



ON THE WING

1999 TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE ANNUAL REPORT

As we look forward to a new century, we can feel confident that the best days of Texas are ahead.

We are enjoying a prosperity not known in our history and an increased awareness of the great added value that our rich natural and cultural resources bring to our lives. Protection and management of these resources on your behalf is the responsibility of Texas Parks and Wildlife, a unique public institution with an unusual culture that is completely dedicated to getting the job done in the most efficient and sensible way possible.

Texas Parks and Wildlife is almost entirely funded by its customers, the men, women, and children who use and enjoy the resources of our state.

Texas Parks and Wildlife is dedicated to partnering with private landowners, other government entities, nonprofit organizations, and corporations that share our vision and commitment to our mission.

Texas Parks and Wildlife is firmly committed to decision-making based on science and sound data, but we listen to the views of our customers.

Texas Parks and Wildlife believes in its employees, who constitute as fine a corps of conservation professionals as exist in the nation.

Texas Parks and Wildlife is determined to expand the opportunities of its users, whether they are hunters, anglers, campers, hikers, birders, history buffs, bikers or other responsible outdoor enthusiasts.

Texas Parks and Wildlife believes in communications and makes every effort to be totally open in our operations and to encourage every employee to be a salesperson for conservation.

Texas Parks and Wildlife believes in and depends on thousands of volunteers who help us bring our services to you out of their belief in the importance of our natural and cultural heritage and out of the goodness of their hearts.

And so, with these core values and great support from the Texas Legislature, we begin the new century on sound footing. The most extensive repair program in our history is on schedule and on budget. In partnership with the nonprofit Parks and Wildlife Foundation of Texas, and with the support of Governor Bush, we have launched Lone Star Legacy, the most ambitious public/private partnership ever undertaken for conservation in Texas.

Finally, with the support of legislative leadership, the department begins the new century with the largest budget increase in its history.

Frankly, it comes just in time because there is so much to be done. Every two minutes, another acre of Texas farm and ranchland becomes a subdivision, a shopping mall, or a road. Every hour, more of the free-flowing water of our rivers and streams is dedicated to purposes other than fish and wildlife or recreation. Every day, more Texans move from rural communities into our great cities and thus become more estranged from the great natural landscape of Texas.

In spite of these challenges, we are confident that the support you have always given us will be there as our team and its customers work together in the coming year to devise an appropriate strategy to meet the needs of our precious resources and our people in the exciting years ahead.



Andrew Sansom
Andrew Sansom, Executive Director

Lee M. Bass
Lee M. Bass, Chairman

BIRD'S EYE VIEW



Every year, as more and more people choose to live in Texas, putting more and more demand on our resources, Texas Parks and Wildlife's mission of managing and conserving the state's natural and cultural resources becomes ever more challenging. In 1999, as the decade, the century, and the millennium were coming to a close, meeting those challenges took on even more urgency.

To ensure that Texans will always have places to "get away from it all," as Parks and Wildlife's Chief Operating Officer Bob Cook puts it — to hunt, fish, hike, bird-watch or contemplate the state's rich cultural heritage — the department has engaged in rigorous, long-term research and planning, and department leaders have made the effort to continuously rethink and revamp the way Parks and Wildlife does business. "It's a longstanding principle at Parks and Wildlife to work continuously to improve our management philosophy and structure to meet current needs," says Gene McCarty, chief of staff.

In taking stock of last year's challenges and accomplishments, there is much to celebrate as well as much to consider for the future.

Independent reports completed in 1998 from the State Auditor, Texas A&M University, and the Texas Historical Commission all concluded that more funding is needed for the Texas State Parks System. To help address the critical issues identified in these reports, Parks and Wildlife asked the 76th Legislature for additional funding and received the largest appropriation increase in recent history.

In 1999, Texans found their state parks and fish hatcheries in better repair; more places to hunt, fish and bird-watch on public and private land; an increased commitment to wildlife diversity and rare species; and enhanced outreach to groups ranging from rural landowners to urban minorities.



With the Lone Star Legacy program, Lone Star Legends and Lone Star Land Stewards awards, Parks and Wildlife reached out to the public for volunteers, partners and contributors in carrying out the work of conserving the state's resources and building a base for the future. The opening last summer of the George Bush Gallery of the National Museum of the Pacific War at the Admiral Nimitz Museum and Historical Center was a milestone in the Lone Star Legacy program and a model for future projects.

Continuing a tradition of seeking new funding sources for conservation, as well as developing new ways to increase marketing efforts to the public, Parks and Wildlife introduced Big Time Texas Hunts. This program added three new major hunting packages to its lottery prizes for hunters, which already included the popular Texas Grand Slam and the Texas Exotic Safari.

Some changes were not so noticeable to the public, but made a major difference in the management and operations of Parks and Wildlife systems, people, and facilities. The department put the finishing touches on a state-of-the-art automated integrated financial system that allows interface with statewide accounting systems. "One of the primary benefits is that it is an integrated system instead of the multiple stand-alone systems we had previously," says Jayna Burgdorf, senior director for Administrative Resources. "This provides more current and complete financial information."

Other innovations included an online park reservation system. Customers now have the convenience of making park reservations 24 hours a day, seven days a week via the World Wide Web. During FY99, more than 12,000 reservations were made from the Internet. This number is expected to more than double during the next year. To continue to offer the most current conveniences, Parks and Wildlife increased the number of parks that accept credit cards. In FY99, 46 additional parks began to offer this service.

Direct-marketing efforts of Parks and Wildlife's services and sales of package licenses were enhanced by the Texas Outdoor Connection, the department's license point-of-sale system. Data collected from this automated system enables Parks and Wildlife to increase communication with current constituents.

