTLY TEAMED UP WITH KEEP ARANSAS COUNTY BEAUTIFUL TO HOST THIS ANNUAL CLEANUP WHERE DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS REMOVED AWFUL GARBAGE FROM OUR BEAUTIFUL COAST.

A SPECIAL 🙏 THANK YOU 🙏 TO OUR AGGIELAND CHAPTER FOR COMING DOWN TO HELP AGAIN THIS YEAR. GOOD BULL AGS 🐂

📍: JOHN BLAHA

#JOINCCA #CCATEXAS

[CLICK HERE TO LIKE/SHARE THIS POST!](#)

**BIG NEWS FOR ANGLERS IN SOUTHEAST TEXAS** 🌊 THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE SABINE PASS PUBLIC BOAT RAMP

THE RAMP WAS IN DIRE NEED OF REPAIRS RESULTING FROM HURRICANE STORM SURGES ALONG WITH ADDITIONAL WEAR AND TEAR. THE PROJECT INCLUDED: REBUILDING THE RAMPS, CONSTRUCTING A FISH CLEANING STATION WITH COVER, A FLOATING DOCK + WALKWAY, AND ASPHALT FOR THE PARKING LOT WITH LANDSCAPE.

THIS BOAT RAMP'S PROXIMITY TO THE AREA'S ARTIFICIAL REEFS, INCLUDING THE SABINE HI-20 SITE (8.4NM FROM SHORE TO SITE) WHICH HAS BEEN A BIG BENEFICIARY OF OUR CCA TEXAS HABITAT TODAY FOR FISH TOMORROW INITIATIVE, WILL BENEFIT LOCAL ANGLERS.

A BIG THANK YOU TO TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE | COASTAL FISHERIES - TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE, THE LOCAL COMMUNITY, AND INDUSTRY PARTNERS LIKE CHEMIERE ENERGY INC. FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF THIS IMPORTANT PROJECT!

[CLICK HERE TO LIKE/SHARE THIS POST!](#)

THANKSGIVING IS A TIME TO GIVE THANKS AND BE THANKFUL. WE'RE THANKFUL FOR OUR TEXAS COAST AND ALL THE MARINE LIFE THAT INHABITS IT. THE SEAGRASS, THE OYSTERS, THE TEXAS REDFISH, AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN, WE'RE GRATEFUL FOR IT ALL!

WE HOPE YOU AND YOUR FAMILY HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY THANKSGIVING! 🐟🍷

📍: MAC ELLIOTT MEDIA + CCA TEXAS STAR TOURNAMENT

#JOINCCA #CCATEXAS

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## CCA Texas on Instagram

We're now over 19.1K Instagram followers and are nearly at our goal of 20,000 followers! Help get us there! If you aren't following us already, add our @cca\_texas page to your feed and encourage your friends and family to follow us along with you! FOLLOW us on Instagram TODAY!

## INSTAGRAM

WHEN YOU FINALLY FIND THAT PERFECT SPOT TO SET UP SHOP...

...AND THEN...

...TIME TO FIND A NEW SPOT...OR IS IT?

CLICK HERE TO WATCH THIS VIDEO!

COASTAL CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION TEXAS

Y'ALL THINK HE WANTS TO GO WADE FISHING?

WONDER IF HE'S GOOD WITH A NET...

HE'S GOT TO KNOW WHERE THE FISH ARE, RIGHT?

CLICK HERE TO WATCH THIS VIDEO!

COASTAL CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION TEXAS

"THE CHARM OF FISHING IS THAT IT IS THE PURSUIT...

...OF WHAT IS ELUSIVE BUT ATTAINABLE...

...A PERPETUAL SERIES OF OCCASIONS FOR HOPE."

- JOHN BUCHAN

CLICK HERE TO WATCH THIS VIDEO!

COASTAL CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION TEXAS



## CCA Texas on TWITTER/X

Get important recreational angling-related news and updates filtered into your feed by following us on Twitter / X! In addition to posting our own updates, we make sure to repost content that we know you want to see! FOLLOW us on TODAY!

## TWITTER



Y'ALL KNOW...

AFTER A LONG, LONG SUMMER IN THE GRUELING HEAT, FALL AND WINTER FISHING IN THE COOLER WEATHER FEELS INCREDIBLE!

📍 MESQUITE BAY, TEXAS


👤: JOHN BLAHA

#JOINCCA #CCATEXAS

**CLICK HERE TO LIKE/REPOST!**

AS ANGLERS, WE OFTEN FORGET THAT "SCHOOL OF FISH" IS NOT A CLICHÉ. TROUT, REDFISH, AND PARTICULARLY FLOUNDER CAN TRAVEL IN SHOCKINGLY TIGHT SCHOOLS.

I THINK MOST FISHERMEN UNDERESTIMATE THE DEGREE TO WHICH FISH WILL SCHOOL.



COASTAL CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION TEXAS

A FEW THOUGHTS ON THE SCHOOLING NATURE OF FISH FROM OUR ADVOCACY DIRECTOR SHANE BONNOT WHO HAS WITNESSED THIS BEHAVIOR, SPECIFICALLY IN A HATCHERY SETTING, OVER HIS MANY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE.

IT CAN DEFINITELY BE EASY TO FORGET WHEN YOU'RE OUT ON THE WATER...

#JOINCCA #CCATEXAS

**CLICK HERE TO LIKE/REPOST!**



🐟 HABITAT TODAY FOR FISH TOMORROW 🐟

OUR GREAT FRIENDS AT @SPAWGLASS1953 CARE DEEPLY ABOUT THE HEALTH AND CONSERVATION OF OUR MARINE RESOURCES AND ANGLERS' ACCESS TO THEM HERE IN TEXAS AND FOR THAT, WE ARE GRATEFUL.

