

# CURRENTS

February / March 2026



*Looking Forward*

*Stephen Ford on the pole and wife Elaine on casting duty. Thanks to photographer KIESE & CO, LLC*

# 35 Years in the Making - The Texas Artificial Reef Program

By CCA Texas Advocacy Director Shane Bonnot

For 35 years, artificial reefing has become a cornerstone of Gulf restoration and recreational fishing off the Texas coast, filling a vital ecological and recreational gap where natural hard-bottom habitat is scarce. Managed by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), the [Texas Artificial Reef Program](#) was established by state law in 1990, and since its inception, has coordinated placement of ships, concrete modules, bridge sections, and portions of decommissioned oil and gas platforms to create durable, complex habitat on an otherwise flat continental shelf. [These structures](#) give barnacles, oysters, corals, and other sessile organisms a place to attach; those communities in turn attract juvenile and adult fish and concentrate food for predators—creating hotspots for anglers and divers alike. Simply put, build the habitat, and the fish (and the fishing opportunities) will follow.

The program has permitted about 7,450 acres since its inception, with a total of 94 reef sites (16 nearshore reefs, 66 rigs-to-reef, and 12 ships-to-reef), more than 10,000 concrete structures deployed and over \$36 million funded. Currently, TPWD is working with CCA Texas, CCA's national habitat program, the Building Conservation Trust, and friends' groups (Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation, Friends of Sabine Reef, Friends of RGV Reef) on deployments at sites including Sabine, Port O'Connor, the Rio Grande Valley, and the Queen Isabella Causeway. Some of these deployments

are funded by a \$2.4 million RESTORE grant originally secured by CCA's Building Conservation Trust.

## Why artificial reefs matter to fisheries

The Texas Gulf is largely a flat, sandy shelf with few naturally occurring "hard" habitats; where hard structure exists, natural ridges or man-made structures, fish and invertebrate life congregate. Artificial reefs provide the substrate needed for invertebrates and algae to grow, creating food and shelter for juvenile fish and forage grounds for larger gamefish such as red snapper, grouper, king mackerel, cobia, and amberjack. TPWD monitoring finds red snapper commonly at artificial reef sites, and nearly 200 marine fish species have been recorded on reef-associated structures in Texas waters. These reefs increase local productivity and enhance fishing and diving opportunities.

Angler access is a central benefit of nearshore reefing. Texas manages fisheries out to 9 nautical miles from shore; inside that boundary, anglers are subject to state regulations and, in the case of red snapper, enjoy a near year-round recreational opportunity with a more liberal bag limit than federal waters. Because much of our state waters lack depth and structure attractive to reef fish, nearshore reefs sited at appropriate depths are especially valuable for creating new, accessible red snapper and reef fish fishing grounds for anglers.

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TPWD explicitly designs some reef sites to be reachable by smaller boats and to support local ecotourism and diving economies. One such example is the 20-acre HI-54 Shallow site 1.7 miles from the coastline in





front of Sea Rim State Park, which received its first deployment of concrete culverts, granite blocks, and old oil rig structure pieces in June 2024. This reef site serves as a template for future reef locations since it is easily accessible and

provides ample opportunities to target speckled trout, red drum, mackerel, jackfish, and sharks.

### Site selection: opportunities and conflicts

Selecting reef locations requires balancing ecological gain, public access, and other marine uses. The Texas artificial reef plan and program guidance emphasize minimizing conflicts with shrimping grounds, navigation routes, endangered species habitats, and culturally sensitive sites while maximizing benefits for recreational and commercial fishers. State law and the Texas artificial reef plan direct TPWD to use best available science, coordinate permitting, and avoid unreasonable obstruction to navigation, hence the careful permitting, marking and monitoring that accompany reef projects. These competing uses and regulatory constraints explain why siting and permitting can be lengthy and why nearshore sites are carefully prioritized.



### Funding and the rigs-to-reefs model

Although TPWD has a legislative mandate to run the artificial reef program, funding has been a limiting factor. A significant source of funding and material has



come from rigs-to-reefs partnerships: when oil and gas platform owners donate decommissioned platforms (or share realized removal-cost savings), TPWD can pursue permits and deployment. TPWD and partners have repurposed more than a hundred platforms into reef habitat. Conservation organizations (notably CCA Texas and the Building Conservation Trust), grant programs such as RESTORE, donations from private companies (such as Port Arthur LNG, Cheniere, Golden Pass LNG, Phillips 66, Motiva, Valero, BNSF Railway, and others), and support from friends' groups have provided important financial support for nearshore projects. Still, sustained funding is needed to scale reef construction and monitoring.

### Looking ahead

Nearshore reefing offers a pragmatic, cost-effective tool to restore lost habitat, improve fisheries, and expand public access to quality fishing and diving. Some permitting woes may soon be alleviated as TPWD is working closely with the Army Corps of Engineers to create a programmatic permit and agreement to streamline the permitting process for constructing artificial reefs. Projects such as the Queen Isabella Causeway conversion and recent deployments at Sabine and Port O'Connor illustrate what coordinated public-private efforts can achieve: new habitat, stronger local fishing economies, and more places for anglers and divers to enjoy the Gulf. Continued partnerships, stable funding, and careful, science-based site selection will be key to expanding these benefits and carrying the artificial reef program forward for the next 35 years.





# TPWD Science-Based Gill Net Program Remains On Hold

By CCA Texas Advocacy Director Shane Bonnot

For nearly five decades, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's (TPWD) gill net sampling program has provided an unparalleled, science-based view of coastal fisheries and estuarine health. That continuous dataset, one of the largest and longest-running marine resource databases in the world, has driven major management decisions, supported academic research, and underpinned the economic value and sustainability of Texas's coastal fisheries. Today, however, that program is suspended while a federal investigation into rare, incidental interactions with protected species threatens to dismantle a flagship monitoring system at the heart of Gulf Coast fisheries science.

## What the program does and why it matters

TPWD's standardized gill net sampling, in place since 1975, provides spatially unbiased, repeatable measurements of key species such as red drum, southern flounder, and spotted seatrout. Nets are deployed on randomized shorelines across eight major bays each spring and fall, with strict limits on how many nets can be set in a given bay or at one time. That random-design, repeated sampling is uniquely effective at detecting trends in adult and sub-adult fish that other gears miss, and it complements angler-survey data and other sampling methods to give managers a comprehensive picture of fish population status and ecosystem conditions.

The program's data has driven difficult, and sometimes controversial



management actions, such as red drum and spotted seatrout being designated gamefish and commercial bay gill nets being banned; adoption of management

*Reinstating a permitted, responsibly managed gill net program is not only consistent with conservation goals; it is essential to preserving the long-term health and value of Texas's coastal fisheries.*

plans for various fisheries; and the agency implementing limited-entry programs and commercial license buybacks. Those policy choices were controversial when first proposed, but the scientific record gathered by the monitoring program repeatedly validated the need for regulation, which yielded positive results.

Beyond regulations, the long-



*Since 1975, standardized gill net sampling has provided accurate data that led to management actions of gamefish regulations and bay gill nets being banned. Photo from 1985 by Wildlife Graphics/Sam Caldwell*



term dataset has been the backbone of hundreds of peer-reviewed studies, graduate theses, and agency reports that document shifting baselines, habitat changes, and responses to restoration and freshwater inflow decisions. Economically, TPWD's fisheries science has helped sustain a coastal recreational fishery that supports local businesses and communities—estimates commonly cite annual total economic impacts in the neighborhood of 4-5 billion dollars tied to Texas's marine fisheries and associated coastal recreation, illustrating the program's real-world value.

#### **Incidental takes: rare, recorded, and largely nonlethal**

Over forty years of sampling, interactions with protected species have been extremely infrequent. From 1983–2023, TPWD recorded 41 bottlenose dolphin encounters across more than 30,000 gill net sets—an average of about one encounter per year, and in roughly 41% of years, **none occurred**. Sea turtle encounters have likewise been uncommon and typically nonlethal; observed increases in some turtle counts reflect the success of conservation measures that have helped populations rebound.

#### **Regulatory impasse and inconsistent permitting**

Despite the program's long track record and documented rarity of protected-species interactions, NOAA Fisheries has declined to issue TPWD the incidental take authorizations the agency has requested five times since 2011 (applications submitted in 2013, 2015, 2017, 2022, and 2023). In May 2024, NOAA Fisheries' Offices of Law Enforcement and Protected Resources opened a formal inquiry into alleged Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act violations related to those rare encounters, prompting TPWD to suspend gill net sampling while the matter proceeds.

The permitting history raises troubling questions about consistency. NOAA has granted incidental take authorizations to various private and public entities for activities with potential impacts on marine mammals and listed species, yet TPWD's requests, backed by decades of monitoring data and mitigation measures, remain unapproved. That regulatory opacity and delay have immediate consequences: without a permit, TPWD cannot resume routine sampling, and the continuous, structurally unbiased time series that managers, researchers, and stakeholders rely on is broken.

#### **Consequences of a data gap**

Suspending gill net sampling does more than pause a government program: it fractures an irreplaceable dataset. In the last decade alone, TPWD gill net data supported dozens of peer-reviewed papers, many graduate theses and dissertations, and countless management actions. Losing consistent sampling will degrade the ability to detect population shifts, evaluate regulation effectiveness (for example, recent harvest changes for speckled trout), and

identify emerging threats from desalination plants, ship channel expansions, industrial development, or altered freshwater inflows.

A fragmented monitoring approach risks reducing analytical confidence and increasing management uncertainty. Decisions made without timely, unbiased data can produce premature relaxations or unnecessary restrictions with real social and economic consequences for coastal communities and industries. Or the alternative could occur. No management decisions are made for the foreseeable future due to the lack of information available to fisheries managers. Either way, as long as the nets are out of the water, the fisheries' independent monitoring program is handicapped.

#### **A practical path forward**

Protecting endangered species and conserving marine ecosystems must remain priorities for all agencies involved. But protections can coexist with sound, science-based monitoring when agencies collaborate and apply rules consistently. TPWD has actively supported research aligned with conservation goals, including updated bottlenose dolphin assessments indicating substantial population increases in some areas, and provides response support during cold-stun and strandings events that benefit species recovery.

To avoid allowing bureaucratic delay to erode a 50-year scientific legacy, NOAA should act with expediency, drop the investigation, and issue TPWD the necessary permits to continue their program. The stakes are straightforward. Without science-based gill net sampling, fisheries management loses a critical tool, public transparency erodes, and academic and agency research stalls. Reinstating a permitted, responsibly managed gill net program is not only consistent with conservation goals; it is essential to preserving the long-term health and value of Texas's coastal fisheries. 🌊



*Without science-based gill net sampling, fisheries management loses a critical tool, public transparency erodes, and academic and agency research stalls.*



# A Twenty-Three Year Tradition Continues

The comprehensive and systematic approach to removing traps has been expanded to include San Antonio, Aransas, Lavaca and Matagorda Bays. Search areas are defined out of Port O'Connor, Charlie's Bait Camp, Seadrift, Austwell, Rockport, Port Lavaca & Palacios, with removal activities continuing throughout the closure period. Funding for this year's effort will come from a NOAA Marine Debris Removal grant. Volunteers are asked to collect data on each trap removed and mark its location using a cell phone-based app. This data will help to determine the root causes of trap dereliction. Send the email address of the data coordinator in your crew so we can create a username and password for accessing the data program. And, the mobile phone of the Captain for last-minute changes and on-the-water emergencies. Contact Allan Berger to sign up for your area. Details are available on [sabaypartnership.org](http://sabaypartnership.org). Looking forward to the event—it will be fun again! Call or email questions. —Allan Berger [allanberger@outlook.com](mailto:allanberger@outlook.com) 713-829-2852

**Save the date: the closure period is February 20 - March 1, 2026, with the main event scheduled for Saturday, February 21. In case of bad weather, Feb. 28 is the fallback day.**

Although traps can be removed at any time during the 10-day closure, several partner organizations will be holding volunteer events on the first Saturday of the closure (February 21) with the second Saturday acting as a back-up day if a cancellation occurs due to weather. A list of trap drop off locations will be published in a news release on February 1st. News releases can be found here: <https://tpwd.texas.gov/newsmedia/releases/>

If anyone is interested in volunteering, they can contact Allan Berger at [allanberger@outlook.com](mailto:allanberger@outlook.com) or 713-829-2852.