Some of Parks and Wildlife's work last year involved old-fashioned courage and resourcefulness. During FY99, Texas game wardens responded to five separate severe weather natural disasters, from severe flooding in the Del Rio, Upper Coastal Bend, Central-South, and Rio Grande Valley areas to tornado activity in Northeast Texas. Using their knowledge of the land, the water, and the people of these areas, as well as their technical expertise, they performed evacuations and search and rescue operations under very difficult circumstances.

Some highlights of who we are and what we do:

The Texas Parks and Wildlife system includes our Austin headquarters and 61 field offices, 122 state parks, 50 wildlife management areas, and eight fish hatcheries. The parks cover 616,859 acres and include 40 historical sites.

We manage the resources of 800 public impoundments covering 1.7 million acres of water and 80,000 miles of rivers and streams. These resources are used by 2 million anglers 16 years of age or older. Last year, Parks and Wildlife's massive freshwater fish stocking program put more than 8 million bass fingerlings into public bodies of water around Texas.

We manage the marine resources of the state's 4 million acres of salt water, including the bays and estuaries and out to nine nautical miles in the Gulf of Mexico. Last year, coastal hatcheries produced 37 million red drum and 6 million spotted sea trout fingerlings.

During FY99, our game wardens spent 124,521 hours patrolling public freshwater lakes, streams and rivers and the salt waters of the Gulf and coastal inlets by boat. They traveled 10.8 million miles patrolling 261,914 square miles of land over 254 counties enforcing wildlife resource and water safety laws and regulations.

Annually, we conduct more than 1,700 wildlife population surveys, provide recommendations concerning the management of about 1,200 vertebrate wildlife species, conduct more than 60 wildlife research studies, manage 50 wildlife management areas totaling 750,000 acres, hold public hunts on more than 200 tracts of land totaling more than 1.4 million acres, provide incentives and technical guidance to landowners to manage for endangered species, inform the public about wildlife, and develop 2,100 wildlife management plans for about 10 million acres of private lands.

As time flies:

The Year in Review, September 1998-August 1999



September

Parks and Wildlife recognized for conservation work

Texas Parks and Wildlife was named recipient of the Ernest Thompson Seton Award from the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. The award is granted for outstanding public promotion of the need for scientific management of wildlife resources.

October

Wildlife Expo

The seventh annual Texas Wildlife Expo drew thousands of families from Central Texas and around the state. This two-day outdoor extravaganza held at department headquarters in Austin featured shooting sports, fishing, kayaking, rock climbing, birding, and living history exhibits.

Dealing with the floods

Texas Parks and Wildlife employees were called into service by devastating floods in South Central Texas. Crews worked long and hard not only to assess and repair damages from the flooding but to rescue people who were trapped by the high waters.

New facilities at Abilene

The newly renovated historic rock concession building and swimming pool at Abilene State Park were rededicated as one of more than 100 events in 1998 commemorating the 75th anniversary of Texas state parks. The event was attended by Texas First Lady Laura Bush, honorary co-chair of the anniversary celebrations.

November

A conservation charge

The Parks and Wildlife Foundation of Texas, Inc. and First USA, a leading national issuer of credit cards, teamed up to introduce the Texas Parks and Wildlife Platinum Visa card. Each time a cardholder makes a purchase with the card, First USA makes a contribution to the Lone Star Legacy Endowment Fund to support the parks and wildlife of Texas.

December

Big Bend opening

The Barton Warnock Environmental Education Center, which serves as the eastern gateway to Big Bend Ranch State Park, celebrated the completion of major renovations and the opening of a major new exhibit, titled "*Una Tierra - One Land*," which interprets the region's geological history and the biological landscapes of the Chihuahuan desert.

January

76th Legislature convenes

The Texas Legislature convened in Austin with a budget surplus for the first time in years. Supported by three independent studies that concluded that more funding was needed for Texas state parks, Parks and Wildlife requested a large appropriations increase.

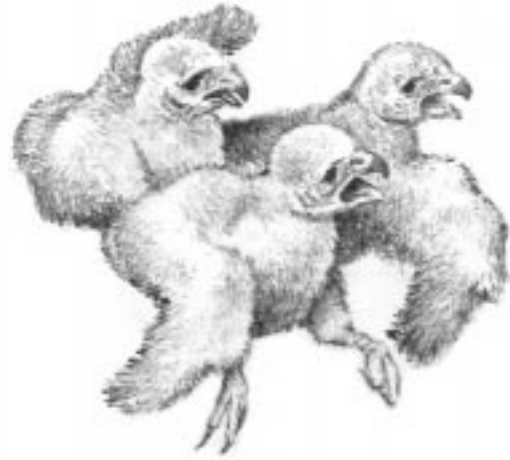
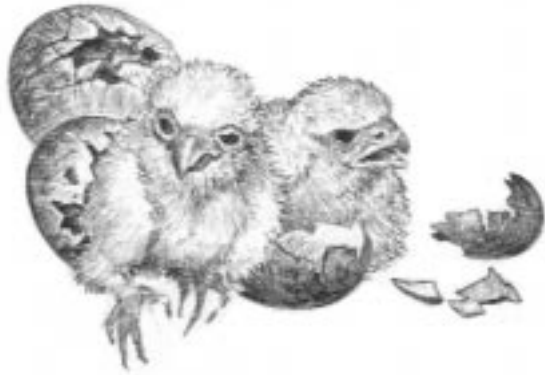
February

New light on old plantations

Three new wayside exhibits about plantation life and sugar production in Texas before the Civil War opened at the Varner-Hogg Plantation State Historical Park. The exhibits, which help to enlarge an understanding of African American history in Texas, highlight the contributions and the sacrifices of the slaves who lived and worked on the old Patton Plantation in Brazoria County.

Corralling history

Parks and Wildlife dedicated the new bison working pens for the state bison herd at Caprock Canyons State Park.