THEIR GENEROSITY WILL SUPPORT CONSERVATION AND HABITAT EFFORTS ALONG OUR STATE'S COAST 🌞

#SGHOUSTON #JOINCCA #CCATEXAS

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CURRENTS is published six times a year by CCA Texas, a nonprofit state affiliate of the Coastal Conservation Association. This is the issue of December 2023 / January 2024 Volume 44 Issue 1

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Editor / Sam Caldwell

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Liz Bosmans, Kevin Hickson

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Corbin Primrose, Taylor Rieck, Erich Schneider,  
Matt Still, Coleman Todd and Carson Vecera

[Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) for updates and details. Registration will open after New Years, link is on [BABESONTHEBAY.COM](http://BABESONTHEBAY.COM) through the Fishing Chaos App! This tournament is a catch and release tournament. We can't wait to host you all once again for a fantastic weekend of fishing and camaraderie. If you are interested in being a 2024 Sponsor, or have any tournament questions, please contact Tournament Director, Jen Thomasson, at (361) 205-0182 or Janelle Weller, Asst. Tournament Director at (830) 998-5989. For Vendor info, please call Tina Frick at (210) 508-6281.

Thank you to a huge group of amazing Sponsors for your continued support of CCA Texas Aransas Bay! **Salemi's Ace Hardware, Rockport Tackle Town, Waterloo Rod Company, Yeti, Bay Flats Lodge, Reel Skipper, Guild Mortgage, Orvis Swan Point Landing, L&F Distributing, Rockport Marine, Goin' Coastal Outfitters, Titos Vodka, Poor Man's Country Club, The Reserve at St. Charles Bay, Chris's Marine, Reel Sportswear, Big Tree Realty, Guild Mortgage - Shelley Sammons and Sandy Oaks Kennel & more.** We also welcomed some new very generous sponsors in 2023 including **Smith Optics, Grundens, Sage Fly Rods, and By the Bay Vacation Rentals...**we can't wait to have you back next year! If you are interested in joining the CCA Texas Aransas Bay Chapter, please contact President, Mike Ferri at (361) 790-4404, Vice President, Bill Burge at (713) 828-3823 or Secretary, Jane Jackson at (210) 240-7722. We have a wonderful crew here in Rockport-Fulton and would love for you to join us!

**Alvin-Pearland  
Rex Richards  
alvinpearlandcca@yahoo.com**

**Aransas Bay  
Michael Ferri 361-790-4404  
txsprig@yahoo.com**



Happy Holidays from Aransas Bay CCA! We are so thankful for the greatest crew of volunteers and like-minded conservationists! Thank you all for your dedication and hard work throughout the year!

**Save the date for our upcoming Aransas Bay CCA Banquet April 6, 2024 at Fulton Convention Center.** Raffle tickets for the 6-seater golf cart from Copano Carts are

for sale NOW! Come see us at Christmas in the District on December 9, LaMardi Gras in Lamar and more! Second through Fifth Place tickets win big too, so don't miss out!! Our Banquet is an exciting evening of fundraising for Texas Coastal Conservation, and we sell out QUICK! For questions regarding the banquet and raffle ticket sales, email [jdblaha@ccatexas.org](mailto:jdblaha@ccatexas.org) or contact President, Mike Ferri at (361) 790-4404 or Jane Jackson, Secretary at (210) 240-7722. Follow our [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages for the latest details!

**Save the Date for Babes on the Bay on May 17-18, 2024.**

Registration opens in early January and we are back for our 25TH ANNIVERSARY year, with another fantastic weekend of fishing, live music, vacation giveaways, vendors, and more! We have Guided, Non-Guided, Artificial, Any Bait, Fly Fishing and Babette Divisions! Ladies, book your guides and reserve your hotels ahead of time! Keep an eye on our



*Clockwise: David Frick and Grandson Bayes enjoying each other on the water in Rockport / Britney Goodwin with a gorgeous Rockport Red / Sarah Bosenbury with a beautiful Flounder / Candace Kern letting one swim to see another day!*

**Austin**

**Jason Magdalena 512-789-6207**

**Jason.magdalena@gmail.com**

CCA Austin is excited about keeping our banquet new and exciting for everyone. We offer raffles and live auctions for everyone to enjoy including the ladies! **Our banquet will be on May 9, 2024 at Palmer Events Center.** Your ticket includes CCA membership, gifts, dinner and an open bar. This is a great opportunity to thank your employees or invite your clients and network with other professionals who have the same interest in raising the funds needed to continue the mission of CCA! CCA is a Non-Profit Organization.

If you are interested in purchasing a table at our May 9, 2024 banquet you can click on this link [ticketstripe.com/CCAAustin2024](https://ticketstripe.com/CCAAustin2024) or contact Cheryl at [cherylcacaustin@gmail.com](mailto:cherylcacaustin@gmail.com) or (512) 662-0006. Our tickets will be electronic so no paper tickets will be mailed out. Each table seats 10 people.

Our 2024 Raffle Boat is a 25' Haynie Magnum (see picture below). Tickets are \$20 each or 6 for \$100, 22 for \$300, 40 for \$500 and 86 for \$1000. We will have more than one winner! Second place winner will win a Diablo Kayak! Third place winner will win a Lifetime Membership with CCA! You do not have to be present to win. If you are interested, please call Cheryl at (512) 662-0006 or email [cherylcacaustin@gmail.com](mailto:cherylcacaustin@gmail.com) or a CCA Austin Board Member.