To date, we've removed over 40,000 traps coastwide with the help of about 4,000 volunteers. This equates to 657,820 crabs saved since the beginning of the program. —**Holly Grand** / Coastal Outreach Coordinator, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department 361-825-3993

## Trap Disposal Locations:

- SA Bay System: dumpsters at TPWD POC Dock, Charlie's Bait Camp, Austwell Boat Ramp, Seadrift Marina and Sanders Park/Swan Point Boat Ramp for the SA Bay System.
- Lavaca Bay: none
- Matagorda Bay: Matagorda Harbor, Palacios Railroad Harbor
- Aransas Bay: Goose Island State Park boat ramp, South Conn Brown & Ransom Channel Ramp

*\*Note that TPWD sets these Trap Disposal locations.*



*Just one boat's take, Port O'Connor, 2019.*



*Dropoff site in Port O'Connor, 2019. Photo by Lannie Green.*

San Antonio Bay  
Partnership





# Partners and Volunteers Unite for 2025 San Antonio Bay Shorelines Cleanup

PORT O'CONNOR, TX — The San Antonio Bay Partnership (SABP) wrapped up its 2025 Shorelines Cleanup week (October 13-18th, 2025), a coordinated effort across Port O'Connor, Seadrift, and surrounding areas uniting partner organizations and community volunteers in a shared effort to keep the San Antonio Bay system clean and thriving.

The week kicked off with partner organizations heading out from Seadrift to clean up San Antonio Bay shorelines. Crews from the International Crane Foundation, San Antonio River Authority, Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program, Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust, Texas Water Trade, Audubon Texas, Keep Texas Beautiful, and Texan by Nature

joined forces to remove just under 4,000 pieces of trash and marine debris. The day's "Most Unusual Find" award went to Texan by Nature for finding and removing a seesaw from the San Antonio Bay shoreline.

The Houston Zoo brought a crew of employees for two days to pick up trash. On Tuesday and Wednesday, the Zoo crew boarded boats in Port O'Connor and removed nearly 8,000 pieces of trash from Espiritu Santo Bay. On Saturday, community volunteers used their boats, kayaks, and plenty of muscle to haul away everything

*Our 2025 cleanup brought together more than 170 volunteers and partner organizations who removed 3.4 tons of debris from the San Antonio Bay system during a week-long series of coordinated efforts across Port O'Connor, Seadrift, and nearby shorelines.*



*Houston Zoo headed out on Tuesday and Wednesday*

from plastic bottles, fishing nets, rope, and fishing line to shoes, toys, chairs, toothbrushes, and even toilet seats—a sobering reminder of how much debris finds its way into our bays. Saturday's effort resulted in the removal of 70 large contractor bags of trash, including 922 plastic drink bottles, 912 plastic bags, and 2200 pieces of plastic. The most unusual find on Saturday was a creepy baby doll.

A land-based crew of volunteers from Lavaca Bay Foundation and Formosa Plastics cleaned the Point

Comfort side of the causeway. Their efforts resulted in the removal of 29 bags of trash, including nearly 500 plastic drink bottles, 286 aluminum cans, and 118 drink cups.

In total, 170 volunteers, 31 boats, and 4 kayaks removed 3.4 tons of trash, filling four roll-off bins. Over 24,051 individual items were documented this year, bringing the 6-year total to 99,435 pieces of marine debris removed from the San Antonio Bay system.

This year, H-E-B sponsored a pilot project for Bulky Marine Debris Removal, which removed oversized items that were too difficult for volunteers and required hiring contractors.

"These cleanups highlight the power of collaboration," said Allan Berger, SABP Chair and Cleanup Coordinator. "When organizations and community members come together to tackle

marine debris, we not only clean the bay but strengthen the partnerships that protect it. The real challenge is keeping trash contained and properly disposed of, so it never reaches our waterways in the first place." Berger emphasized that cleanup alone isn't enough. "The real impact will come when we reduce the plastics entering our bays. I challenge everyone to skip single-use plastics on the water. Refillable bottles and cups make a real difference."

Funding for the 2025 Shorelines Cleanup was provided by Matagorda Bay Mitigation Trust, with additional support from Bay Flats Lodge, Houston Zoo, Port O'Connor Chamber of Commerce, and donors like you.

To learn more or get involved in next year's event, visit [www.SABayPartnership.org](http://www.SABayPartnership.org) or contact [allanrberger@outlook.com](mailto:allanrberger@outlook.com) or 713-829-2852 -Allan



*Formosa Taiwanese Interns volunteered to clean up under the Lavaca Bay Causeway*





# HABITAT TODAY FOR FISH TOMORROW

*A Natural Partnership*



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



## CCA TEXAS AND BUILDING CONSERVATION TRUST: NEARSHORE REEFING SUPPORT

### PROJECT

### FUNDED AMOUNT

SABINE REEFS	\$1,503,500
RIO GRANDE VALLEY	\$1,068,000
PORT O'CONNOR	\$700,000
GALVESTON BIG MAN AND KATE'S	\$329,000
HRI NEARSHORE REEF ENHANCEMENT STUDY	\$250,000
MATAGORDA	\$200,000
CORPUS CHRISTI	\$100,000
FREEPORT / VANCOUVER	\$60,000
PORT MANSFIELD	\$50,000

**TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS  
TO NEARSHORE REEFING \$4,260,500**





# CCA TEXAS: LEADERS IN OYSTER REEF CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION

## PROJECT

## FUNDED AMOUNT

AYERS REEF RESTORATION AND SHORELINE PROTECTION	\$1,126,204
CARANCAHUA BAY OYSTER REEF RESTORATION	\$1,000,000
OYSTER LICENSE BUYBACK PROGRAM	\$1,000,000
OYSTER REEF CREATION - ST. CHARLES BAY (ROCKPORT)	\$711,250
EAST MATAGORDA COL (EIDELBACH FLATS REEF)	\$500,000
MESQUITE BAY COL (RANCH HOUSE REEF)	\$500,000
OYSTER RESTORATION - EAST GALVESTON BAY	\$500,000
COMO LAKE DANA COVE OYSTER RESTORATION/CREATION	\$400,000
SINK YOUR SHUCKS OYSTER RECYCLE PROGRAM	\$352,000
MESQUITE BAY OYSTER REEF MONITORING (HRI)	\$225,000
OYSTER RESTORATION - DEEP REEF SABINE LAKE	\$215,000
OYSTER RESTORATION - PEPPER GROVE / GALVESTON	\$130,000
HRI OYSTER RESTORATION SITE LOCATOR MAPPING STUDY	\$120,000
OYSTER REEF RESTORATION - ARANSAS BAY	\$75,000
OYSTER REEF RESTORATION - COPANO BAY	\$75,000
NUECES BAY DEMONSTRATION OYSTER REEF	\$60,000
GALVESTON BAY FOUNDATION OYSTER RECYCLE TRAILERS	\$10,000
SINK YOUR SHUCKS OYSTER RECYCLE PROGRAM TRAILERS	\$10,000
FUNDS APPROVED AND EARMARKED FOR OYSTER RESTORATION AND CREATION IN AREAS CLOSED TO HARVEST ON THE TEXAS COAST (BALANCE OF \$5,000,000 COMMITMENT)	\$1,931,774

**TOTAL DOLLARS SPENT AND  
COMMITTED TO OYSTER  
RESTORATION AND CREATION**

**\$8,941,228**



# HABITAT TODAY FOR FISH TOMORROW

\$1,600,000 | CEDAR BAYOU/VINSON SLOUGH RESTORATION  
\$1,503,500 | NEARSHORE REEFING - SABINE PASS  
\$1,068,000 | NEARSHORE REEFING - RIO GRANDE VALLEY REEF  
\$1,000,000 | \*\*\*AYERS REEF RESTORATION AND SHORELINE PROTECTION (AYERS BAY)  
\$1,000,000 | \*\*\*CARANCAHUA BAY OYSTER REEF RESTORATION (CARANCAHUA BAY)  
\$1,000,000 | OYSTER LICENSE BUYBACK PROGRAM  
\$711,250 | OYSTER REEF CREATION - ST. CHARLES BAY (ROCKPORT)  
\$700,000 | NEARSHORE REEFING—PORT O'CONNOR  
\$630,000 | \*\*\*OYSTER LAKE SHORELINE PROTECTION (WEST GALVESTON BAY)  
\$552,000 | SINK YOUR SHUCKS OYSTER RECYCLE PROGRAM  
\$500,000 | EAST MATAGORDA COL (EIDELBACH FLATS REEF)  
\$500,000 | MESQUITE BAY COL (RANCH HOUSE REEF)  
\$500,000 | OYSTER RESTORATION - EAST GALVESTON BAY  
\$400,000 | COMO LAKE AND DANA COVER SHORELINE PROTECTION (WEST GALVESTON BAY)  
\$329,000 | NEARSHORE REEFING - GALVESTON / BIG MAN & KATE'S REEF  
\$250,000 | HRI NEARSHORE REEF ENHANCEMENT STUDY  
\$250,000 | DAGGER ISLAND SHORELINE PROTECTION & MARSH RESTORATION (REDFISH BAY)  
\$225,000 | MESQUITE BAY OYSTER REEF MONITORING (HRI)  
\$215,000 | OYSTER RESTORATION—DEEP REEF SABINE LAKE  
\$200,000 | NEARSHORE REEFING - MATAGORDA  
\$200,000 | SHORELINE STABILIZATION - SAN BERNARD NWR  
\$200,000 | \*\*\*GORDY MARSH LIVING SHORELINE (TRINITY BAY)  
\$150,000 | MARSH RESTORATION - BIRD ISLAND COVE (WEST GALVESTON BAY)  
\$150,000 | \*\*\*NUECES BAY DELTA SHORELINE RESTORATION  
\$138,000 | SHORELINE PROTECTION/MARSH CREATION - MOSES LAKE (GALVESTON BAY)  
\$135,000 | BAFFIN BAY SERPULID REEF HABITAT CONSERVATION/RESTORATION STUDY  
\$130,000 | OYSTER RESTORATION—PEPPER GROVE / GALVESTON (BCT)  
\$126,204 | AYERS REEF ENGINEERING AND MONITORING PLAN (AYERS BAY / MESQUITE BAY COMPLEX)  
\$125,000 | ARANSAS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SHORELINE PROTECTION (SAN ANTONIO BAY)

\$120,000 | HRI OYSTER RESTORATION SITE LOCATOR MAPPING STUDY  
\$100,000 | MARSH RESTORATION - DICKINSON BAYOU  
\$100,000 | NEARSHORE REEFING - CORPUS CHRISTI  
\$95,000 | BAHIA GRANDE RESTORATION (PORT ISABEL / BROWNSVILLE)  
\$91,000 | MARSH RESTORATION - BRAZORIA & SAN BERNARD WILDLIFE REFUGE  
\$75,000 | OYSTER REEF RESTORATION - ARANSAS BAY (ROCKPORT)  
\$75,000 | OYSTER REEF RESTORATION - COPANO BAY (ROCKPORT)  
\$70,000 | MARSH RESTORATION - EGERY ISLAND (COPANO BAY/BAYSIDE)  
\$70,000 | MARSH RESTORATION - MATAGORDA ISLAND  
\$70,000 | NUECES BAY DELTA WATER MANAGEMENT GATES  
\$60,000 | NEARSHORE REEFING - FREEPORT / VANCOUVER  
\$60,000 | NUECES BAY DEMONSTRATION OYSTER REEF  
\$50,000 | NEWCOMB BEND MARSH RESTORATION (TPWD)  
\$50,000 | MARSH RESTORATION - GOOSE ISLAND (ROCKPORT)  
\$50,000 | NEARSHORE REEFING - PORT MANSFIELD  
\$50,000 | SHORELINE STABILIZATION - J. D. MURPHREE WMA  
\$50,000 | SHORELINE STABILIZATION - COW TRAP LAKE (BRAZORIA COUNTY)  
\$50,000 | DOLLAR BAY SHORELINE PROTECTION AND MARSH RESTORATION  
\$50,000 | GALVESTON BAY FOUNDATION HEADQUARTERS LIVING SHORELINE RESTORATION  
\$46,204 | AYERS REEF RESTORATION REEF PROJECT PHASE I  
\$42,000 | MARSH RESTORATION - OXEN & GANG'S BAYOU (GALVESTON)  
\$40,000 | KATE'S HOLE LIVING SHORELINE (CORPUS CHRISTI BAY)  
\$40,000 | TRINITY BAY DISCOVERY CENTER LIVING SHORELINE  
\$30,000 | SWEETWATER PRESERVE SHORELINE PROTECTIONS AND OYSTER REEF ENHANCEMENT  
\$24,000 | MARSH RESTORATION - NUECES BAY (CORPUS CHRISTI)  
\$20,000 | MARSH RESTORATION - SNAKE ISLAND COVER (WEST GALVESTON BAY)  
\$15,000 | WEED ERADICATION FOR WATER FLOW RESTORATION (GUADALUPE RIVER DELTA)  
\$10,000 | SINK YOUR SHUCKS OYSTER RECYCLE PROGRAMS TRAILER  
\$5,600 | BAY DEBRIS REMOVAL - ARANSAS PASS

**TOTAL FUNDED THROUGH 2025:**  
**\$16,096,758**

\*\*\*2025 PROJECTS CONTRIBUTED TO AS OF 11/20/2025\*\*\*



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**

COASTAL CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION TEXAS

Catches from illegal fishing of red snapper in Gulf of Mexico is estimated to be **greater than the entire recreational allocation**.