March

April

May

June

July

August

Birders galore

The 1999 Great Texas Birding Classic concluded after nine days of competition and events.

This huge joint venture, which coincides with the annual migration of millions of neotropical birds returning from their winter homes south of the border, was co-sponsored by 15 communities and dozens of other sponsors, including businesses, foundations, and individuals.

Volunteers honored

Texas Parks and Wildlife kicked off its volunteer recognition program.

Outstanding volunteers in eight different categories were honored as Lone Star Legends.

Lone Star Land Stewards

The 12 winners of the annual Lone Star Land Steward Awards were honored at a special reception in Austin. The awards are given to recognize the contributions of private landowners who have demonstrated exemplary habitat conservation programs on their lands.

Legislature supports new funding

The 76th Legislature approved new general revenue funding for state parks, which would allow the purchase of badly needed equipment and the hiring of new employees. Legislators appropriated \$2 million annually to increase the amount available for local park grants, \$1 million for additional Community Outdoor Outreach Program grants, and \$2 million for local entities to provide recreation opportunities. Legislators also approved spending \$5 million over the biennium on conservation education projects and provided debt service money for Parks and Wildlife to issue some \$16.3 million in state park development bonds to support several of the projects. Employees also received raises as part of the appropriations bill.

Fisheries boost

The grand opening of Phase II of the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center was marked by a major donation from the Parks and Wildlife Foundation of Texas, Inc. and leading businessman and conservationist Edwin L. Cox, Jr., former chair of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission.

New hook for hunters and fishers

Parks and Wildlife introduced the new *Hook and Bullet* newsletter, a publication sent to every Super Combo hunting license holder, urging them to renew and providing vital information for hunters and anglers.

Licenses

New hunting and fishing licenses for 1999-2000 went on sale. Parks and Wildlife announced the expansion of public dove-hunting leases.

New faces

Parks and Wildlife prepared to welcome the 44 new employees whose positions were established as a result of increased funding from the 76th Legislature.

Goliad celebration

As part of a yearlong celebration of the 250th anniversary of Presidio La Bahia in Goliad, the Fannin Battlegrounds State Historical Park was the setting of a dramatic reenactment of events that took place during the struggle for Texas independence from Mexico. Other events held at Goliad State Historical Park during the year helped to highlight the region's rich historical and cultural legacies, including its importance in the origins and history of Texas ranching.

Fixin' it up right. Now.

Work on a major wastewater treatment system at Garner State Park was completed. This was one of the major improvements to parks around the state made possible by the \$60 million in bonds approved by the 75th Legislature.



Leadership

The Commission and Executive Director

A nine-member commission governs Parks and Wildlife and bears the responsibility of adopting policies and rules to carry out all department programs. Members of the commission are appointed by the governor. The executive director oversees the work of implementing and administering all departmental programs as directed by the commission.



Lee Marshall Bass, Chairman
Fort Worth, Texas

Lee Bass was appointed to the commission in 1989 and reappointed for another six-year term in 1995, when he was named chairman of the commission. Mr. Bass, a graduate of Yale University and the Wharton School of Finance, is president of Lee Bass, Inc. He serves on a number of boards, including the Sid W. Richardson Foundation, the Bass Foundation, the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, the Peregrine Fund, and the International Advisory Board of Game Conservation International.



Carol E. Dinkins, Vice-Chair
Houston, Texas

Carol Dinkins was appointed to the commission in 1997 and selected as vice-chair in 1999. A former deputy attorney general of the United States, she is a partner in the law firm of Vinson and Elkins, where she is a member of the firm's management committee and heads the environmental practice. She chairs the board of trustees for the Nature Conservancy of Texas, and she is a member of the board of the Houston Museum of Natural Science. She has also served on the boards of Oryx Energy, the Environmental Law Institute, the Natural Ocean Industries Association, and the University of Houston Law Foundation.



Ernest Angelo, Jr., Commissioner
Midland, Texas

Ernest Angelo, who was appointed to the commission in 1997, is an independent petroleum engineer, president of Ernestar Resources, L.C., and managing partner of Discovery Exploration in Midland. A former four-term mayor of Midland, he has served on a number of boards, including the Midland Chamber of Commerce, the United Way, and the coordinating board for the Texas College and University System.



John Avila, Jr., Commissioner
Fort Worth, Texas

Appointed to the commission in 1997, John Avila is president and CEO of Thos. S. Byrne, Inc. General Contractors. A retired brigadier general in the Texas Army National Guard, he has degrees from the University of Texas, the University of Houston, and the U.S. Army War College. He has served as director of the Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the Harris Methodist Health Foundation and Mental Health Association, and he has served on the boards of United Way and National Guard Association of Texas.



Richard (Dick) Heath, Commissioner
Carrollton, Texas

Richard Heath was appointed to the commission in 1995 and served as vice-chairman from 1997-1999. He is president and CEO of BeautiControl Cosmetics, Inc. and member of the board of directors of Haggar Clothing Company. He serves on a number of boards and advisory councils, including the Cox School of Business at SMU, the Dean's Council of Harvard University Divinity School, the Salvation Army (Dallas) and the Methodist Hospital Foundation.



**Alvin L. Henry, Commissioner
Houston, Texas**

Alvin Henry was appointed to the commission in 1999. He has degrees from Howard University and the Thurgood Marshall School of Law at Texas Southern University. A human services consultant and advisory director of Comerica Bank Texas, he is owner of the East Fork Ranch in Tyler. For 10 years, he served as president and CEO of Neighborhood Centers, Inc. He is vice-chairman of the Texas Southern University Foundation and member of the Houston Area Urban League.