The 10 Gun raffle is back after a successful first year. There will be 10 winners! Tickets are \$20 each, 6 for \$100, 22 for \$300, 40 for \$500 and 86 for \$1000. If you are interested in purchasing tickets, please contact Cheryl at (512) 662-0006 or email [cherylc](mailto:cherylc)



**2024 BOAT RAFFLE TICKET INFORMATION**

**25' HAYNIE MAGNUM IN WHITE AND ICE BLUE**

- Suzuki 300 Motor
- Custom White Powder Coated Aluminum with K-Top
- Boat And Front Seats
- Swim Ladder
- Flushlights LED Light Bar
- LED Light Deck
- Full Marine System
- GPS System
- Power Pole
- Two Live Wells

Plus, the boat sits atop a beautiful Coastline Tandem Axle Aluminum Trailer with Deluxe Package that includes mag wheels with "Big Boys Fenders"!

Second Place Drawing Winner will win a Diablo Kayak  
Third Place Drawing Winner will win a CCA Lifetime Membership

**DRAWING HELD LIVE DURING THE CCA AUSTIN CHAPTER BANQUET | MAY 9TH, 2024**  
1 TICKET FOR \$20 | 6 TICKETS FOR \$100 | 22 TICKETS FOR \$300  
40 TICKETS FOR \$500 | 86 TICKETS FOR \$1000 (NEED NOT BE PRESENT TO WIN)

If you would like to purchase a Boat Raffle Ticket, please call Cheryl Smith at: 512.662.0006  
Cheryl will take your credit card information or you can mail a check to her.  
She will promptly email you a receipt/invoice to keep with your purchase.

Thank you to our boat sponsors:



You do not need to be present to win! Every year in lots will just sell before the banquet so get yours now.  
If you purchase your boat ticket by February 15, 2024, you will automatically be entered into the early bird drawing.  
Early Bird Draw Prize: 1st Place: Boat, 2nd Place: Kayak, 3rd Place: Lifetime Membership  
Early Bird Draw Prize: 1st Place: Boat, 2nd Place: Kayak, 3rd Place: Lifetime Membership  
Early Bird Draw Prize: 1st Place: Boat, 2nd Place: Kayak, 3rd Place: Lifetime Membership  
Early Bird Draw Prize: 1st Place: Boat, 2nd Place: Kayak, 3rd Place: Lifetime Membership



**2024 BANQUET TABLE & TICKET ORDER FORM**  
THURSDAY, MAY 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024 | PALMER EVENTS CENTER

TABLES INCLUDE: 10 TICKETS W/ CCA MEMBERSHIPS, GIFTS, DINNER & OPEN BAR

| ITEM  | PRICE   | QUANTITY | EXTENDED PRICE |
|---|---------|----------|----------------|
| <b>Bull Red Table</b><br><small>(Premium table gifts for each guest. Limited quantity available.)<br/>Carty Gift Pricing Through Jan. 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024</small> | \$2,750 |          |                |
|   | \$2,500 |          |                |
| <b>Additional Table Gifts Upgrade</b><br><small>Guarantee your table \$2000 worth of additional table gifts.</small>  | \$1,000 |          |                |
| <b>Individual Tickets</b><br><small>(Includes CCA Membership. Premium table gift not included.)</small>   | \$275   |          |                |

COMPANY BUYER NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
TABLE NAME: (Please print check's credit line you would like your table name to appear.) \_\_\_\_\_  
CONTACT: \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_  
CREDIT CARD NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ EXP. DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ CC SECURITY NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_  
EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE E-MAIL FORM TO: Cheryl Smith: [cherylcacaustin@gmail.com](mailto:cherylcacaustin@gmail.com)  
OR MAIL FORM & CHECK TO: Cheryl Smith, 907 Potomac Path, Austin, TX 78753

Please make checks payable to: Coastal Conservation Association  
For questions, contact Cheryl Smith: [cherylcacaustin@gmail.com](mailto:cherylcacaustin@gmail.com)  
For Official Use Only - Ticket Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Board Member: \_\_\_\_\_

PRESENTED BY:  
**COVERT**  
CHEVROLET • BUICK • GMC

[caustin@gmail.com](mailto:caustin@gmail.com) or a CCA Austin Board Member. You do not have to be present to win.

If you are interested in learning more about CCA Austin please contact our President, Jason Magdalena at [Jason.magdalena@gmail.com](mailto:Jason.magdalena@gmail.com).

**Bastrop County**  
**Cole Williams 512-913-3684**  
**colew65@yahoo.com**

**Brazoria**  
**Kim Lamont 979-482-1456**  
**KALamont@dowcom**

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

Enjoying fishing with better weather. Our chapter met at C&J Barbeque for our monthly meeting. We started working on our **next annual banquet, which will be held March 1, 2024.** Please save the date!

We already have four dates for meetings between now and the banquet. Hope you will come and help out. Meetings will be at C&J Barbeque (they also cater our banquet). Thanks for all they do! Meeting dates: Jan 9, Jan 23, Feb 13, and Feb 26 so far. Mark your calendar. See you at the meetings or the banquet. Tickets are on sale now. Reserve your tables early.

Merry Christmas! Take a kid fishing and share your enthusiasm for fishing and the outdoors.

**Brenham**  
**Ryan Saunders 979-251-2389**  
**ryansaunders1@att.net**

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

**Centex**  
**Wayne Webb 254-405-1300**  
**sheyhunt@aol.com**

**Central Houston**  
**Todd Buster 713-545-1897**  
**tbuster@busterandcogdellbuilders.com**

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

Greetings from the Colorado Valley! Our chapter is wishing everyone a terrific holiday season along with long days in the field hunting and great days on the water getting in some quality fishing time. Hope you are sharing your experiences with the young ones in your families. **Our upcoming banquet in LaGrange will be held March 21, 2024.** Please get your tickets/tables early. It promises to be another great event and we are expecting a full house again. You can contact any of the following board members for raffle tickets and tables: Danny Olenick at (979) 249-6851, Trish Kubena at (512) 581-2588, Gary Janda at (979) 966-2082, Dave Fehlker at (512) 468-6782, Rusty Kubena at (512) 581-2878, and Eugene Ulrich (979) 249-7425. Wishing bent rods and tight lines to all!