**WHAT TO LOOK FOR:** Panga style fishing boats, large totes and 3-4 man crew.



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**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**

COASTAL CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION TEXAS



**YETI** BUILT FOR THE WILD.



## UNDERSTANDING VIBRIO INFECTIONS TO STAY SAFE IN MARINE WATERS

### What Is Vibrio?

*Vibrio* is a group of bacteria naturally found in the bays and coastal waters of Texas. If you've been in saltwater, you've encountered *Vibrio*. *Vibrio* encompasses a number of different species, but when most people hear "*Vibrio*", they think about the rare, but traumatic flesh and limb destruction that it can cause, informally referring to it as "flesh eating bacteria."



### How can you be exposed?

Infection occurs when *Vibrio* enters the body through open wounds, even minor cuts or insect bites. Common activities like swimming, fishing, or handling raw seafood can lead to exposure. Risk of infection is most pronounced when water temperature is at or above about 70°F, although infection can occur year-round. A recent study by researchers at the Harte Research Institute also found that *Vibrio* populations temporarily increase sharply during Saharan Dust deposition events.

### Symptoms of a Vibrio infection

Symptoms of a *Vibrio* infection can develop rapidly, including pain, swelling, redness, and fever. In severe cases, loss of limbs or death can occur within 24–48 hours if left untreated.

### What to do if you are infected?

If you suspect a *Vibrio* infection (pain, swelling, fever), seek immediate medical attention. Inform healthcare providers about recent saltwater exposure and potential *Vibrio* infection.

## MINIMIZE VIBRIO RISKS



### Avoid Saltwater with Open Wounds:

Refrain from swimming or wading if you have cuts or abrasions.



### Use Protective Gear:

Wear puncture-resistant gloves when handling seafood and closed-toed shoes in water.



### Wound Care:

Immediately treat any wound that has been exposed to saltwater by flushing and cleaning with warm water and antibacterial cleanser; Chlorhexidine -based products such as Hibiclens® can be purchased at your local pharmacy and provide lasting antibacterial effect. Apply a topical antibacterial ointment and cover the wound with a clean dressing or Band -Aid. Fishermen, bathers, and others should carry, or have immediate access to, small bottles of Hibiclens and antibiotic ointment.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

**Michael Wetz, Ph.D.**

Chair for Coastal Water Health

michael.wetz@tamucc.edu | (361) 825-2132



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*Thirty-seven incredible years of competitive tournament fishing and life-changing prizes while helping to conserve our state's marine resources.*

### Meet the NEW STAR Tournament Team

By Drew Adams, CCA Texas  
STAR Tournament Co-Director

**U**nder the leadership of former STAR Tournament Director Bill Kinney and Director of STAR Tournament Services Peggy McMillan, what began as a family-oriented fishing tournament transformed into Texas's premier summer event, attracting more than 45,000 anglers annually and awarding over \$40 million in prizes, along with over \$8.7 million in scholarships. The legacy built by Bill, Peggy, and all those who have served on our

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Tournament Committee has strengthened our Texas fisheries and coastal resources for future generations. We extend our sincere gratitude to Bill and Peggy for their decades of dedication to CCA and congratulate them on their well-earned retirement.

**Looking ahead, I am pleased to introduce the NEW 2026 CCA Texas STAR Tournament Leadership Team.**

**Coleman Todd** and I will serve as Co-Tournament Directors. Coleman has dedicated over 20 years to conservation, working for CCA Texas as an Assistant

Director while leading Chapter Development during a tremendous growth period for our organization. Additionally, Coleman has extensive experience fishing in competitive tournaments in Texas. Like Coleman, I have dedicated most of my professional career to conservation as well. 2026 is my 15th year with CCA Texas, and up until now, I was an



*Drew Adams*

Assistant Director, facilitating fundraising for chapters all over the state. Conservation is our passion, and together, we look forward to bringing that passion and our unique experience to grow our CCA Texas STAR Tournament and build upon its incredible legacy.

We are fortunate to be supported by an outstanding team. Ryan Towns, Director of Tournament Operations, has played a major role in running and shaping the tournament over the past four years, and his invaluable experience will continue to help us grow. Lucy De Jesus, our STAR Tournament Assistant, has ensured the daily operations run smoothly and efficiently over the past four years. She is the engine that keeps us on task and moving forward.

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Throughout my and Coleman's careers, one of our most meaningful roles has been building relationships with our CCA Texas Chapter Volunteers, who are the backbone of this organization. CCA Texas is able to make a lasting, positive impact on our state's coastal resources because of the countless hours, dedication, and passion these men and women pour into





conservation. As Assistant Directors, we often served as the bridge between state leadership and local chapters, answering questions and helping guide efforts across the coast. I'd like to share with you the most frequent questions we received regarding the CCA Texas STAR Tournament over the years that I think you'd find interesting:

**How far do tagged redfish travel from where they are released?**

The answer ranges from 150 feet to more than 20 miles, though most stay within about two miles of their release location. With over 120 tagged redfish released annually along the Texas coast, chances are there is at least one within a few miles of where you fish. Keep that in mind the next time you're wading a shoreline hoping for the bite of a lifetime.

**What bait gives me the best chance to catch a tagged red?** Hands down - SHRIMP. Interviews with winning anglers show that over 60% were using live shrimp when they caught their tagged redfish—no surprise to most of you.

**How many tagged redfish are released each year?**

In 2025, more than 120 tagged redfish were released along roughly 367 miles of Texas coastline, meaning there is, on average, a tagged fish within two to three miles of almost anywhere you cast a line.



*Coleman Todd*

**How many tags are typically caught each year?**

The number varies, but most years see 15–20 tagged redfish caught. In 2021, a record 37 tags were landed. Unfortunately, many are caught by anglers who are not registered for the CCA Texas STAR Tournament, which highlights the importance of registering and staying current on your CCA membership. Remember, you must be a current CCA member & registered in the Tournament to win.

**Where do I have the best chance to catch one?**

The simple answer is: JUST GO FISH. More specifically, we WANT these fish caught, so focus on popular shorelines, well-known fishing spots, and areas easily accessed by waders, kayakers,

and bank anglers. Remember, redfish are schooling fish, so when a tagged red is released, it will often seek out the nearest school—right where anglers are already fishing.

I'll leave you with an interesting 2025 STAR Tournament story of a winning angler. Nate and his friend launched from Indianola Fishing Marina, chasing an early trout bite.

When the action slowed, they headed to Nate's favorite redfish hole—only to have their wade cut off by an antsy boater.

Taking the high road, they moved on and worked a nearby grass line instead. Almost immediately, Nate hooked the fish of a lifetime. Covered in grass and mud, he worried the tag might be expired, but after a quick clean, he realized he'd hit the jackpot. After clipping the tag and releasing the redfish, Nate immediately headed back to Indianola Fishing Marina – a CCA TX STAR Tournament Official Weigh Station. The story got even better when another angler recognized the tag and showed him a picture on his phone confirming he'd caught that same tagged redfish just two weeks earlier, less than 100 yards from where Nate caught it—but released it since he wasn't registered.

Moral of the story: when things don't go as planned, keep exploring. You never know when you'll find your next favorite spot—or the fish of a lifetime.



*Ryan Towns*



*Lucy De Jesus*

***Here's to an amazing 2026 CCA Texas STAR Tournament – Keep those lines tight, my friends!***





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*Thank you Mercury Marine!*

Our friends and partners at Mercury Marine were the first-ever CCA Texas STAR partner in 1990. They recognized the future benefits of our mission in marine conservation, even before it became popular.

We are grateful for their generous support for 35 years, and we know that we can always count on them. If you want to support those who support the things we love, scan this QR code to let Mercury know if you're interested in repowering.







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# Caught Redhanded!

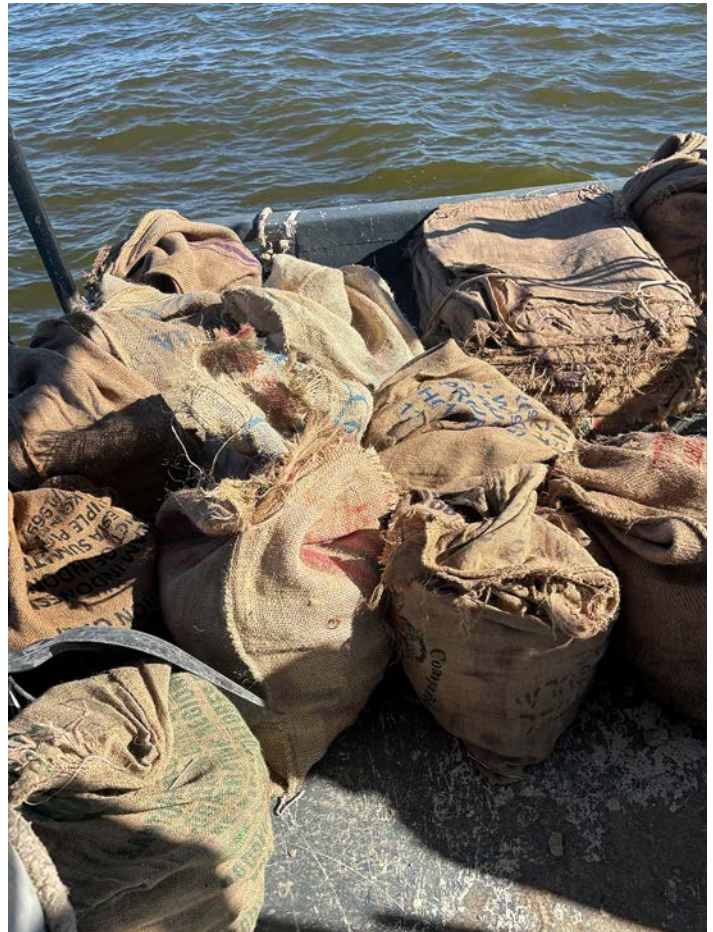


Reports from Texas Parks & Wildlife Game Wardens

On 12/19/25, Harris County Wardens were patrolling Galveston Bay for commercial oyster enforcement. Upon inspection of a vessel, it was determined the commercial oyster boat was in possession of 40% undersized oysters. Citation was issued and (15) sacks of oysters were returned to the reef. Case Pending.

On 01/3/26, Brazoria and Fort Bend Wardens were patrolling waterways for water safety and recreational fisheries enforcement. One vessel inspected was found to be in possession of (5) undersized red drum, (1) undersized sheepshead, and (2) undersized black drum. Citations issued and cases pending.

In November, Matagorda Wardens were patrolling Palacios Bay and inspected a commercial shrimp boat. Upon inspection, Wardens found (30) flounder and a bag of flounder fillets onboard. Citations issued for possession of flounder in closed season. Cases pending.





# Leave It Better Than You Found It

**V**olunteers have been the driving force of CCA since it was the early GCCA. Life Member Frank Fuller talked to CURRENTS about the earliest days of the Gulf Coast Conservation Association.

Fuller, a dedicated Galveston Bay fisherman, says he stopped by a booth at a Houston Boat Show when he saw a large poster featuring a redfish. The volunteer manning the



*Frank Fuller, CCA Life Member*

booth invited Fuller to a meeting at Fred Carr and Ben Kocian's studio. The purpose of the meeting: gather ideas and members to work with a new group. The mission—save the redfish. Fuller says he was hooked then, and has been a member ever since.