**Katharine Armstrong Idsal, Commissioner
Dallas, Texas**

Appointed to the commission in 1999, Katharine Armstrong Idsal is a community volunteer, artist, and member and past vice-president of the Dallas Zoological Society. A fifth-generation Texan and part owner of the Armstrong Ranch in Kenedy County, she has served on advisory boards of the Hidalgo County Historical Society and the Special Camps for Special Kids. She is also a member of the art search committee of the State Preservation Board.



**Nolan Ryan, Commissioner
Alvin, Texas**

Nolan Ryan was appointed to the commission in 1995 and served as vice-chairman from 1995 to 1997. A baseball legend whose career on the mound spanned more than 25 years, he has been inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame. Currently, he is assistant to the Texas Rangers Baseball Organization, chairman of the board of the Express Bank of Alvin, and board member of the Natural Resources Foundation of Texas. He sponsors the Nolan Ryan Scholarship Fund at Alvin Community College.



**Mark E. Watson, Commissioner
San Antonio, Texas**

Appointed to the commission in 1999, Mark Watson owns and operates the Diamond K Ranch in Kendall County. Former president, chairman, and CEO of Titan Holdings, Inc., a casualty insurance company, he is a member of the Texas and Exotic Wildlife Associations, president emeritus of Any Baby Can of Texas, and member of the Cancer Therapy and Research Board. He has been honored as Conservationist of the Year in Kendall County.



**Andrew Sansom, Executive Director
Austin, Texas**

Andrew Sansom has served as executive director of Texas Parks and Wildlife since 1990. He has served as executive director of the Texas Nature Conservancy and special assistant to Interior Secretary Rogers C. B. Morton. During his tenure at Parks and Wildlife, the amount of acreage held by the state for conservation has more than doubled and the department has established itself as the most businesslike of such operations in the country. A cum laude graduate of Texas Tech University, he is the author of two books and has written numerous articles for journals and magazines.

The Department

Executive staff and division directors within the department implement and administer all departmental programs as directed by the commission. The staff and directors bring to bear their extensive experience in research, innovative management and field work. Many of the directors have worked their way up from positions in the field: They have gotten to know the state's natural resources from the ground (and the water) up. Their knowledge of the land, the water, the people, and the wildlife of Texas is itself a valuable state resource.



The division directors are: (*standing left to right*) Annette Dominguez, director of Human Resources; Phil Durocher, director of Inland Fisheries; Larry McKinney, senior director of Aquatic Resources; Walt Dabney, director of State Parks; Robert L. Cook, chief operating officer; Gene McCarty, chief of staff; Dan Patton, director of Infrastructure; (*seated left to right*) Hal R. Osburn, director of Coastal Fisheries; Lydia Saldaña, director of Communications; Andrew Sansom, executive director of Texas Parks and Wildlife; Jayna Burgdorf, senior director of Administrative Resources; Gary Graham, director of Wildlife. Not pictured: Jim Robertson, director of Law Enforcement.

Volunteers in the spotlight

Much of the work of Parks and Wildlife is enhanced by the contributions of time and work by thousands of volunteers around the state. Volunteer activities range from working with Parks and Wildlife programs and activities to dedicating time to specific parks or other Parks and Wildlife sites. Volunteers have participated in such vital activities as stocking fish, giving bat tours at wildlife management areas, restoring the Battleship TEXAS, and hosting youth events.

In recognition of these extraordinary contributions to the State of Texas, Parks and Wildlife launched the Lone Star Legends program, which honors volunteers in eight different categories. Each of last year's winners offers an inspirational story in generosity and service to the community that are above and beyond the call of duty.

"The purpose of the Lone Star Legends program is to honor the people who give countless hours of their time to what they believe in," says Executive Director Andrew Sansom. "At the same time, we hope that the program will encourage and promote volunteerism in conservation."

Parks and Wildlife estimates that the work performed by volunteers was the equivalent of that by more than 300 full-time employees, which meant that their contributions were worth more than \$5 million. Here was what volunteers did for Texas last year:

Certified more than 47,000 students in hunter, boater, and angler education courses.

Spent more than 10,000 hours conducting wildlife surveys, cave surveys, and research at wildlife management areas.

Devoted 300,000 hours at state parks to visitor services, trail work, interpretive tours, and general upkeep.

Spent another 25,000 hours at state parks contributing as living history reenactors at historical sites.



Lone Star Legends Team Award: Sea Center Texas Volunteers Lake Jackson, Texas



The Sea Center Texas volunteers include 23 people with 500 or more hours of volunteer service at the center. Six of those 23 have logged more than 1,000 hours of service. These generous folks have assisted in every aspect of the operation of Sea Center Texas, including teaching children to fish at weekly youth fishing events, working with students on curriculum projects, and serving as tour guides and greeters.

TAKING FLIGHT



Lone Star Legacy

With Lone Star Legacy, Parks and Wildlife has challenged Texans to help in preserving and protecting their precious natural and cultural heritage. Through the Lone Star Legacy program, endowment funds have been established for the operation and maintenance of each state park, wildlife management area, and hatchery. The program, which was launched by Gov. George W. Bush in 1998, really began to build up steam last year. It is the department's most ambitious, visionary fund-raising program to reach out to the public for support in addressing critical maintenance and conservation needs. Through a partnership between Parks and Wildlife and the Parks and Wildlife Foundation of Texas, a private nonprofit organization, Texans now have the opportunity to invest in the

future of the resources of the state to ensure that these facilities continue to provide for generations to come.