**Come and Catch It**  
**Jared Brumme 210-825-9088**  
**Jared.brumme@yahoo.com**

**Corpus Christi**  
**Cody Roesner 916-531-0078**  
**cbroutfitters@yahoo.com**

WOW as I write my final chapter update of 2023, I can't help but reflect on what a year 2023 has been! CCA Corpus Christi started the year off with a record setting banquet this spring, and we have been going ever since! We have not slowed down this fall

with the Babes on Baffin Tournament, Poco Rojo Kid Fish and Anglers' Night Out all taking place in October. Please excuse the longer than usual chapter update as I have a lot to report on and a lot of volunteers to recognize!

The 2023 Babes on Baffin all women's fishing tournament was held October 6-7, 2023, at Marker 37 Marina. Tournament Director Kimberly Prowse and her team put on another amazingly successful event. They hosted 73 Teams and 258 lady anglers from all over Texas! In conjunction with the tournament, Tiffany Currie organized another extremely successful two-day community pop-up market! 2024 will be the tournament's 20th anniversary so the team is already talking about how they are going to make it bigger and better, be sure to **mark your calendars for October 4 and 5, 2024!**

We also hosted our annual Poco Rojo Kid Fish on October 26 at the CCA Marine Development Center in Flour Bluff. Barrett Fines did a great job again this year making sure this event went flawlessly! **Flint Hill Resources** was the Title Sponsor and the **REPCON** cook team provided us with some delicious food for the event. Special thanks to our volunteers from TPWD Coastal Fisheries, Hatchery Staff, Islander Anglers, Islander CCA and Corpus Christi Growth Ventures. The kids (and the adults) had a great time!

Lastly, I am proud to announce a new volunteer base for our chapter. Last fall I was approached by two very ambitious young ladies from Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi regarding starting a CCA presence on campus. After a lot of hard work and organization I am proud to announce that Islander CCA held their first general meetings this semester and are off to a great start! Thank you to Mimi Guthrey and Mckenna Reinsch for making this happen! Islander CCA has already taken an active role in chapter events and was instrumental in the organization and planning of our very successful Fall Anglers' Night Out held October 17 at House of Rock.

We have finalized the date for our **2024 CCA Corpus Christi Chapter Banquet! The banquet will again be at the American Bank Center and will be held Thursday March 7, 2024.** We set the bar pretty high in 2023 and need all the support we can get to make 2024 another record event!

As always, let us know if you're interested in volunteering! For questions, contact Heather at [ccacoruschristi@gmail.com](mailto:ccacoruschristi@gmail.com) or call (361) 882-5199.

**Dallas**  
**Kyle Marmillion 214-437-3468**  
**marmillionkyle@gmail.com**



CCA Dallas Angler's Night Out at Sawgrass Rods

The Dallas Chapter held its biggest Angler's Night Out social ever on November 15 at Sawgrass Fishing Rods in Dallas. Thank you, Sawgrass! We raised over \$4,000 for CCA because Sawgrass donated every rod sold that evening to CCA Dallas. The featured speaker was Capt. Scott Null, who spoke about tarpon and redfish along the Texas Coast. About 80 anglers showed up and were treated to delicious food from St. Pete's Dancing Marlin while sipping cold drinks and learning about what goes into making a Sawgrass rod from rod designer Collins Illich. Sawgrass rods are made in the USA and you can find more info at [sawgrassrods.com](http://sawgrassrods.com). Thank you so much to all of our 2023 sponsors and we look forward to 2024.

CCA Dallas Sawgrass Social link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IH9kFSMdZ3c>

**Fort Bend**  
**Thomas Welch 832-628-0130**  
**twelch@aegislifesafety.com**

**Fort Worth**  
**Beau Redwine 817-291-1890**  
**beauredwine9@gmail.com**

Thank you to everyone who attended our annual Fall Fish Fry hosted and prepared by your FW Chapter Board at The Vintage Rail in Fort Worth. We had a tremendous turnout and, as usual, great food, beverages, and live music. A few raffle items were awarded to some lucky winners and a good time had by all. It seems like winter brings a bit of a lull but we hope you find some time to hit the waters around this beautiful state of ours. Our next event will be our extremely popular crawfish boil in the Spring as we begin our sprint to the annual banquet around the first week in May. Stay tuned to our [Facebook page](#) and newsletter to keep informed about upcoming events and opportunities to get involved. We hope that each of you had a wonderful Thanksgiving and a Merry Christmas - From your FW Chapter Board!

**Galveston**  
**Lawrence Walker 832-444-0911**  
**lpwalk62@icloud.com**

With the Holidays now in full swing, it's a great time to reflect on 2023 and be thankful for our Galveston CCA team and sponsors.



*The Galveston 2023 Annual Banquet, CCA Galveston Anglers' Night Out and the 2023 Galveston Kidfish.*

There are a few pics from our year, including April's Anglers' Night Out with an excellent TPWD Presentation on Oyster Reef Restoration, our Annual Kidfish at Seawolf Park (with over 90 participants!) and September's GCCA Banquet at the Galveston Railroad Museum.

Thanks for all of the support from area chapters and CCA Texas folks who have joined us for events. We are growing and I hope to keep that momentum going into next year. I have no doubt that the team is up for it.

And last but not least, a special thanks to our outgoing President, Corey King! Corey saw us through the uncertainty of the COVID years and ensured that we came out of it as a stronger chapter.

We will be planning our next Anglers' Night Out for 2024, so watch for the notice in your inbox and follow us on [Facebook](#). Hope to see you out there! Best of the Holidays for you and your family, and have a Merry Christmas!