Along the way, Fuller recruited many friends and strangers, worked at fundraising banquets, served on the Houston Board of Directors, was on the State GCCA Board of Directors, and worked with Bill Kinney on the new STAR Tournament.

As a semi-pro golfer, Fuller worked with young groups. He pointed out that the most important group the GCCA needed to reach were youngsters who needed a reason, as well as help, to be on the water. Fuller convinced this writer to serve as the first Director and is proud that we initiated and developed the GCCA's Youth organization that later became the STAR KIDS and STAR TEEN groups. He pointed out that over the years, Bill Kinney's STAR Scholarships have exceeded \$8,700,000. That money has provided opportunities for dozens of young anglers to receive college educations.



Listing all the volunteers who turned the Texas GCCA into the American CCA isn't possible, but you know who you are. Knowledgeable GCCA and CCA members will agree that the accomplishments of two early volunteers, Dusty Rhodes and Ben Kocian, will stand for us all. —Sam Caldwell



*Bill Kinney and Frank Fuller enjoy Butch Ramey's reaction at an early Houston banquet. Ramey had just been named Man of the Year for 1987. Wildlife Graphics/Sam Caldwell photo*

*Below, Kinney and Caldwell disagree about the provenance of a catch on an early Laguna Madre fishing trip. Photo by Jeff Vadakin of FishStix*



*Two early volunteer leaders at the first GCCA fundraising banquet: David Cummings, President and Walter Fondren III, Chairman of the Board.*



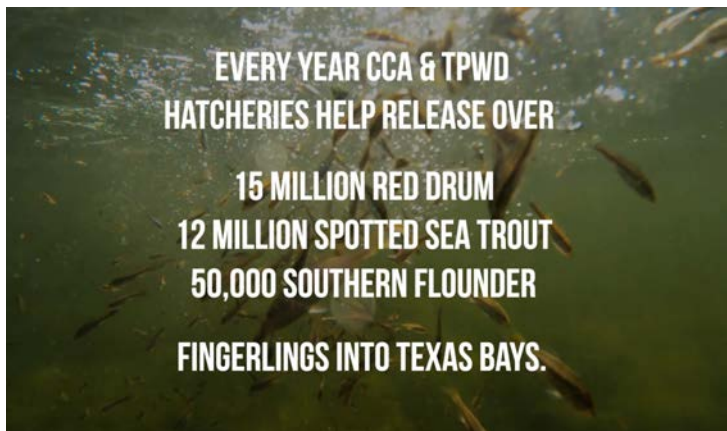


# Putting fingerlings back where fish need to be

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](#)







## 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



Illegal fishermen target red snapper, sharks and red drum, using primarily **long lines and gill nets** which often hook or entangle endangered sea turtles.



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Inside 9 nautical miles – Texas Parks & Wildlife > 800.792.4263

Beyond 9 nautical miles – US Coast Guard > 361.939.0450



PHOTO: TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE



# 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 our statewide membership is time consuming and expensive.

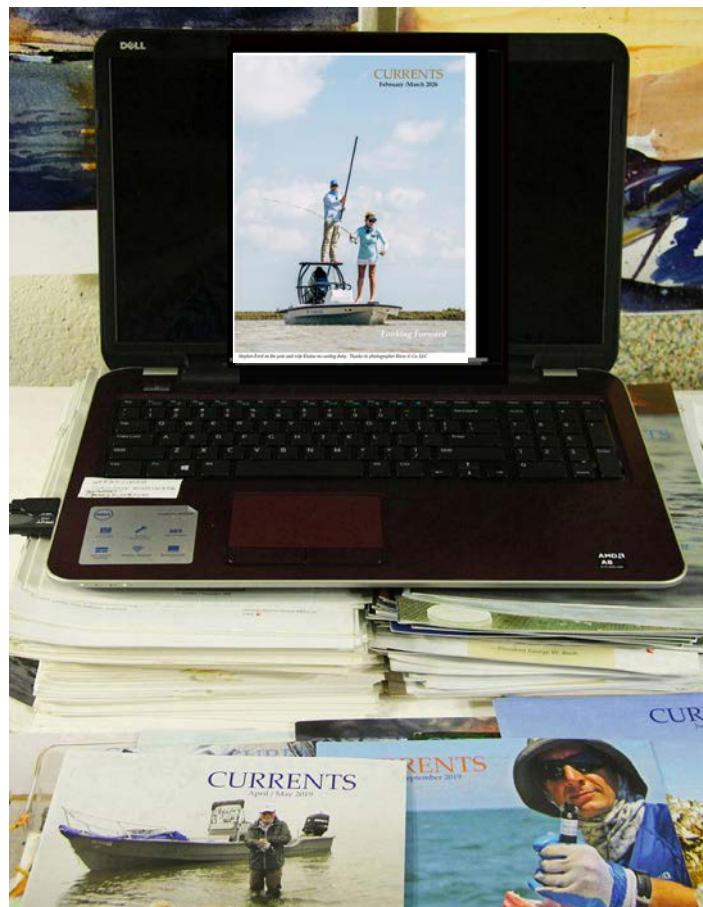
The online CURRENTS newsletter requires no printing nor postage, and delivery is almost instantaneous. An email to members contains a link, with the full newsletter a click away.

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.

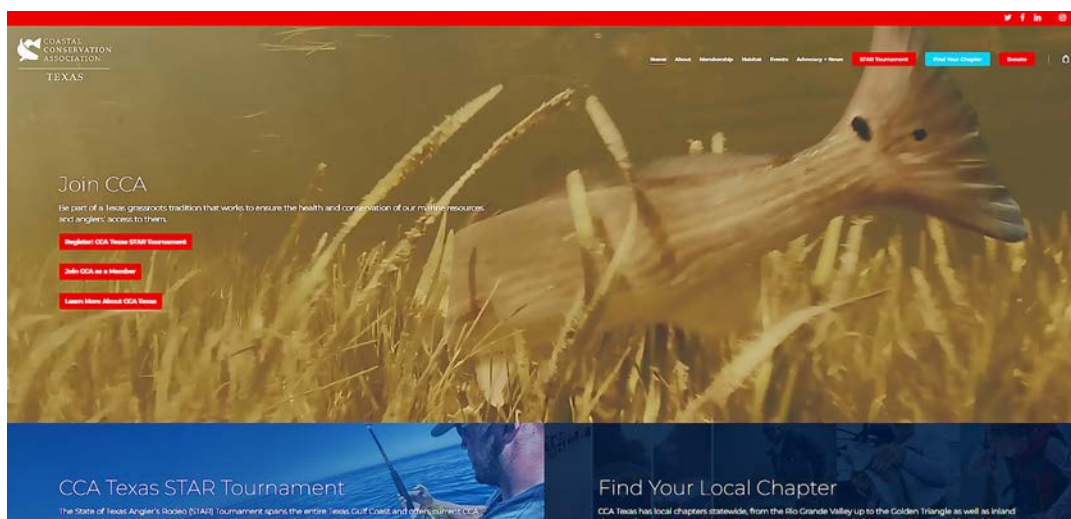
[Click here for CURRENTS Newsletters.](#)



*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 X. 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 continues to GROW FAST, so join thousands of CCA Texas members around the state by following us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [X](#) now! Each time our members FOLLOW CCA Texas and LIKE our posts, it helps to 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!

## FACEBOOK



### Featured Social Media Highlights

Join over 44,000+ Texas anglers by FOLLOWING our [CCA Texas Facebook page](#) to be the first to know about important updates, check out incredible photos, and watch amazing reels and videos! [LIKE us on Facebook TODAY and help us out by sharing our posts!](#)



Our New Year's Resolution seems to be the same every year...spend as much time as we can out on the water! Happy New Year, y'all!

CLICK HERE TO CHECK OUT THIS POST ON FACEBOOK!



 Texas Coast

#JoinCCA #CCATexas

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Stay warm, y'all!

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## CCA Texas on Instagram

We just reached 25K+ followers, now help us get to 30K! 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



**DID YOU KNOW: TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE / CCA PRODUCTION HATCHERIES HAVE RELEASED OVER 1.5 MILLION FLOUNDER FINGERLINGS INTO OUR BAYS?**

 **Conservation in Action**

**Did you know: Texas Parks and Wildlife / CCA production hatcheries have released over 1.5 million Flounder fingerlings into our bays?**

**CLICK HERE TO CHECK OUT THIS VIDEO ON INSTAGRAM!**



**BAFFIN BAY, TEXAS**

 **Another beautiful day down in Baffin Bay**

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**KLEBERG COUNTY, TEXAS**

 **Couldn't ask for better conditions to start the day...**

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## CCA Texas on X

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



PROJECT	FUNDED AMOUNT
OYSTER LICENSE BUYBACK	\$1,000,000
AYRES REEF RESTORATION AND SHORELINE PROTECTION	\$1,000,000
CARANCAHUA BAY OYSTER RESTORATION	\$1,000,000
CENTER FOR SPORTFISH SCIENCE AND CONSERVATION (5 YRS)	\$625,000
TARPON TAGGING PROGRAM: GRIBBS AT TAMU GALVESTON	\$588,000
BAFFIN BAY SERPULID REEF RESTORATION (3 YRS)	\$525,000
COL CONSERVATION REEF'S EAST MATAGORDA	\$500,000
COL CONSERVATION REEF'S MESQUITE BAY (RANCH HOUSE)	\$500,000
GORDY MARSH RESTORATION + SHORELINE PROTECTION	\$200,000
OYSTER LAKE SHORELINE PROTECTION PHASE IV	\$200,000
NUICES BAY MARSH REST. AND MARSH GRASS PLANTING	\$150,000
TPWD COASTAL FISHERIES/HATCHERY SUMMER INTERNS	\$127,000
OYSTER EDUCATION PROGRAM AT TX SURF CONSERVANCY	\$125,000
CITIZEN TAGGING PROGRAM: CCA TX AND CISC AT TAMU-CC	\$101,152
BRINGING BAFFIN BACK: HBI (3 YRS)	\$100,000
REGION IV GAME WARDEN EQUIPMENT	\$66,660
QUANTIFYING ILLEGAL-UNREPORTED-UNREGULATED FISHING	\$50,000
CCA TEXAS CONSERVATION OUTREACH BILLBOARDS	\$39,000
TPWD SEAGRASS OUTREACH BILLBOARDS	\$24,776
FOUR SPORTING CLAY EVENTS FOR OPERATION GAME THIEF	\$20,000
OYSTER RECYCLING BINS FOR SOUTH TEXAS COASTAL INIT.	\$17,000
TPWD GAME WARDEN FND: GO FOR FISH EVENT	\$5,000
BILLY SANDIFER FISH CLEANUP	\$2,000

**TOTAL: \$6,965,588**



We're immensely proud of what we were able to accomplish in 2025, and we're looking forward to building upon this year in 2026 as we continue to ensure the health and conservation of our marine resources and anglers' access to them here in Texas.

**CLICK HERE TO CHECK OUT THIS POST ON TWITTER / X!**



**"INCLUDING OTHER PROJECTS, IN ALL, CCA TEXAS FUNDED OVER \$6.9 MILLION IN HABITAT, RESEARCH AND CONSERVATION EFFORTS IN 2025."**

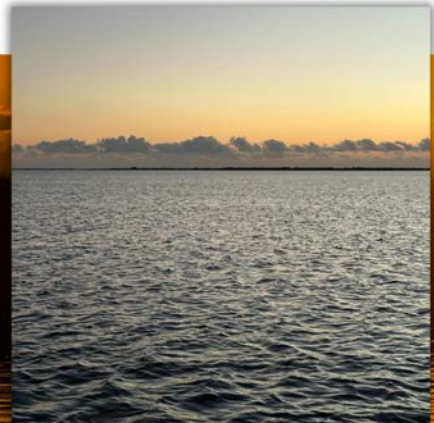
**"CCA TEXAS IS GRATEFUL TO BRING 2025 TO A CLOSE AND USE ITS SUCCESS AND MOMENTUM TO CONTINUE PUSHING CONSERVATION EFFORTS FORWARD INTO THE FUTURE."**


**JOHN BLAHA,  
CCA TEXAS DIRECTOR OF HABITAT**



In 2026, we'll continue to ensure the health and conservation of our marine resources and anglers' access to them here in Texas!