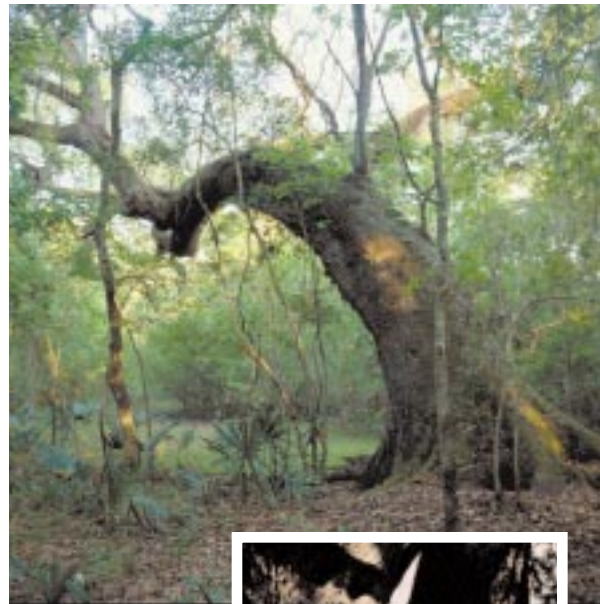


Last year, the opening of the George Bush Gallery of the National Museum of the Pacific War at the Admiral Nimitz Museum was an important milestone in the Lone Star Legacy program. By establishing a permanent endowment to fund the Nimitz Museum, the George Bush Gallery, and the Museum of the Pacific Theater, the Lone Star Legacy will help ensure that the lessons of World War II are not lost to time.



The department has selected five additional landmark projects for special focus that reflect our state's heritage — its natural resources, its history, and its cultural achievements.

Austin's Woods, the rich, historic forested bottomlands site on the Brazos River where Stephen F. Austin established his original colony, has already become an important model for future land conservation efforts and for the preservation of the state's cultural resources as well. In exchange for mitigation of future land and development needs in its wetlands environment, The Dow Chemical Company financed the acquisition and enhancement of an addition to the Peach Point Wildlife Management Area in Brazoria County. In a similar effort, the Texas Department of Transportation purchased 3,500 acres of woodland habitat to create a new wildlife management area. The area is a critical stopover point for migrating songbirds, and preserving this habitat is a crucial step in ensuring the long-term survival of many of America's most beloved songbirds.



Also on track are the World Birding Center in the Rio Grande Valley, which will consist of birding sites scattered throughout the Valley; the Texas State Bison Herd, now at Caprock Canyon State Park, which will help develop a native prairie ecosystem project in the Panhandle; the Government Canyon State Natural Area, an expanse of pristine Hill Country just a short drive away from the city of San Antonio; and the Texas Rivers Center, an educational/research facility to be located adjacent to San Marcos Springs on the Southwest Texas State University campus. This project, along with the already ongoing wetlands restoration project, will be a collaboration of Parks and Wildlife and the university at this unique and irreplaceable site.

"Our state parks are the jewels in the Texas crown. We must be sure that these outdoor treasures are available and accessible to all Texans for generations to come."

— Gov. George W. Bush



**Lone Star Legends
Chairman's Award for
Public Service:
Royce Faulkner and
Michael "Shorty" Powers**



Royce Faulkner

Royce Faulkner and Shorty Powers developed a program for youth hunts for wheelchair users and have successfully operated the hunts since 1996. Faulkner owns a ranch in Kerr County, where he has made all of his hunting blinds wheelchair accessible. Shorty Powers is the founder of Paraplegics on Independent Nature Trips. The two men have provided the opportunity for many young people to experience their first hunt, and the program has encouraged a sense of adventure and confidence in these youth.



Michael "Shorty" Powers

In the hunt

As part of its campaign to deliver more hunting opportunities on public and private lands, Parks and Wildlife continued to offer seasonal access by hunters to more than 40 state parks and natural areas. The number of public dove leases was increased, and the Youth Hunting Days program was expanded.

Following the success of its popular Texas Grand Slam and Texas Exotic Safari, three new Big Time Texas Hunts were added, with winners of the special packages to be selected by drawing:

- The Texas Whitetail Bonanza featuring 10 whitetail hunts on ranches from South Texas to North Texas.
- The Texas Waterfowl Adventure, featuring goose hunts on the coastal prairie, a guided duck hunt in coastal marshes, a guided goose hunt in the Panhandle, and an East Texas duck hunt for woodies and mallards.
- Texas Big Time Bird Hunt focusing on the premier upland game birds — quail, pheasant, turkey, and dove.



On the watch

Parks and Wildlife continued to enhance its law enforcement operation with special emphasis on improving the quality and diversity of applicants chosen for the game warden cadet class. Legislative increases in law enforcement salaries have enhanced Parks and Wildlife's ability to recruit and retain top-quality, professional game wardens.



The Law Enforcement Division's role in conservation is to ensure public compliance with Parks and Wildlife Code statutes and Commission regulations. In order to enforce the state's hunting, fishing, and boating laws, the division uses a program of education, prevention, and apprehension. "We conduct educational programs for civic groups, outdoor sports clubs, church groups, scouting organizations, and schools, and conduct high-visibility patrols," says Jim Robertson, director of the division. "We'd like to have voluntary compliance; but when education and prevention fail to achieve compliance, then violators are apprehended and processed through the judicial system." Game wardens filed more than 20,000 criminal cases for wildlife resource violations and more than 10,000 criminal cases for violations of the Texas Water Safety Act, which resulted in more than \$1.5 million in fines being assessed. Last year, the 76th Legislature passed laws that increased the penalties for a number of hunting violations, including taking wildlife resources without landowner consent, hunting at night, hunting from a motor vehicle, and hunting with a light. These increased penalties should serve as viable deterrents and enhance compliance.

Entrepreneurship at work

Parks and Wildlife continued to improve delivery of its services to customers by creating an online reservations systems for state parks, allowing customers to reserve campsites via the Web, and by offering additional acceptance of credit cards at state parks.

Two new marketing and fund-raising initiatives for Parks and Wildlife were begun in FY99. The Parks and Wildlife Foundation of Texas announced the launch of the Parks and Wildlife Visa card, with a percentage of each charge to go to the Lone Star Legacy Endowment Fund. The legislature approved a new conservation license plate. The first plate features Texas' favorite reptile, the horned lizard, better known as the "horny toad."