**Golden Triangle**  
**Heath Thompson 409-937-4139**  
**Heath.b.thompson@gmail.com**





**Greater Sugar Land  
John Breland 281-808-2969  
geauxingfishing@yahoo.com**

Greater Sugar Land Chapter with our most successful banquet ever, 3 big Kid Fish Events and a successful Presidents Cup. 2024 will be no different starting with the **Annual Banquet to take place Thursday, April 4 at The Stafford Centre** featuring a boiled crawfish and fried catfish dinner. A night of good ol' fashioned fun and FUNdraising and it's not too early to get your tickets.

Stay tuned for the Annual Chapter Presidents Cup to take place in May in Sargent, Texas. Kid Fish events are planned for Riverstone, New Territory and Missouri. This year's events hosted over 100 participants at each event. I encourage any of you to attend one of our Kid Fish events and you won't be able to erase the smile from the kids when they catch their 1st fish from your mind. If you know a community in the Greater Sugar Land area that would like to host a Kid Fish event, please let us know.

Also planned for the Fall of 2024 will be our Annual Anglers Night Out with this year's event being a Casino Night. It will be a fun-filled night, you can bet on it. More information to come. We also would like to welcome to the Greater Sugar Land Chapter new Board Members Sandy Gaines, Hector Gonzales and Frant Marquez. We all look forward to the energy and ideas you each bring to our chapter. Speaking of Board Members, I would like to give a Texas Size shout out to each board member for your continued support throughout the year. Your efforts don't go unnoticed. Let's make 2024 our best year yet. Until next time, tight lines and Laissez Les Bons Temps Rouler.



**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.ccahaysco@gmail.com**

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

**Helotes  
Bob Mitchell 210-442-7009  
Bobmitchell89@gmail.com**

**Hill Country  
Miles Engelke 210-260-8968  
mrengelke1957@gmail.com**



2023 Greater Sugar Land Chapter banquet picture from the Stafford Centre. Photos from 2023 CCA Greater Sugar Land Kid Fish events. Bob Hrachovy passes the Annual Presidents Cup trophy to the 2023 Winner for the 7th time, Joel Canavan. Also pictured, Presidents Cup Chairman David Darilek.

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

**Houston Real Estate**  
**Kirk Laguarda 713-515-3830**  
**KLaguarda@landadvisors.com**

**Katy**  
**Lyn Goldman 713-591-8550**  
**lgoldman@contrexenergy.com**

**Laredo**  
**Maggie Puig 956-645-0031**  
**Mepuig78@yahoo.com**

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

**Live Oak**  
**Denise Krc 979-733-3358**  
**liveoakchaptercca@gmail.com**

Hello everyone, the Live Oak Chapter met on October 26. Denise Krc, chapter president led the meeting with board members and Coleman Todd, CCA assistant director, in attendance.

Thanks to all the sponsors and attendees for making our 2023 banquet a success. Preparations were discussed for **our next banquet on May 2, 2024**. The banquet will be held at the Columbus Fair Grounds. Members volunteered to chair various activities for the banquet. Our next meeting will be on December 5 to come to a consensus on various questions that were presented during our last meeting and to continue discussions and plans about the upcoming banquet.

We bought a two-day trip, from a CCA banquet, donated by Captain Steve Fleming, Game On Charters, out of Theriot, LA. We had a wonderful time. On the first day, we limited out on redfish, caught a bunch of puppy drum, and several large drum which we released. The second day we were having the same re-sults but had to cut the day short due to thunderstorms. We met some new friends, ate some great Cajun cooking, brought a lot of fish home, and went home with a sack of oysters. Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

**Lower Colorado**  
**Anthony Kimmey 979-241-2239**  
**anthonykimmey@ymail.com**



*1st Place and Lower Colorado Chapter CCA Guides Cup 2023 Champions: Capt. Stan Sloan, Donny Tran, Rhett Holloway and Gunner Lyle. They also won the Biggest Trout category. 2nd Place - Capt. Mike Kubecka only needed 2 ladies to take 2nd Place, Kinsley Simmons and Tara Talasek. Way to go! They also won the Biggest Flounder category. 3rd Place - Capt. Peyton Arrinson, Chad Fox, Erick Burke and Brent Pirkle. They also won the Biggest Red Fish category.*

What a day on the water! The Lower Colorado Guides Cup Tournament on October 17 was another huge success. 14 teams of winners from the 2023 Lower Colorado Banquet in August gathered with their chosen captains to fish and compete for bragging rights to be Best of the Bays. This is one of our favorite tournaments. It brings out the competitive spirit for who is TOP GUIDE on the water in the Matagorda Bay system. A big Thank You to **Gulf Coast Ace Hardware** for sponsoring this tournament.

With the beautiful weather and Matagorda's finest guides it was great day of competitive fishing. 1st Place and Lower Colorado Chapter CCA Guides Cup 2023 Champions: Capt. Stan Sloan, Donny Tran, Rhett Holloway and Gunner Lyle. They also won the Biggest Trout category. Capt. Sloan's Crew had this to say about their efforts: "Congratulations to Stan Sloan on his 2nd guide cup win. Big thanks to Rhett Holloway and Gunner Lyle and Donny Tran for never giving up. We fished against many great guides today but managed to pull through. 1st heavy stringer and 1st place trout at CCA Lower Colorado Guide's Cup. Many thanks to Lower Colorado CCA for putting together a great event with live weighing and release, those fish will stay in our bays!"

If you want have a chance to fish with the best in the Matagorda Bays then you need to be at the **15th Annual Lower Colorado CCA Chapter's Banquet and Live Auction on August 2, 2024**. As always, keep watching this spot for the upcoming news and events from the Lower Colorado Chapter of Texas CCA. The only chapter that represents and supports all of Matagorda's Bays, Lakes, Rivers and Creeks.