**CLICK HERE TO CHECK OUT THIS POST ON TWITTER / X!**





Update from The Texas Marine Cold-Water Response Collaborative (TCRC) to mitigate the impact of the cold weather on our marine resources: "The Texas Marine Cold-Water Response Collaborative (TCRC) is requesting a voluntary interruption of commercial navigation and all coastal engineering type activities in the Laguna Madre reach from south of JFK Bridge in Corpus Christi (MM 551) to Port Isabel (MM 661) starting at 06:00 on Monday, January 26, 2026 and presently extending through 12:00 CDT on Tuesday, January 27, 2026.

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# PARTNERING TO PROTECT OUR COASTS

7% of proceeds from CCA-branded gear  
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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 February / March 2026, Volume 46, Issue 2  
Editor-in-Chief / Robby Byers

Editor / Sam Caldwell

#### Editorial Team

John Blaha, Shane Bonnot,  
Liz Bosmans, Kevin Hickson, Ryan Towns

#### CCA Texas Staff

Drew Adams, Garrett Boehnemann, Blake Burnside,  
Lucy DeJesus, Drake Grigar, Corbin Primrose, Taylor Rieck, Matt Still, Coleman Todd, Carson Vecera,  
Edmund Weinheimer and Hayden Weunsche

### Alvin-Pearland Rex Richards

Happy 2026 from Alvin Pearland CCA! As this update is being written, we are thawing out from Winter Storm Fern, longing for warmer weather, and starting to plan chapter activities/events for the year. If you think you may have an interest in supporting our chapter by serving alongside us on the Board of Directors, please reach out to find out what is involved and what it takes to get plugged in.

We have set the date for our **2026 CCA Alvin/Pearland Chapter Fundraising Banquet: Thursday, June 18 at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Pearland.** We are still in the planning stage, but you can count on a fun-filled evening of friends, food, and good old-fashioned fundraising! If you have a Company or Product you would like to showcase at our event, please reach out to discuss options. Stay tuned for more details soon.

We will be hosting Anglers' Night Out events again this year. They will be held at Big Horn BBQ in Pearland. We are still in the process of finalizing our dates but stay tuned for more details and the speaker line-up.

The best way to stay up to date with our latest Chapter Events is to follow us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/](http://www.facebook.com/)

[alvinpearland.cca](http://alvinpearland.cca) or go to our Chapter Website at <https://ccatexas.org/find-your-chapter/alvin-pearland/>.

Wishing you great fishing and tight lines in 2026, from your Alvin Pearland Board!

**Aransas Bay**  
**Michael Ferri 361-790-4404**  
**[txsprig@yahoo.com](mailto:txsprig@yahoo.com)**

The Aransas Bay Chapter is excited to share that ticket sales are officially open for our Annual Banquet, and we couldn't be more grateful for the continued support of our incredible community. Your generosity, participation, and passion for conservation are a huge part of the Chapter's success.

Thanks to that support, the 2025 Aransas Bay Chapter Banquet was another outstanding success, helping fund meaningful conservation, habitat restoration, and outreach efforts right here along our coast. Building on that momentum, we are pleased to announce that the 2026 Aransas Bay Chapter Banquet is officially on the calendar.

**Mark your calendars for Saturday, March 28, 2026 at the Fulton Convention Center!** We are thrilled to once again host our banquet at the Fulton Convention Center and look forward to another memorable evening filled with great food, exciting raffles and auctions, fellowship, live auction and a shared commitment to conserving our coastal fisheries and habitats. Many thanks to Salemi's Ace Hardware our Title Sponsor, Silsbee Ford our Sportsman's and Travel Raffle Sponsor, Rockport Tackle Town our Cap Sponsor and Guild Mortgage our Tumbler Sponsor!

Babes on the Bay – Spring on the Water: Spring also brings one of our most anticipated events of the year—**Babes on the Bay returning May 15–16, 2026**, also at the Fulton Convention Center. Thanks again to Salemi's Ace



Left: Janae Evans in the marsh, right: sunrise at Aransas Bay



Left: Amanda Wood giving a kiss to a nice red, middle: Liz Hewitt with a great catch, right: Debbie Minns at sunrise



Hardware as our Title Sponsor, Rockport Tackle Town and many more who make this possible! Babes on the Bay is the largest one day all women's fishing tournament that blends friendly competition with education, conservation, and community. The weekend includes: inshore fishing tournament divisions, a lively awards celebration on Saturday, live music, food, shopping vendors, and sponsors supporting coastal conservation, camaraderie among women who love the outdoors and our Texas coast! We are open to the public Friday and Saturday!

Registration is open now on Fishing Chaos and teams are encouraged to register early, secure guides and lodging, and get ready for an unforgettable spring fishing weekend.

As we look ahead to spring fishing season, we want to extend a heartfelt thank you to our volunteers, sponsors, members, and conservation-minded supporters. Your time, energy, and dedication make everything we do possible—from successful banquets to impactful conservation work in Aransas County and beyond. We are proud of what this community continues to accomplish together and look forward to another year of strong fisheries, healthy habitats, and time well spent on the water. We can't wait to see you this spring!



CCA Austin Board Members

**Austin**  
**Alex Blackburn 512-565-4939**  
**Atblackburn3@gmail.com**

I hope everyone survived the ice storm we had in January and is looking forward to what Spring has to offer. CCA would not be able to raise the funds needed to continue their mission without all the local Chapters' fundraising efforts and the support we receive from you and local businesses.

CCA Austin calendar of events: **April 9th – ANO at Austin Yeti Flagship Store** at 220 S Congress Ave, Austin 78704. We have partnered with Yeti to host an Anglers' Night Out to promote CCA and have some fun meeting and networking with other people. More information will be available closer to the event. Be sure to follow [CCA](#)

[Austin Chapter](#) on Facebook for updated information.

May 1st – Boat raffle tickets will go on sale to the public. There will only be 260 tickets sold at \$250.00 each. If you are not attending the banquet on May 7th, this will be your opportunity to purchase a ticket. This year's boat is a 23' Haynie Amigo with a Mercury 150HP L Pro XS Optimax and Coastline Trailer. More information on how to purchase your tickets will follow closer to May 1st.

**May 7th – CCA Austin 47th Annual Fundraiser Banquet.** You will enjoy an evening of music, food from some of the best restaurants in Austin, Open Bar, Yeti Raffle, Games, General Raffle, and the best Live Auction items. We offer something for everyone including the Ladies. Purchase your tickets early.... The banquet is always sold out. <https://ticketstripe.com/CCA-Austin-2026>. If you have any questions, please reach out to Cheryl at [Cherylccaaustin@gmail.com](mailto:Cherylccaaustin@gmail.com) and she will be happy to help you.

If you are interested in learning more about the Austin CCA Chapter, we meet on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at Warren Wildlife Gallery, 1401 Bouldin Ave at 6:00 p.m. We welcome new members and look forward to meeting you. If you have any questions please contact our President, Alex Blackburn at [atblackburn3@gmail.com](mailto:atblackburn3@gmail.com) or Cheryl Smith at [Cherylccaaustin@gmail.com](mailto:Cherylccaaustin@gmail.com).

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

**Brazoria**  
**Stephen Griffith 979-236-1902**  
**swgriffith65@gmail.com**

Brazoria County Chapter has set its annual banquet for 2026. **This year's banquet will be Thursday, May 28, 2026 at The Dow Academic Center.** If anyone is interested in purchasing a table or becoming a sponsor contact Stephen at (979) 236-1902 or email [swgriffith65@gmail.com](mailto:swgriffith65@gmail.com).

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

Reporting from the frozen north...well north of Houston. I'm sure the fish are hibernating, right along with everything else. But a warming trend is just around the corner, so it will be a good time to go through your fishing tackle and be ready to go catching.

As I type...we are in the home stretch leading into our **CCA Brazos Valley Chapter Annual Banquet on February 6 at the Brazos Center in Bryan, TX.** Our team has been busy. We appreciate all coming together to help. Excited to open the doors, see ole friends, meet new ones, and have some fun. Check out the next issue for details. Take someone fishing...and preferably not ice fishing.



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

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

**Centex**  
**Mike Hyde 254-855-8752**  
**Hydemike37@yahoo.com**

**Central Houston**  
**Brooks Kelm 713-829-1386**  
**brooks@bayoucityangler.com**

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

Greetings from the Colorado Valley! I've been doing a little winter fishing with a trip down to Baffin on a floating cabin trip, took my son and two grandsons along and we all totally enjoyed the trip. My grandsons said they have never caught so many trout! Getting a little hunting in as well but this is all coming to an end. We are focusing on preparations for our upcoming **CCA Colorado Valley Chapter Banquet on March 26, 2026 in LaGrange at the KC Hall**. Please get your tables early because it promises to be another terrific evening. Wishing bent rods and tight lines to all!

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

We hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season and extend our wishes for a happy new year. Our chapter is preparing for the **1st annual kidfish event with our partner, the Shiner Fire Department. The event will be held on April 18, 2026, from 8am -12 pm at the Green-Dickson Park in Shiner, Texas.** It is a free fishing event for kids under 16 years old, but registration is required. We will wrap up the fishing at 11 a.m. and provide a hot dog lunch with chips and drinks. Please see our flyer for more information and to register. We look forward to seeing you there.

Also, save the date for our **2026 CCA Come and Catch It Chapter Annual Banquet on August 7 at the JB Wells Expo Park starting at 5:30 p.m.**

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

2026 is off to a great start here in the coastal bend!! Winter fishing is HOT here in the Laguna Madre, with good numbers of solid trout being caught (and released). Anyone who spends time on the water will find it hard not to notice the hard work being put in by TPWD and CCA to protect

our angling future and help our fishery recover from the 2021 freeze!

We are excited to host our **48th Annual Fundraising Banquet on Thursday, March 05, 2026, at the Hilliard Center**. We are pleased to announce that long-time sponsor **Flint Hills Resources** has committed to be our title sponsor again

this year for Banquet and our Poco Rojo Kid Fish! Thank you, Flint Hills Resources, for your continued support of CCA and our community.

Raffle Tickets for our Bull Red Solo Skiff Raffle sponsored by Andrew's Distributing and our Sow Trout Sportsman Raffle sponsored by L&F Distributors are currently being sold. You don't need to be present to win! Scan our QR Code for the Sportsman Raffle Prize List.

We expect this event to sell out so please let us know ASAP if you would like to purchase tickets, sponsorship or reserve a table.

For questions or to purchase table/tickets for the banquet please contact Heather at [ccacorpuschristi@gmail.com](mailto:ccacorpuschristi@gmail.com) or call (361) 882-5199. As always, let us know if you're interested in volunteering!



*Scan QR code for 2026 CCA  
Corpus Christi Chapter Raffle  
Prize List*

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

As we get closer to our 2026 Banquet, we would like to thank our 2025 CCA Dallas Banquet Table Sponsors. Thank You: Tito's Handmade Vodka, McGriff Specialty, Parking Systems of America, Miles & Miles Argentina, ScreenFab, Vaquero Private Wealth, Community National Bank, AgTrust, Taylor Farms, Lee Halford, McMurray Metals, Blue Harbor Capital Advisors, Dallas Gun Club, Bullard Construction, AM Steel and Supply, Clay Shooters Supply, Contego Solutions, Mesero, Park Cities Dads Club & Ducks Unlimited.

Our first ANO of 2026 will be on March 11 at The Beretta Gallery. Details will be sent out in early February via email and on social media.

**Our 2026 Annual Banquet is Scheduled for April 9 at On The Levee.** We look forward to hosting everyone for another great event, tickets and tables are on sale now: <https://ticketstripe.com/CCADallas2026>.





Annual CCA Golden Triangle Chapter Banquet at the Beaumont Civic Center. As always, we will have plenty of food, plenty of raffles and a great time to be had by all. Come out and see us! Cheers!

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

Can you smell it, it's in the air, the smell of a good ole fashioned FUNdraiser in the aroma of boiled crawfish, fried catfish, open bar and a guaranteed good time while doing our part to contribute to the Mission Statement of CCA Texas. All at the **Greater Sugar Land CCA Annual**

**Banquet to be held at the Stafford Centre on Thursday, April 9, 2026.** You don't want to miss this banquet with our friends from Cajun Country Cookers who always prepare a great meal for us with boiled crawfish, fried catfish and all the fixings. Grab seven of your friends or coworkers and get a table while they last, just click here: <https://ticketstripe.com/2026SugarLandCCA>.