Making critical repairs

Under the leadership of director Dan Patton, the Infrastructure Division is responsible for the planning, design, and construction of new Parks and Wildlife facilities and for the repair, renovation, and upkeep of existing facilities. Many of those existing facilities were built during the 1930s as part of the New Deal, and in recent years, the task of keeping up those aging park facilities has become increasingly demanding.

In late 1998, independent reports from the State Auditor, Texas A&M University, and the Texas Historical Commission all concluded that more funding is needed for the Texas State Parks System. To help address the critical issues identified in these reports, Parks and Wildlife asked the 76th Legislature for additional funding. Said Richard Heath, Parks and Wildlife Commission finance committee chairman, “We have done just about everything we can to increase Parks and Wildlife’s self-sufficiency — budget cuts, fee increases, entrepreneurial projects, and private endowment initiatives — and it’s still not enough to keep pace with a growing, aging system and today’s costs.” The legislature responded with an additional \$7.5 million in new general revenue for Parks and Wildlife, the biggest appropriation in the department’s recent history.

With funds from the \$60 million bond issue previously approved by the legislature, the department began to address the huge backlog of critical repairs. “The focus of this bond program is the repair or replacement of the water and wastewater treatment systems, most of which the public doesn’t see,” says Dan Patton. For example, last year the division completed a major wastewater treatment project at flood-prone Garner State Park that will accommodate the growing crowds who will flock to the park in the coming decades.

Some of the improvement projects that the public could appreciate immediately were the renovation of the 1930s-era cabins at Caddo Lake State Park, the opening of the new visitors’ center at Monahans Sandhills State Park, and major renovations at Abilene State Park.





Streamlining the systems

Other behind-the-scenes improvements made by Parks and Wildlife have to do with management and computer systems that have made the department more efficient. The Infrastructure Division has been organized into an innovative management structure, whose effectiveness is bolstered by an automated project management system that allows managers to track budgets and schedules. Another system nearing completion, called a Facility Management Information System, will inventory and track every Parks and Wildlife facility through its entire life cycle.



Parks and Wildlife also finished the installation of an automated integrated financial system that replaces the previous fragmented systems that were not always able to “talk” to each other.

Where Parks and Wildlife’s Money Goes - FY99

(Based upon annual budget by division - \$ millions)

State Parks	42.6
Law Enforcement	38.0
Wildlife, Conservation, Cultural and Natural	22.3
Administrative Resources	12.7
Inland Fisheries	10.4
Coastal Fisheries	8.6
Communications	3.4
Resource Protection, GIS, Outreach	8.1
Executive Office, Retail Operations	1.6
Human Resources	1.4
Infrastructure	4.3
Texas Outdoor Connection License System	4.0
Annual Capital Program	
Critical Repairs	23.3
Other Capital Projects	6.5
Grant Program	
Local Park Grants	15.2
Boat Ramps, Other	5.1
Total	207.5

Where the Money Comes From - FY99

(Based upon initial annual projected receipts - \$ millions)

Anglers and commercial fishing operations	47.3
Hunters	40.2
Boaters	32.3
Park users	34.0
Sporting goods purchasers (non-consumptive)	19.8
Revenue bond proceeds	18.0
Other sources, such as federal grants, general revenue, self-funded initiatives	18.6
Total	210.2

Accountability Measures (By Topic)	Responsible Division¹	FY97	FY98	FY99
Fish Production				
Number of fingerlings stocked in fresh water	IF	17,248,300	17,325,179	17,534,476
Number of fingerlings stocked in salt water	CF	26,862,598	37,300,000	36,586,844
Donations				
Estimated value of labor, cash, and service contributions	All Divisions	\$9,359,025	\$9,988,868	\$10,016,944
Park Visitation				
Estimated number of state park visits (in millions)	SP	21.8	21.0	21.8
Conservation				
Percent of Texas' bays and estuaries with inflow needs determined	RP	42.9%	43%	84%
Percent of private land acreage in Texas managed to enhance wildlife	WL	5.9%	6.5%	6.9%
Percent of fish and wildlife kills or pollution cases resolved successfully	RP	90%	88%	87%
Public compliance rate	LE	98.6%	99%	99%
Efficiency				
Ratio of employees to facilities managed	All Divisions	12:1 ²	12.7:1	12.8:1
Ratio of fingerlings produced to hatchery employees	CF, IF	636,629:1	646,138:1	535,644:1
Infrastructure				
Percent of maintenance needs met	SP	61%	63.4%	79.3%
Percent of major repair needs met	INF	28.3%	2.27%	2.39%
Direct Service				
Percentage of department's direct service expenditures to total expenditures	AR	92.8%	90.5%	92.5%
Public Access				
Number of WMAs available for wildlife viewing and other non-hunting forms of outdoor recreation	WL	50	50	50
Acres of public hunting land provided (including state parks)	WL, SP	1,432,127	1,420,599	1,393,780

¹ Abbreviations as follows: Administrative Resources (AR), Coastal Fisheries (CF), Communications (C), Education (ED), Infrastructure (INF), Inland Fisheries (IF), Law Enforcement (LE), Resource Protection (RP), State Parks (SP), Wildlife (WL), Wildlife Management Area (WMA)