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

**Mainland**  
**Trey Mitchiner 281-636-2165**  
**treym642004@aol.com**

Our Upcoming Chapter Meetings for 2024 are January 9 - Out Cast Charters, March 12 - Bite Fight Angler Lures, **May 3 - Annual Banquet**, July 9 - SaltWater Recon, September 10 - Knockin Tail Lures, and October 8 - Capt. James Frausto.

Our first meeting will be January 9, 2024 and CCA Texas-Mainland Chapter will have Captain Shuga Shane with Out Cast Charters talk about their Offshore Trips and The Bayside Event Center and everything they offer from spending the night before your 8 or 12 hour offshore trip.



2023 Jim Ehmen Memorial Guides Cup Winners

**Matagorda Bays**  
**Jason Beery 979-578-1106**  
**jwbeery@yahoo.com**

Our final chapter event for 2023, the Jim Ehmen Memorial Guides Cup, was another great success! There was a total of 18 teams that participated in the Cup with this year's Champions, Capt. Caleb Rush and Team, weighing in with a stringer at 24.47 LBS! This makes Capt. Caleb a BACK-TO-BACK Champion of the Guides Cup that was held at the beautiful Matagorda Harbor Bait and Tackle on September 25 – 26 of this year and we can't wait to be back there for next year's Guide Cup. We hope that you will make it out to the 2024 Matagorda Bays Chapter Banquet in El Campo to secure your spot in the game!

Our Guides Cup sponsors for 2023 were **Duckett, Bouligny and Collins LLP., Rod Insurance Group, Mulit-FAB Metals.** If you are interested in participating in the 2024 Guides Cup or the live auction event held at **our next annual banquet in El Campo, Thursday June 27, 2024**, be sure to look up and like our [Facebook page](#) where the Jim Ehmen Memorial Guides Cup final standings have been posted.

Next up on the agenda for the Matagorda Bays board members is to organize an Anglers' Night Out in the El Campo area in the February time frame to provide vital information to the public with what the CCA is currently doing for the local and surrounding bays along with what the CCA has instore for the future work in our local areas. The 2024 raffle boat is in our chapter's possession. Check out our [Facebook page](#) for all upcoming events, pictures and NEWS!

The Matagorda Bays Chapter wishes to thank each of our Matagorda Guides for their part in fundraising for conservation and participating in the 2023 Jim Ehmen Memorial Guides Cup- Capt. Nick Mosley, Capt. Jason Finley, Capt. Stan Sloan, Capt. Charlie Paradoski, Capt. Kenny Hauff III, Capt. Floyd Ciruti, Capt. Cody Vacek, Capt. Tommy Alexander, Capt. Will Fuller, Capt. Jerry West, Capt. Kit Caston, Capt. Patrick Gardner, Capt. Dustin Appling, Capt. Rob Cummings, Capt. Layton Ondrias, Capt. Ozzie Arnold, Capt. Caleb Rush. We much appreciate your support! If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact us at any time.

## Mid Coast

### North Texas

**Brian Donovan 214-402-3825**  
**brian@firstlightprint.com**

CCA NTX will hold our second **banquet on Thursday, April 18, 2024 at 3 R's Ranch at 1695 Coit Rd. in Prosper, Texas.**

Doors open at 5:30 p.m. Individual tickets are \$100, and sponsorship and underwriting opportunities are available. For tickets or ad-ditional information, contact Brian Donovan at (214) 402-3825 or Taylor Rieck at (713) 626-4222.

### Northwest Houston

**Jerry Goss 832-457-7535**  
**jerry.goss@lexitaslegal.com**

### Orange County

**Zach Johnson 409-594-0525**  
**wzachjohnson@gmail.com**

### Port Lavaca

**Eric Ellison 361-983-4690**  
**fishingsalt@yahoo.com**

### Port O'Connor

**Hank Lippold 832-499-1067**  
**hanklippold@gmail.com**

### Prairie

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

### Redfish Bay

### Rio Grande Valley

**Ruben Arcaute 956-453-6966**  
**rjarcaute@gmail.com**

### Sabine-Neches

**Darin Johnson 409-790-9855**  
**darin@jorgensenmarine.com**

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the Sabine Neches Chapter! What a year this has been! Glad to finally receive the cool weather after all of the heat. From Banquets to fishing tour-naments to beach clean-up, this has been one our busiest years. I want to thank all of our volunteers and members for your partic-ipation this year and am looking forward to a great 2024!

**Please mark your calendars for Thursday, March 7, 2024, our 26th Annual Banquet and Fundraiser to be held at the Bob Bowers Civic Center in Port Arthur, TX.** Hot crawfish, cold drinks and great items up for grabs, looking forward to seeing you there! Until then, tight lines to all!



**Saltgrass**  
**Buck Stobart**  
 409-782-7934  
[stobartbuck@yahoo.com](mailto:stobartbuck@yahoo.com)

**Sam Houston**  
**Brandon Kolaja 281-797-6908**  
[bkolaja@huntsvilletx.gov](mailto:bkolaja@huntsvilletx.gov)

**San Antonio**  
**Liz Hewitt 210-859-6924**  
[pescaliz@aol.com](mailto:pescaliz@aol.com)

**San Bernard**  
**Jeremy Compton 281-961-0262**  
[jcompton@detconsultinginc.com](mailto:jcompton@detconsultinginc.com)

STAR BOAT WON BY SAN  
 BERNARD'S TIM CHAPMAN,  
 THEN DONATED BACK!

To the left is a photo collage of STAR Red Tag Winner #7 Tim Chapman. Tim has graciously donated the boat back to CCA Texas along with some upgrades on it. This boat will be raffled off by the San Bernard Chapter. Huge thanks to **Brown Water Marine** and the **Tim Chapman family** for this beautiful donation.