*Photos from the latest CCA Fort Bend Chapter Anglers' Night Out at Hoss Archery and Outdoor in Rosenberg*

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

Howdy all, our Fort Bend committee members have been on the ball this year making plans and coming up with new and better ideas for this year's banquet.

Flats Cats Boats is putting the final touches on this year's raffle boat, and we are excited to get in circulation.

I'd like to thank Hoss Archery and Outdoor in Rosenberg for hosting our Anglers' Night Out along with our guest speaker Capt. Clint Barghi. We had a great event with around 50 guests from the community. Thank you all for attending and support.

A few dates to mark in your calendars: Feb. 18-22 is the Fishing show at GRB (Our boat will be on display), **April 16 will be the 2026 CCA Fort Bend Chapter Banquet** and we will host our Kid Fish in July (exact date TBD).

I'd like to give special thanks to Joe's Oyster Bar & Grill in Rosenberg for letting us hold our monthly meetings there, Wet Sounds Inc. and Sportsman's Boat and RV Storage for their Chapter support. Take a kid fishing! They just may grow up and return the favor! Till next time...

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

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

**Golden Triangle  
Dave Roberts 409-781-6850  
Superdave.roberts08@gmail.com**

Greetings from the GTC! I hope that everyone has stayed safe and warm this winter and fortunately, spring is right around the corner. Fishing on the upper coast has been nothing short of fantastic during these colder months. Coming up on May the 21, 2026 we will be having our



*Left: Mike Spero getting CCA Greater Sugar Land Presidents Cup plaque in 2018 and right: Bob Hrachovy getting the win in 2025*

**The Annual Chapters Presidents Cup Fishing Tournament is scheduled for Saturday, April 25, 2026 in Sargent, TX.** Proceeds from the tournament benefit our Kid Fish programs. This is a fun tournament with some great camaraderie, oh and bragging rights on who takes home the Presidents Cup Trophy and keep it for a year. And something new, we also provide the Presidents Cup Winner with a custom pictured framed plaque of them and the trophy for the year they won it. This year it could be you. Your entry fee gets you a light meal on Friday and meal and open bar at the Saturday weigh in. Requests are coming in from our Community Partners to help them host their Kid Fish Events in 2026. We try to accommodate as many as we can, however we need your help in volunteering. Once you see a youngster catch their first fish and their big Ole Texas smile you will be glad you volunteered.

Our chapter also plans on attending the 2026 CCA Texas Inter Chapter Challenge this year on June 12th &



13th and officially putting the other Texas Chapters on notice “We will bring home the trophy this year” but still come on down and meet us and enjoy the great time and camaraderie.

If you would like to get involved with the Greater Sugar Land CCA Chapter, feel free to contact myself at [greatersugarlandcca@gmail.com](mailto:greatersugarlandcca@gmail.com) or better yet attend one of our Board Meetings that take place at a new location El Fogon Mexican Kitchen, 4514 Highway 6 in Sugar Land. We meet at 6:30 p.m. for social time and the meeting starts at 7:00 p.m. The 2026 Board Meeting Schedule is Tuesday February 10th, Tuesday March 10th, Tuesday April 14th, May, June, July, August - no Board Meetings, Tuesday September 8th, Tuesday October 13th, Tuesday November 10th, December 2026 – no Board Meeting. Until next time, get out on the water and enjoy good times & tight lines.

**Greater Woodlands**  
**Charlotte Redd 832-368-8263**  
**[choctawcharlie69@gmail.com](mailto:choctawcharlie69@gmail.com)**

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS for our 19th Annual CCA Greater Woodlands Chapter Banquet on Thursday, May 14, 2026!** This event will be held at The Blue Magnolia, located at 1 Whispering Pines Street, Magnolia, TX, 77354. For current information, check out our [Facebook Page](#). And check out our calendar of events on our [CCA Texas chapter webpage](#). We will be posting links to our online banquet ticket sales and table sponsorship opportunities when they become available. Feel free to contact Corbin Primrose to sign up for a table sponsorship early, or to buy pre-sale raffle tickets: [cprimrose@ccatexas.org](mailto:cprimrose@ccatexas.org) or (713) 626-4222 Ext. 6609. This will be a night of food, fun, and fellowship. You don't want to miss it!

**Guadalupe Valley**  
**Adam Arroyo 361-350-0026**  
**[Ctown75@aol.com](mailto:Ctown75@aol.com)**

**Hays County**  
**Tim Young 512-573-7939**  
**[tim.ccahaysco@gmail.com](mailto:tim.ccahaysco@gmail.com)**

**Heart of the Hills**  
**Kelly Parks 210-669-3732**  
**[bucksdelucks@yahoo.com](mailto:bucksdelucks@yahoo.com)**

**Helotes**  
**Johnny Rayburg 210-535-6810**  
**[jrayburg@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jrayburg@sbcglobal.net)**

**Highland Lakes**  
**Tim Franke 512-496-9973**  
**[timfrankecca@gmail.com](mailto:timfrankecca@gmail.com)**

**The CCA Highland Lakes Chapter Annual Banquet will be on April 16, 2026!** After an incredible second year of momentum and growth, CCA Highland Lakes is fired up to invite you to our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Chapter Banquet on Thursday, April 16, 2026, at the Lakeside Pavilion in

Marble Falls, Texas! This signature event brings together CCA members from across Central Texas and the state for an unforgettable evening dedicated to conservation, camaraderie, and coastal traditions.

Join us for a high-energy night featuring great food, exciting raffles and auctions, premium prizes, and the chance to connect with fellow CCA members and supporters who share a passion for protecting our coastal resources. Whether you're a longtime CCA supporter or brand new to the organization, this banquet is the perfect opportunity to get involved, make connections, and be part of something that truly makes a difference.

If you've never attended a CCA banquet before—this is the time! Our Highland Lakes chapter continues to grow, and we're expecting a packed house and an outstanding lineup of auction items, raffles, games, and experiences that you won't want to miss. We can't wait to show you a great time down on the lake in beautiful Marble Falls!

Sponsorship opportunities and premium tables are available, offering excellent name and brand recognition while directly supporting CCA's conservation mission. This annual banquet also kicks off another exciting year for the chapter, with additional events planned in 2026—including an August Sporting Clays tournament.

Watch for upcoming announcements in CURRENTS with more details on ticket sales, sponsorships, and event highlights. Follow us on our [Facebook CCA Highland Lakes Chapter page](#). And take those kids fishing!

For more information about the CCA Highland Lakes Chapter or the 2026 banquet, please contact: CCA Highland Lakes Chapter President Tim Franke – (512) 496-9973 or [timfrankecca@gmail.com](mailto:timfrankecca@gmail.com).

**Hill Country**  
**Miles Engelke 210-260-8968**  
**[mrengelke1957@gmail.com](mailto:mrengelke1957@gmail.com)**

**Houston Homebuilders**  
**Jimmy Reid 281-932-3395**  
**[jreid@newmarkhomes.com](mailto:jreid@newmarkhomes.com)**

**Houston Real Estate**  
**Kirk Laguarda 713-515-3830**  
**[KLaguarda@landadvisors.com](mailto:KLaguarda@landadvisors.com)**

**Katy**  
**Lyn Goldman 713-591-8550**  
**[lgoldman@contrexenergy.com](mailto:lgoldman@contrexenergy.com)**

**Laredo**  
**Maggie Puig 956-645-0031**  
**[Mepuig78@yahoo.com](mailto:Mepuig78@yahoo.com)**

**Lavaca County**  
**Brandon Welch (361) 407-3760**  
**[brandonkwelch@yahoo.com](mailto:brandonkwelch@yahoo.com)**



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

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

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

Mark your calendar and oil up your shotgun for 2nd Annual Lower Colorado Chapter's HOOKED ON CLAYS on March 28, 2026. Current plans are for the action to take place at Rusty Hook Ranch in Matagorda, TX. There will be competition between 4 person teams, Youth teams, Best Man, and Best Woman. There will be special prizes for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place shooters. Entry fees will be announced soon.



Left - 2026 CCA North Texas Banquet catering provided by Babe's Chicken; middle - John Hansen, and right - Richard Pratt, both CCA NTX committee members on a recent fly fishing trip to Louisiana

Check our [Chapter webpage](#) for more details. Sponsors are wanted for teams, stations, prizes or overall. Contact Blake Burnside (713) 626-4222 or [bburnside@ccatexas.org](mailto:bburnside@ccatexas.org) for information on becoming a sponsor.

Keep watching here for more exciting information about what's happening with our CCA Chapter in Matagorda County, where we support all the bays, rivers and creeks in the county.

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

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

Upcoming CCA Mainland Chapter 2026 events: Sportsman raffle tickets available for purchase. We will be at BTR Cajun throwdown at Highland Bayou Park LaMarque April 10 and 11, we will also be at big crawfish bash at mainland city center in LaMarque, TX on May 2 selling our sportsman raffle tickets.

We have several upcoming Anglers' Night Out events: March 10th with The Kemah Channel Man, August 11th with SeaTow Galveston Bay, and September 8th with Mike Cabbage. And mark your calendars for the **Annual CCA Mainland Chapter Banquet on May 8, 2026!**

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

Mid Coast  
Elisa Carter 830-305-6418  
elisacarter@hotmail.com

North Texas  
Brian Donovan 214-402-3825  
brian@firstlightprint.com

**North Texas CCA will hold our 4th Annual Banquet on Thursday, April 23, 2026, at 3R's Ranch in Prosper, TX.**

We're excited to welcome returning title sponsor Tito's Handmade Vodka. This year we present Babe's Chicken Dinner House as our caterer, bringing North Texas's favorite fried chicken to our party. With more auction and



raffle items than ever, games, cocktails, and networking with other conservation-minded friends and companies, 2026 will be our biggest year yet!

Sponsor tables and individual tickets are on sale now, including Trout and Bull Red tables, plus our Texas Slam Table for ten people with marquis event promotion, private cocktail service, and premium table gifts. Follow CCA North Texas on Instagram at [@cca\\_ntx](#) for banquet updates and tickets. To purchase tickets or tables, please contact chapter president Brian Donovan at [Brian@firstlightprint.com](mailto:Brian@firstlightprint.com) or CCA Texas Assistant Director Garrett Boehnemann at [gboehnemann@ccatexas.org](mailto:gboehnemann@ccatexas.org).

Northwest Houston  
Mag Jaramillo 832-421-0439  
Mag.jaramillo@gmail.com

Orange County  
Zach Johnson 409-594-0525  
wzachjohnson@gmail.com

Piney Woods

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

Port O'Connor  
Norman Trubee 512-583-2912  
ntrubee@gmail.com



The Port O'Connor chapter is kicking off 2026 with strong momentum, keeping habitat and conservation front and center in all our efforts. We want to extend a huge thank-you to Jerry and Brent for hosting our Anglers' Nights Out (ANO) events at the legendary Hurricane Junction in Port O'Connor. Their top-notch hospitality, mouthwatering food, and ice-cold drinks make every gathering unforgettable. Be sure to stop by and support them next time you're in POC!

Here's a recap of our 2025–2026 ANO programs so far, along with what's coming up: November 2025 local guide Kim Goulden shared insights on the current state of our fisheries, plus practical tips on methods and techniques to up your game on the water. January 15, 2026 we dove into oyster mariculture with a presentation from Blake Whitney, President of Three Sisters Oyster Company. Blake and his team recounted their early journey, including their first crop "planted" in July 2025. They wowed the crowd by shucking a sack of fresh, flavorful bivalves—definitely check them out at [ThreeSistersOyster.com](https://www.threesistersoyster.com)! March 2026: Look forward to our local TPWD game wardens Casey Willmon and Jake McMahan leading a discussion on current happenings.

Our board is hard at work planning the **annual banquet on April 11, 2026**—mark your calendars for a fun Margaritaville-themed night! Sharkies will be serving up those iconic cheeseburgers in paradise.

This year's star raffle prize is a 14 kW Kohler generator, fully installed at your Calhoun County location, complete with a filled 250-gallon propane tank ready to go.

The Port O'Connor chapter stays dedicated to conservation and building community ties—we can't wait for another year of making a real difference together!