² Legislative change. Calculation based on FTEs

Accountability Measures (By Topic)	Responsible Division¹	FY97	FY98	FY99
Public Access (continued)				
Annual percent change in public hunting days provided	WL	+2.5%	+5.8%	-1.6%
Number of state parks open to public hunting	WL, SP	35	39	38
Number of facilities managed that provide recreation opportunities or service to the public	All Divisions	232	232	231
Self Sufficiency				
Percent of Parks and Wildlife public use facilities that are revenue-generating and self-sufficient ³	SP, WL, IF, AR	12%	10.6%	9.9%
Department Operating Self-Sufficiency:				
• Level 1 – All operating budget related costs of direct service divisions	AR	86.73%	83.99%	81.78%
• Level 2 – All operating budget related costs of direct service divisions and indirect service divisions (HR, EO, and most of AR)	AR	78.65%	75.25%	74.71%
• Level 3 – All operating budget related costs of direct and indirect service divisions and all associated employee benefits	AR	68.99%	65.36%	64.44%
Outreach				
Estimated number of outreach programs and events held	All Divisions	29,708	26,099	30,013
Estimated number of Texans reached by programs and events	All Divisions	1,624,268	1,639,668	1,790,649
State Parks and Public Lands				
State park reservations ⁴	SP	256,370	252,217	261,798
Texas Conservation Passports sold	AR, LE	48,703	46,445	47,831
Volunteer hours in state parks (including inmate labor)	SP	667,078	696,047	742,360
New state parks opened	SP	0	0	0
State park acreage	SP	671,772	661,466	616,859
Wildlife management acreage (owned)	WL	282,220	285,304	294,344
Wildlife management acreage (leased)	WL	472,325	472,325	472,107
Number of acres in the department's Public Lands System per 1,000 Texans	AR, WL, SP, IF, CF	50.3	49.3	47.9

¹ Abbreviations as follows: Administrative Resources (AR), Coastal Fisheries (CF), Communications (C), Education (ED), Infrastructure (INF), Inland Fisheries (IF), Law Enforcement (LE), Resource Protection (RP), State Parks (SP), Wildlife (WL), Wildlife Management Area (WMA)

³ Based on a calculation that compares fees collected at sites/operating costs under the direct control at that site. Does not include other support costs

⁴ Numbers reflect change in methodology from previous years



Accountability Measures (By Topic)	Responsible Division¹	FY97	FY98	FY99
State Parks and Public Lands (continued)				
Hours of criminal justice labor (state parks)	SP, INF	196,185	249,808	255,576
Hours of criminal justice labor (WMAs)	WL, INF	94,410	64,083	63,487
Community Outreach				
Fish and wildlife events held for targeted user groups	IF, CF, WL, LE, ED	3,637	4,263	3,607
Local park grants awarded	SP	\$14,936,316	\$15,900,000	\$16,600,000
Boat ramp grants awarded	SP	\$765,631	\$1,500,000	\$1,030,000
Students in hunter education	ED	27,132	31,916	33,924
Students in boater education	ED	4,616	15,079	7,919
Magazine subscribers	C	135,000	143,000	145,000
Number of TV show viewers	C	275,000	284,000	284,000
Facilities Managed				
Field offices managed	All Divisions	61	61	61
Hatcheries managed	CF, IF	9	8	8
WMAs managed	WL	50	50	50
State parks managed ⁵	SP	122	123	122
Hunting, Fishing and Boating				
Resident hunting-type licenses	AR, LE	923,964	952,770	954,923
Non-resident hunting-type licenses	AR, LE	47,000	53,487	54,417
Hunting stamps ⁶	AR, LE	221,604	199,480	184,221
Resident fishing-type licenses	AR, LE	1,482,092	1,526,533	1,559,972
Non-resident fishing-type licenses	AR, LE	104,656	103,384	107,379
Fishing stamps ⁷	AR, LE	518,112	510,027	517,214
Combination hunting/fishing-type licenses ⁷	AR, LE	471,537	485,801	493,378
Annual boat registrations ⁸	AR, LE	308,836	304,688	305,432
Public hunts on department lands, leases	WL	4,972	5,675	5,971

¹ Abbreviations as follows: Administrative Resources (AR), Coastal Fisheries (CF), Communications (C), Education (ED), Infrastructure (INF), Inland Fisheries (IF), Law Enforcement (LE), Resource Protection (RP), State Parks (SP), Wildlife (WL), Wildlife Management Area (WMA)

⁵ In 1998, the method of measurement changed from individual state park units managed to state parks managed

⁶ The "Super Combo" license package sold in FY97 includes all state stamps resulting in a decrease in the total number of stamp sales

⁷ The FY97 and FY98 totals include "Super Combo" and "The Texan" combination license packages

⁸ Boat registration fees cover two years, therefore this number represents roughly half of all registered boats

Accountability Measures (By Topic)	Responsible Division¹	FY97	FY98	FY99
Fish and Wildlife				
Deer harvested	WL	333,819	371,332	392,573
Turkeys harvested	WL	67,511	70,369	57,856
Mourning doves harvested	WL	3,657,749	4,314,415	4,555,264
Ducks harvested	WL	1,181,345	1,207,998	1,440,588
Geese harvested	WL	303,558	266,364	276,444
Law Enforcement				
Vehicle miles patrolled by game wardens	LE	10,900,000	10,820,000	10,800,000
Boat hours patrolled by game wardens	LE	138,943	129,989	124,521
Arrests (game and fish)	LE	22,447	21,229	20,693
Arrests (water safety)	LE	12,775	11,399	10,629
Field contacts by game wardens	LE	1,514,043	1,580,892	1,547,444
Resource Protection				
Environmental permit/document reviews	RP, WL	4,869	1,791	1,418
Fish kills and pollution complaints investigated	RP	325	290	323

¹ Abbreviations as follows: Administrative Resources (AR), Coastal Fisheries (CF), Communications (C), Education (ED), Infrastructure (INF), Inland Fisheries (IF), Law Enforcement (LE), Resource Protection (RP), State Parks (SP), Wildlife (WL), Wildlife Management Area (WMA)



FLYING TOGETHER



The 1999 Lone Star Land Steward Awards

With more than 97% of the state's land under private ownership, the lion's share of the credit for caretaking the vast and varied landscape that makes up the State of Texas belongs to private landowners and managers. In recognition of their contributions, Parks and Wildlife selected a dozen exemplary landowners around the state as recipients of the 1999 Lone Star Land Steward Awards. Says Andrew Sansom, "By recognizing private landowners who have demonstrated exemplary habitat conservation programs on their lands, we hope to strengthen that sense of place that all Texans can share and take pride in being a part of the landscape that makes our state unique."