*For tickets contact:*

**Jeremy Compton, 281-961-0262**  
[jcompton@detconsultinginc.com](mailto:jcompton@detconsultinginc.com)



**San Gabriel**  
**David Singleton 512-848-6555**  
[southwestland@gmail.com](mailto:southwestland@gmail.com)

As we set our sights on 2024, the anticipation for our Annual CCA Banquet on Thursday, August 1, 2024, is building! Our team is gear-ing up, connecting with sponsors to enhance the experience, collaborating with CCA to stay ahead of trends, and fostering connections within our San Gabriel Chapter.

We invite you to join us on this exciting journey. Whether you're interested in learning more about the 2024 CCA San Gabriel Chapter, exploring sponsorship opportunities for the upcoming banquet, or want to engage with our chapter, feel free to reach out to our Chapter President, David Singleton, or our dedicated





Banquet Chair, Jeff Bible, at [aggieangler93@gmail.com](mailto:aggieangler93@gmail.com).

The San Gabriel Chapter proudly encompasses Round Rock, Georgetown, Cedar Park, Leander, Taylor, Hutto, Florence, Andice, Schwertner, Jarrell, Walburg, Granger, Hare, Coupland, Liberty Hill, and surrounding communities.

We wish you, your family, and your friends a joyous holiday season filled with warmth and blessings. Your support means the world to us. Looking forward to another year of shared experiences and growth!

**Southwestern**  
**Veronica Oliver 830-765-6228**  
**[ronnimoliver@gmail.com](mailto:ronnimoliver@gmail.com)**

**TAMU**  
**Aidan Downs 210-753-1777**  
**[adowns03@tamu.edu](mailto:adowns03@tamu.edu)**

**Texas State University**  
**Matthew Poston**  
**[Mattposton22@gmail.com](mailto:Mattposton22@gmail.com)**

**Tomball/Magnolia**  
**Matt Maddox 832-963-5215**  
**[mrmaddox04@gmail.com](mailto:mrmaddox04@gmail.com)**

**Tri-County**  
**Justin Putz 210-585-0401**  
**[putz.stx@gmail.com](mailto:putz.stx@gmail.com)**

**Trinity Bay**  
**Jayo Washington 281-960-7064**  
**[jayowash@comcast.net](mailto:jayowash@comcast.net)**

I expect the aroma of turkey and ham still floats around your house like mine. Soon to be replaced by the sizzle of broiling prime cuts of beef. Hold that thought for just a second.

It's just never too early to think about crawfish. As they are surely burrowed deep in the mud, I want you to break out that brand new 2024 calendar and **reserve April 27, 2024 for the Trinity Bay Crawfish Boil**. Doesn't that just make your salivary glands tingle? An afternoon of mudbugs and suds will announce Spring has sprung.

Check our [chapter website](#) or [Facebook page](#) for more details. Till next time, Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays from us to you.

**Trinity Valley**  
**John Hebert Jr 936-334-2528**  
**[jjhebert@imsday.com](mailto:jjhebert@imsday.com)**

**West Houston**  
**Ruben Delgado 281-808-1434**  
**[Castaline@icloud.com](mailto:Castaline@icloud.com)**

2023 was a great year for WH CCA. We are looking forward to our Annual Crawfish Boil and Banquet this coming spring. The crawfish boil is our largest fundraiser of the year and attendance has been increasing every year. Be on the lookout in January for details and sponsorship opportunities.

We are excited to announce our new board members for this coming year Steve Tebbano, Gus Economides and Kenzie Sullivan. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank our new sponsor partner **TEXIAN FIREARMS**. They are your



2023 West Houston Banquet venue.

source for all things firearms, ammo and accessories. If you have any questions about joining our boards, crawfish boil, or sponsorship opportunities please contact our President Ruben Delgado at (281) 808-1434 or [castaline@icloud.com](mailto:castaline@icloud.com).

**West Texas**  
**Craig McDonnold 432-682-3499**  
**[Craig@McDonnold.net](mailto:Craig@McDonnold.net)**





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## Upper Coast

### Capt. Ralph Frazier

*Cold front alert!*

As we move through December, expect the best trout fishing to be just off the banks. The early rising wadefisher will have the upper hand here for trout, because you can watch for bait movement as specks move away chasing after baitfish. Check a good chart and seek shallow areas with deeper guts and depressions nearby.

On East wind days, it's hard to catch fish unless you get out of the boat. You can locate a leeward shore, or fish the Intracoastal. West Bay can be good on wind days, but once again, the key is locating and fishing guts and depressions where the fish are sheltering. Redfish will be deeper. Look for and fish off-colored water on purpose.

Cold fronts are coming along, but they can be your friend. I don't go during a front, but a couple of days before and especially after a big one, the fish seem to get excited and look for lures. Lures; my favorites of all time are the bone Super Spook and the good old Corky because I'm usually looking for trophy fish. Plastic tails can be good. Flapping Shad Gulp is good, but piggy perch eat the tails. Gulp caught fish on a recent trip while live shrimp were fishless. The Little John has almost no action but they catch fish. Reds are tough, but trout need careful release. Use hookouts or wet your hands. Turn the big ladies back. —**Capt. Ralph Frazier** 281-337-0321

[Ralph2fish@aol.com](mailto:Ralph2fish@aol.com)

## Middle Coast

### Capt. Tommy Countz

*Fish slowww but go!*

December on the big middle coast: If we haven't had any extreme cold spells, it's like fishing on a fall day. One of the best bets is the Colorado River. Drift with the current and make casts towards the shore. I prefer using a 3/8 ounce leadhead rigged with a bright colored paddle tail soft plastic like a Margarita Norton Sandshad Jr. Remember that the colder the water temperatures, the deeper the fish will be.

An option in East Matagorda Bay is looking for streaks of off color water in the clear water and drifting those areas. With low tides, wadefishing the South shore of West Matagorda Bay can produce some really good redfish action. Concentrate on drains and guts. My go-to baits are 1/4 ounce weedless gold spoons or dark Norton Sandshads rigged on 1/16 oz. leadheads. Again, work all baits slower than you normally would.