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

**On March 27, 2026 we will be hosting our 28th Annual CCA Prairie Chapter Banquet that will be at the Austin County Fair Convention Hall in Bellville.** We are expecting a huge turnout, every year it gets bigger and bigger!

This year we will have some awesome games and raffles. The game that is the biggest hit is our cap and card game that we have every year with great prizes, and it will sell fast! Also, we will have some great raffles that include Poker Chip Challenge, Golden Ticket and the Premium Raffle.

Our meal will be prime rib, chicken breast shrimp and all the trimmings and catered by Mikeska BBQ and his crew will be serving the meal.

The main event of the evening is the live auction with some great items of fishing, hunting trips, prints and more. Mark Switzer will be our auctioneer for the event along with a silent auction with some awesome gifts.

If interested in purchasing a table or tickets or if you would like to be a sponsor, contact Patricia at Wittenburg Printing in Sealy (979) 885-7464. See you on March 27!

**Redfish Bay**  
**Rod Hall 713-202-9373**  
**rodhall1253@gmail.com**

Hope everyone made it through the holidays safely and is enjoying the new year. The Redfish Bay Chapter board of directors held their first official board meeting for 2026 on January 14 to kick off the new year. The big item we discussed was the **CCA Redfish Bay Chapter Annual Banquet that is scheduled for April 25, 2026** at the Aransas Pass Convention Center. This date will be here before you

know it and there is still plenty of work to go around. That being said, if any of the Redfish Bay Chapter members would be interested in becoming a banquet committee member, please feel free to reach out to me, Rod Hall, at (713) 202-9373 or Toni Ballard at (512) 293-1874. The chapter board will be meeting to work on banquet details on the following dates: Feb. 11, March 11, March 25, April 8 and April 15 at Coasters in Aransas Pass, time TBD.

Anglers' Night Out meeting will be determined at a later date, and an email will be sent to notify every one of the details.

**Rio Grande Valley**  
**Javier Suarez 956-330-9788**  
**javier@eastcapeboats.com**

Greetings CCA RGV Fam. By the time you read this, the 46th Annual Chapter Banquet has taken place. Our Board Members worked diligently to prepare for this event. A lucky winner received the Can-Am Defender Max Lone Star Edition, provided by F&T Valley Motor Sports, atop a 16-foot Fort Bragg Utility Trailer, provided by Mid Valley Trailer Sales to include other winners for the reminding raffle items.

We would like to express our deepest appreciation to our valued sponsors who contributed to our banquet items: L&F Distributors (Multi-Year Exclusive Title Advertiser), L&G Concrete (Raffle Girls), Payne Auto Group (Hats), F&T Valley Motor Sports (Can-Am provider), Mid Valley Trailers Sales (Trailer provider), Ron Hoover RV & Marine (Bar), Luby's of McAllen and Pharr (Food Catering), Clark Chevrolet and Clark – Knapp Honda (Tervis Style Tumblers), Sames McAllen Ford and Lincoln (Turtlebox), Purpose Built Optics Sunglasses (Sunglass provider), South Texas Sinus Institute (Sunglass Straps), Tow Boats US Arroyo / Port Isabel / Port Mansfield (Key Chains & Key Chain Game), Hess Air (Koozies), Four Paws Animal Hospital (Towels), Lone Star National Bank (Board Member Shirts & Bucket Raffle), Mansfield Knockers and KWigglers (Casting Game), Pathfinder Public Affairs (Goodie Bags), Chorizo De San Manuel (Yeti Mugs), Rental World, and Turtlebox (Ranger provider).

To our attendees, we thank you for your support. To our chapter board members and volunteers, we appreciate your hard work and dedication. Our success relies heavily on the support of our sponsors, attendees, donors, and volunteers.

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

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

**San Antonio**  
**Brandon Stellges 210-374-65934**  
**Brandon.Stellges@frostbank.com**



Gearing up for our busy spring season in San Antonio! First up, **Wednesday, March 4 we will have an Anglers' Night Out at Alamo Café starting at 6:30 p.m.** This is for the San Antonio membership to come for a fajita buffet dinner at \$20 per person. We will have Dr. Michael Wetz, Ph.D. with Harte Research Institute speaking about Investigating Reactive Nitrogen Sources that Stimulate Algal Blooms in Baffin Bay. We will also sell raffle tickets for a guided fishing trip and some door prizes.

Next is our 13th Annual CCA San Antonio Sporting Clay Shoot & Crawfish Boil, to be held on Friday, March 27 at the National Shooting Complex. This is a really fun and relaxing event with great comradery and a tasty crawfish boil for our guests to enjoy following the shoot. We expect to have upwards of 60 teams (4-person team), and we treat them right with prizes for the top shooters in various categories, raffles, door prizes...and crawfish! If you would like more information, please call Brandon Stellges at (210) 436-9305.

Next up is our Cast for Kids event, to be held this year at Live Oak Park Pond. Scheduled for Saturday morning, April 11. Our CCA committee provides funding and committee member volunteers for the 60 to 100 children and families in attendance. A big thank you to Texas Parks & Wildlife who stock the catfish. For more information, please contact Jim Behnken at (210) 414-8048 or Tom Akin at (210) 313-4860.

And then our big event will follow on **Thursday, April 30, 2026, our 47th annual San Antonio CCA banquet.**

Bigger and better than ever, we are shooting to increase our total guests in attendance to about 1,600 ... so we are looking for table buyers! We have some new ideas in the planning, so expect a slightly revised format but with all the good stuff you always expect on the banquet floor! For more information, contact our banquet chair Brandon Carpenter at (210) 218-2393 or co-chair Chase Anderson at (210) 710-1820. We are looking for a few new volunteers to join us in our fundraising journey; if you have experience or want to be part of our organization, please reach out to me, Brandon Stellges at (210) 436-9305! Keep your lines tight and take a kid fishing...or hunting!

#### San Bernard

**Jeremy Compton 281-961-0262**  
**jcompton@detconsultinginc.com**

#### San Gabriel

**David Singleton 512-848-6555**  
**southwestland@gmail.com**

As the new year kicks off, the CCA San Gabriel Chapter is recharged and ready to keep the momentum going for Texas coastal conservation. With cooler weather settling in and prime fishing ahead, here's what's happening in Georgetown.

First, a big reminder: our **24th Annual Banquet is locked in for Thursday, August 6, 2026**, right here in Georgetown. The Planning Committee is hard at work lining up everything to make this one an event you won't want to miss—bigger prizes, more excitement, and even stronger support for our fisheries and habitats. Stay tuned for ticket details and sponsorship opportunities as we get closer.

Details for our first Anglers' Night Out of 2026 are coming together and will drop soon on the CCA San Gabriel Facebook page. Keep an eye there for date, time, location, and speaker info—we always aim to deliver great evenings of education, camaraderie, and door prizes.

In the meantime, the chapter is enjoying some much-needed time on the Texas Coast, chasing reds, trout, and whatever the bays offer up. We're also looking forward to supporting our fellow chapters by attending their banquets over the next few months—nothing beats seeing the statewide network in action and sharing ideas for conservation wins.

If you're ready to jump in, reach out about volunteering for the banquet committee or helping at events. Your involvement helps us protect and enhance our coastal resources for the long haul. Tight lines and see you on the water or at the next gathering!

#### Southwestern

**Stephen Fuqua 713-397-9283**  
**Sfuqua.sf@gmail.com**

#### TAMU

**Blaine Eckert 936-499-1596**  
**Blaine.eckert@gmail.com**

**Texas State University**  
**Tate Elder 832-294-1254**  
**tateelder@icloud.com**

**Tomball/Magnolia**  
**Matt Maddox 832-963-5215**  
**mrmaddox04@gmail.com**

#### Tri-County

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

#### Trinity Bay

**Jayo Washington 281-960-7064**  
**jayowash@comcast.net**



*CCA San Gabriel Banquet*

*Chairmen Jeff Bible, reeling in some big winter trout in Port O'Connor*

Greetings Campers, Happy New Year to one and all. Grab your calendar for us please. The **Trinity Bay Banquet will be Friday, August 21, 2026, at Armenta's Reception Hall** located at 825 Sheldon Road, Channelview, TX. Even though Armenta's is a bit far from Trinity Bay, the hall has offered us so much more room than anywhere else we could find. Get your table by May 31 and get your name in a drawing for a \$500 raffle pack. To get your tickets contact any Trinity Bay Board member or <https://ticketstripe.com/TrinityBAY26>. It will be a blast as always. Come see us.



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

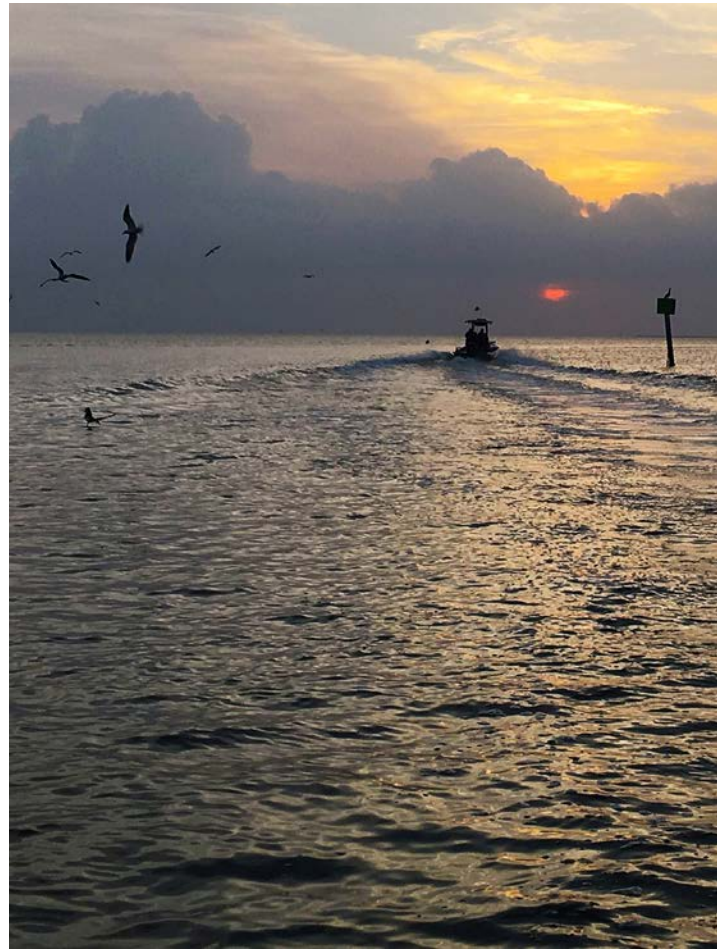
West Houston  
Ruben Delgadillo 281-808-1434  
Castaline@icloud.com

Dear West Houston members! We are back again this year with our famous **Annual Crawfish Boil! The date is April 9, 2026, at the American Shooting Center** - 16500 Westheimer Pkwy, Houston, TX 77082. Tickets and tables on sale now, see you there: <https://ticketstripe.com/WestHoustonCCA2026>

West Texas  
Craig McDonnold 432-682-3499  
Craig@McDonnold.net

SAVE THE DATE: **Our CCA West Texas Chapter banquet will be held on Wednesday, April 15, 2026, at the Midland Country Club at 6:00 p.m.** We are very fortunate to have our crawfish cooking team, The Enviro Resources Cooking Team, again for another year. They donate their time to travel from Erath, LA to Midland to bring us some of the finest shrimp and crawfish around and our banquet would not be nearly so successful without their efforts. Please come join us for cocktails, crustaceans and comradery.

Tables for our 2026 banquet are available: Bull Red (10 Top for \$3,000), Trout (8 Top for \$2,000), and Individual tickets for \$200. For tickets and to reserve your table, please contact Craig McDonnold at (432) 682-3499 or Taylor Rieck at (832) 262-8212. We are looking forward to seeing everyone there for another great year.



*Headed East Early / Port Mansfield, East Cut on the horizon.  
Wildlife Graphics photo*



## June 13 and 14, 2026 — 17th Annual Port Mansfield East Cut and Beach Cleanup

An enjoyable weekend with your best friends, refreshing a beautiful part of Texas. Food and fun as well as boat rides and work in the sun. For complete information on lodging and events, Email [brooks@BBstexorleans.com](mailto:brooks@BBstexorleans.com) Sponsorship opportunities are available.