January can be a great time to try to catch your "bucket list" trout. Wading East Matagorda Bay is the place to be out of the boat. Work Corkies or Soft Dines in areas where baitfish are nervous. Drifting areas of scattered shell can also be productive. I throw the same baits I use in the river. Wherever you're casting a lure, did I say that slowwww is the way to go? Tip: finding out your waders leak is not a good way to start a wade in the winter. Take care of your crew; it's your first job.

—**Capt. Tommy Countz** To book a trip with me, call or text 281-450-4037 or email me at [countz@sbcglobal.net](mailto:countz@sbcglobal.net)

## Lower Coast

### Capt. Bryan Robinson

*Be a Weatherman!*

It's that time of the year again when we need to keep a close eye on the weather. December and January can bring some cold and wet stuff our way for a few days then turn to beautiful fishing conditions. Be prepared for the good and bad!

Colder water temperatures and lower tides will push fish off the flats and into deeper channels and holes. Work the deeper depressions slow with soft plastics and heavier jigs. I like a darker lure for this such as root beer with a chartreuse tail.

Sight fishing with either a spinning rod or a fly rod can be special this time of the year also! This is a great time to have that second cup of coffee and wait for the sun to warm the flats. Work a lure slow and close to the fish when sight fishing on these flats. Work a top water slow through potholes in about three feet of water. Use a drift sock if you're fishing from a boat so you don't move over them too fast. Fly fishermen seem to have an advantage on good-weather days after a cold front pushes through. Work the flat slow by poling a skiff or wading. A good soft presentation with a crab fly should get a bite!

Remember to keep a close eye on the weather and pack accordingly. There are gonna be some epic days on the water coming soon. Happy Holidays! —**Capt. Bryan**

**Robinson** 956-241-5520  
[ryandrobinson@yahoo.com](mailto:ryandrobinson@yahoo.com)

*Captain Bryan is a longtime CCA member, a past President of the RGV chapter, and has served on the CCA State Board of Directors. He loves guiding fly fishers.*



*Tyler Haley works on a daybreak speckled trout near Matagorda Island.*



*Kathie Bassler releases a personal best near Port Mansfield.*

# Shrimp & Pork Dumplings

## INGREDIENTS

*1/2 lb ground pork*  
*1/2 lb minced fresh raw shrimp*  
*2 scallions diced*  
*1 Tbsp minced fresh ginger*  
*1 Tbsp minced garlic*  
*4 green onions, chopped*  
*4 Tbsp soy sauce*  
*1 Tbsp sesame oil*  
*1/2 Tsp black pepper*  
*1 pkg wonton wrappers*



## RECIPE

Mix together till well combined. Put a heaping teaspoon onto a wonton wrapper, wet edges of wrapper with water and fold in half, lightly pressing edges together and gently flattening the mixture. When done cover them with a damp towel.

Using a pan that has a lid, add a couple of tablespoons of sesame oil. Heat over medium to medium high heat, add 8 to 10 or more of the dumplings if there is room. Let them sizzle for 2 minutes uncovered without turning them. Add 1/4 to 1/3 cup water to pan and cover. Let steam for 5 minutes. Remove and cover. Repeat until all are done. Serve with your favorite dipping sauce!

*Great Recipes Editor Liz Hewitt*



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## Hunting Season Story

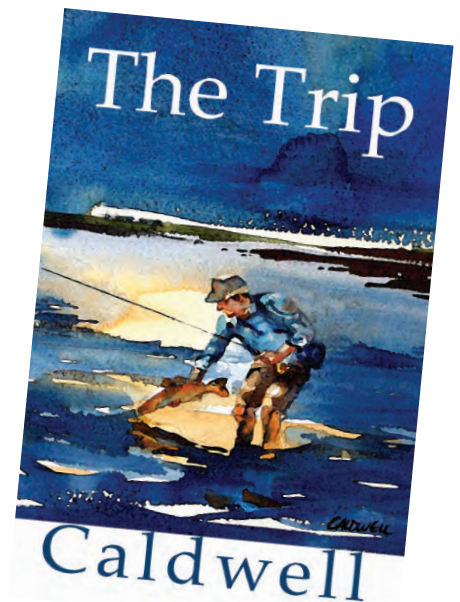
Some hunting trip days are great, others not so great. For a GCCA South Texas hunter, a Jeep on fire leads to a plateful of cheese and jalapenos dripping down from a dining room ceiling. For a visit to that evening, click on the scorched hunter.



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# Coastal Conservation Association

6919 Portwest Drive, Suite 100  
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December 2023/ January 2024

*Your friends at Coastal Conservation Association wish you a Fine Holiday Season and a Great New Year*



Santex takes a break on a long trip. Sam Caldwell



BEST IN TEXAS

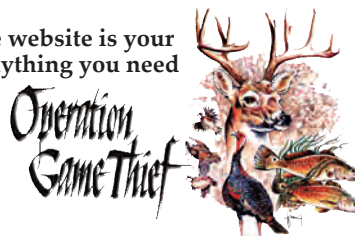
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Sabine: 409-971-2195

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](http://www.tpwd.texas.gov)  
To focus on fishing and boating, visit

[www.tpwd.texas.gov/fishboat/fish](http://www.tpwd.texas.gov/fishboat/fish)  
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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.ogttx.com](http://www.ogttx.com)



## COASTAL CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION TEXAS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION (including STAR Entry)

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- ASSOCIATE: \$20 \_\_\_\_\_ Per each family member. All membership privileges except TIDE and CURRENTS.
- LIFE MEMBER: \$1000 \_\_\_\_\_ CCA Life Membership piece, print, plus member gifts. Payable in four \$250 installments.
- STAR ENTRY FEE: \$30 \_\_\_\_\_ 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.

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