# Great Photos 2026

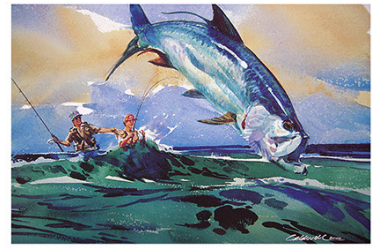
**Categories: Best In Show / Action / Scenic / Humor / Kids / Wildlife / CPR**

Important: Send jpegs and include name of subject, title, your name as well as the names of anyone in the photo **if possible**. Email jpegs to [sam@samcaldwell.com](mailto:sam@samcaldwell.com) Give us your best shots.

## The Great Photos Contest Continues.

Keep your CCA CURRENTS an award-winning newsletter! PLUS- a Facebook/Instagram/Twitter entry for CCA Social Media qualifies for a special prize.

*Win Art Print prizes from Texas State Artist Sam Caldwell*



## Let's Go Retro!

A Great Action photo from Tide Magazine, circa November 1986. Photographer Fred Carr provided many Great Photos for the early GCCA and was co-author of the CCA's award winning *Change of Tides* book. He wrote of this photo, "Busting a big tarpon with a tiny fly, just off Islamorada."



## Let's Go Recent!

A Great Action photo from Matthew Kern of his wife Candace, preparing to release a beautiful Tarpon. Matthew and Candace are an avid fly angling couple pursuing tarpon along the Texas coast and the Florida Keys.





## Upper Coast Rocky Chase

### *Cold, but no damage from FERN*

As of this writing, we have just had 3 solid days of below freezing temps—20-25 degrees for 6-7 hours duration, so I can only imagine that the fishing has been slow. We were notified that this would be a “stunning” event—slowing down the movement of fish and turtles in most of the coastal inland waters, and a voluntary barge traffic cessation for The Laguna Madre was issued, ending on Tuesday, January 27th. This was not expected to be a fisheries event, but we may see some localized effects due to the rapid temperature change and wind speeds. I-10 seemed to be the line of demarcation for freezing temps (as well as other things). As you go farther south from Houston, on down the coast, the water temperature only got down to 40-45 degrees.

I can report that I have been fishing twice in the last 60 days, mostly in the Sabine system-Sabine Ship Channel, Lighthouse Cove, Keith Lake and other Upper Coast areas, the former being more productive than the latter. The tides have been very strong, and along with a North wind and low tide, the water level in Keith Lake was very shallow. Even the duck hunters had a hard time getting around. Looking for a good warm up in February and March.

Be sure to listen to The Michael Berry Show on KTRH 740AM, at 8AM and 5PM, as CCA is now a sponsor of his show. Happy Fishing! —**Rocky**

*Rocky Chase is a 43-year member of CCA, and serves on the Board as Chairman of the Governmental Affairs Committee.*

## Middle Coast Capt. Cody Roesener

### *Make sure to hold onto your rod!*

February and March are two of my favorite months to be on the water. Redfish are plentiful, and the trophy trout fishing is the best I have seen in several years!

Wade fishing is my go-to when I am looking for the big girls this time of year. Start in deeper water early and move shallower as the fish move into the skinny water as the sun comes up and it gets warmer.

I have been throwing PavLures Softy's or SoftDine XL's early and then switching to soft plastics with a light jig head as I move into shallower water. Z-Man Big BallerZ and Thick Tricks have been my baits of choice; their added buoyancy helps slow their sink rate and allows them to be fished light and slow.

Drift fishing can still be productive, put out your drift socks to slow your drift as much as possible. Focus on working potholes with soft plastics or a popping cork rig. If you are drifting, take note of the water depth and bottom structure where you are finding fish. Once you find a pattern you can adjust your technique to target these areas of higher productivity.

The drum fishing will be on fire soon. They are a great fish to keep for dinner and can make for a fun day on the water with the kids. In deeper water or along the edges of channels, try a Carolina Rigged shrimp with a piece of Fish Bites and make sure to hold onto your rod!

Layer up and don't be afraid to make the most of our winter fishery! —**Capt. Cody B. Roesener** / President, CCA Corpus Christi 916-531-0078

*“It seems to be a law of nature, inflexible and inexorable, that those who will not risk cannot win.” -Capt. John Paul Jones*

## Lower Coast Capt. Bryan Robinson

### *Watch the weather, go explore*

Hello again from the Lower Laguna Madre! Hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season. Most people are done with hunting so it's back to fishing! The LLM has experienced a warm and windy winter so far with some very low water levels. We usually have high levels in the fall but it was short lived this year. The water just didn't make it to the back lakes where it gives the grass a chance to grow.

Water temperatures have been dropping because of the cold fronts finally making it all the way down into Deep South Texas. Now that Fern has wandered on, fish will be hunkered down in deeper areas with the low water levels and cooler temperatures. This is a great time to explore the bay to look for these places the fish are holding up. I like to look at holes close to the ICW. Don't forget to work the sandy potholes surrounded by grass. Fish love these areas in the winter, especially the big trout! As the tide starts to rise these fish will move onto shallow flats to warm up.

Work the holes with 3in-4in soft plastics. Let the lure sink all the way to the bottom and move them slow.

Make sure to keep an eye on the weather during the winter months. The few days after a cold front pushes through could be spectacular. Blue bird skies and low winds! A fly fishers dream!

Crab patterns will work well. Try and get the fly into the path of the fish and wait until they get up to it. Twitch it and enjoy the ride! Get that boat gassed up, watch the weather and go explore! Adios! —**Capt. Bryan Robinson** 956-241-5520 / [bryandrobinson@yahoo.com](mailto:bryandrobinson@yahoo.com) Captain Bryan is a longtime CCA member, a past President of the RGV chapter, and has served on the CCA Texas State Board of Directors. He loves guiding fly fishers.



Photos for this issue of ForeCasts are courtesy of CCA's Aransas Pass chapter. Left, Liz Hewitt readies a fine redfish for further duty. Liz is not only a great fisherlady, she brings fine cuisine to CURRENTS as the Great Recipes Editor. Check out Liz's recipe on page 43. Right, a promising stretch of back bay hosts angler Janae Evans.



# Texas Clear Water Oyster Stew

1 pint (36 oysters) in their juice / 1 large shallot / 1 stick butter  
1/2 bunch green onions / 2 stalks of celery / 1/4 bunch of parsley  
1 pt heavy cream / 1 pt half and half milk  
1 Teaspoon(ish) Tony Cachere's / 2 Garlic cloves / Black Pepper

Melt one stick of butter in large sauce pan. Add shallot, green onions, celery, garlic and parsley (all chopped). Sauté for 3 minutes. Stir in heavy cream and half and half milk. Bring to a light boil while constantly stirring. Slowly pour in the oysters with juices. Bring to a simmer. Add Tony Cachere's and pepper to taste. Cook until the oysters are curled up on the edges. Serve with crusty bread. Serves 6



*Great Recipes Editor Liz Hewitt*



# — REEL IN — BUSCH LIGHT



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# Got a special friend who deserves a special gift?

Consider a classic Caldwell painting—or two. Included will be Caldwell's award winning novel, *The Trip*.



Both of these early Caldwell paintings went at auction to provide funds for Texas coastal conservation programs. Now an issue of high quality Giclee prints is available—with individual remarks by Texas State artist Sam Caldwell.

For good measure, Caldwell will include a **First edition *The Trip* novel**— also remarked.

## Surf Silver

A young fisherman is hoping for a trophy speckled trout. Instead, he's connected to a reel-stripping meg-alops atlanticus. A tarpon sketch is the remark.



## Ancient Traditions

A young bowman makes a connection in time to a previous hunter. A 10,000 year-old fluted Clovis point? An Alibates flint knife from only 500 years?

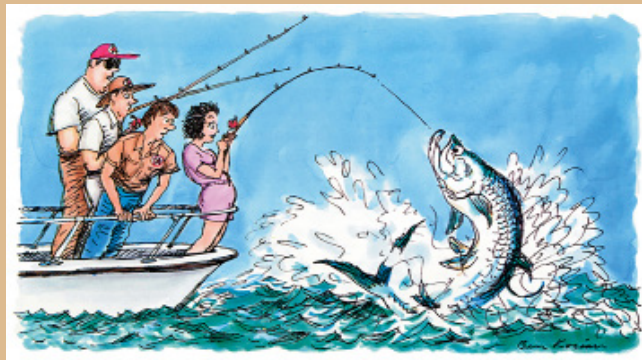
S/N print 1 of the editions is available for your friend, with Caldwell's original sketch remark as an individual note.

High Quality archival paper, 12" x 18"

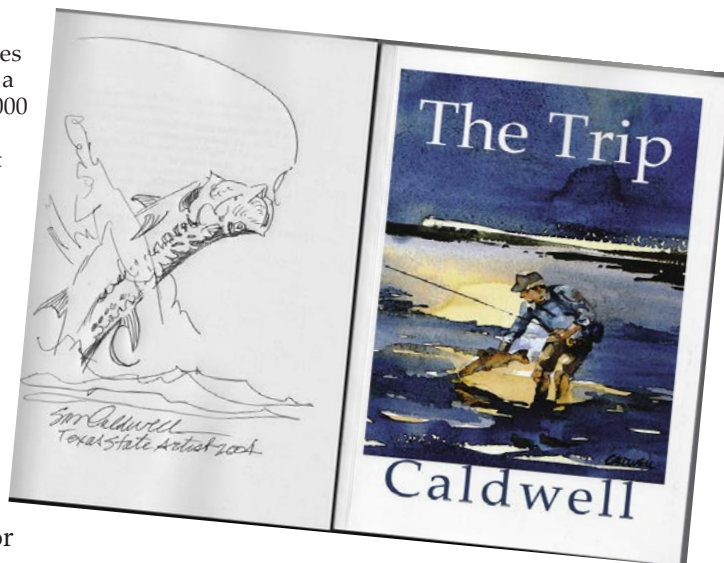
\$350 each, or \$600 for both.

A Retro tale from  
**Not That Serious** Collected  
by Ben Kocian and Sam Caldwell

*Caldwell plays a joke on Kim Brown, but the joke is on Caldwell. Click on the tarpon below and scroll.*



Let Caldwell know if you enjoy the stories from CCA yesteryear. Text to 281-455-9390



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Texas State Artist 2004 / DU State Artist 2010-2011

Dallas CCA Conservationist 2015

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281-455-9390





## Coastal Conservation Association

6919 Portwest Drive, Suite 100  
Houston, TX 77024

February / March 2026

## Great Photos 2026

Categories: Best In Show / Action / Scenic / Humor / Kids / Wildlife / CPR

Important: Send jpegs and include name of subject, title, your name as well as the names of anyone in the photo **if possible**.

Email jpegs to [sam@samcaldwell.com](mailto:sam@samcaldwell.com) Give us your best shots.

*Win Art Print prizes from Texas State Artist Sam Caldwell*



**BEST IN TEXAS**

### U.S. Coast Guard

#### Air & Sea Rescue

National Response Center: 800-874-2143  
Port Isabel: 956-761-2668  
Corpus Christi / Marine Safety Office:  
boating emergencies, chemical and  
oil spills: 361-888-3162  
Port Aransas: 361-749-5217  
Port O'Connor: 361-983-2616  
Freeport: 979-233-3801  
Houston, Galveston: 409-766-5620  
Sabine: 409-971-2195

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

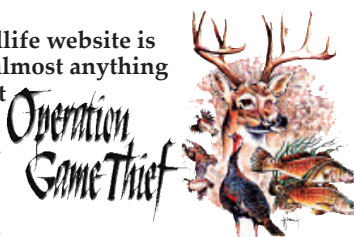
Visit [www.tpwd.texas.gov](http://www.tpwd.texas.gov)

[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)

[www.tpwd.texas.gov/fishboat/boat](http://www.tpwd.texas.gov/fishboat/boat)



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)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
NEW MEMBER \_\_\_\_\_ RENEWAL \_\_\_\_\_ (Member ID for renewing members only) \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

#### Method of payment

- ☐ Check/Money order  
☐ Charge to my:  
☐ MASTERCARD  
☐ VISA  
☐ AMEX  
☐ DISCOVER

- MEMBER: \$40 \_\_\_\_\_ Membership card, decal, bumper sticker, Texas CURRENTS newsletter & TIDE magazine.  
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.

Credit card number \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

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