The winner of the top award, as the Most Outstanding Land Steward for 1999, went to Barbara Kana and her family, who own and operate the 9,200-acre West Kerr Ranch, located in the center of the Edwards Plateau. "Barbara has carried out a well-rounded management program," says Fielding Harwell, a Parks and Wildlife technical guidance biologist who has worked closely with her during the long process of transforming West Kerr Ranch to vibrant grassland. When she first took over management of the ranch in 1990, it was an overgrazed, rocky wasteland. And now, after applying such practices as prescribed burning and rotational grazing, the land yields a foot or two of high grass in the spring, and the cedar has yielded to more welcome trees, such as redbud and live oak. As Kana has said, "My ultimate goal is to leave this land better than I found it."





Lone Star Legends Partnership Award:



The Dow Chemical Company has been a strong partner of Parks and Wildlife for 15 years, contributing generously to a number of the department's sites and activities. The company has been particularly instrumental in the development and maintenance of Sea Center Texas in Lake Jackson. Dow initially provided 12 acres of aquaculture rearing ponds that were used in a pilot program for stocking coastal waters. The program proved a success, and Dow provided 75 acres to enable the construction of the permanent facilities at Sea Center.

Lone Star Legends Leadership Award: Priscilla Schaefer Davis Mountains State Park, Jeff Davis and Loving Counties



Priscilla Schaefer began volunteering at the bird banding station at Indian Lodge in the Davis Mountains State Park complex and helped to get a Friends Group started to support the lodge. She managed to expand the effort into a Friends Group for the entire complex, including Balmorhea State Park.

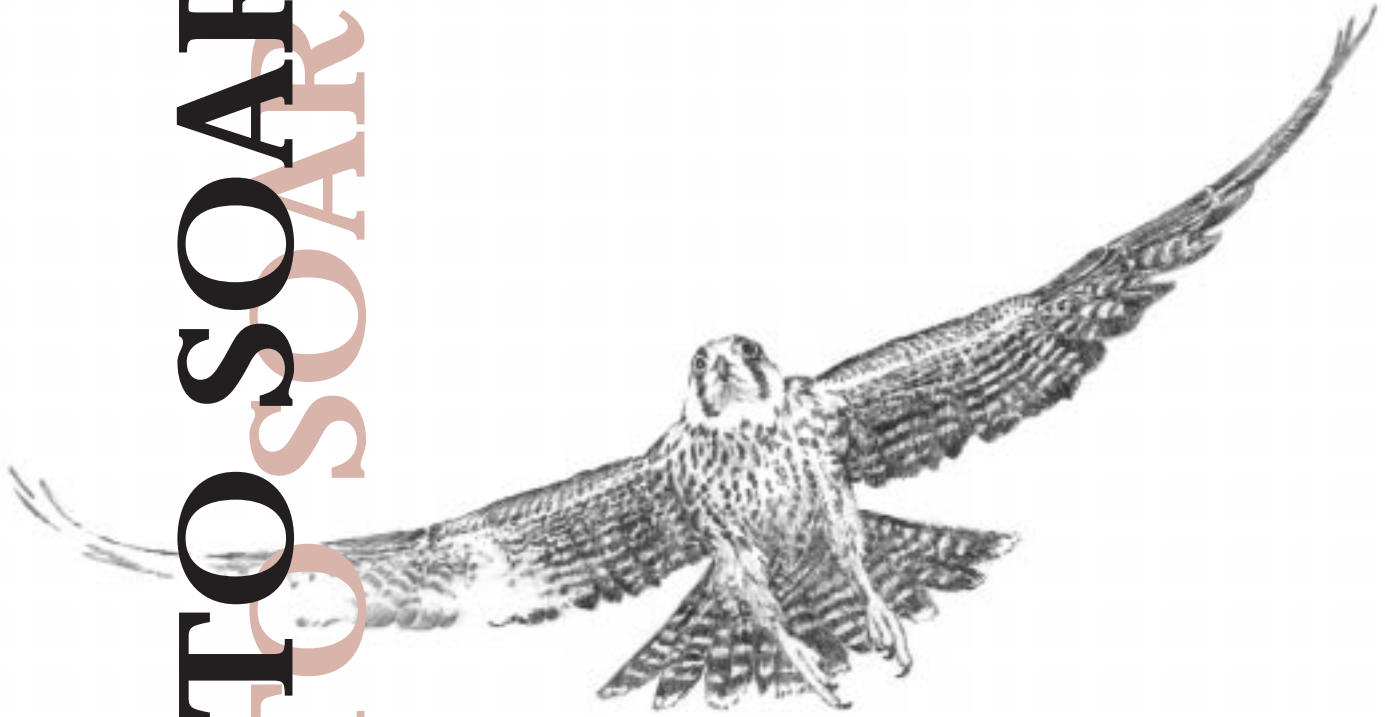


Wildlife conservation programs

It is the goal of Parks and Wildlife to help other landowners follow the lead of Barbara Kana and the other exemplary stewards of the land. And with a boost from the legislature, the Wildlife Division has been able to give a lift to its conservation programs. One of the main benefits of FY99 budget increase was a boost in allocation of money for incentive programs and increased technical guidance for landowners. "In the past, we've had a fledgling incentive program," says Gary Graham, "but this is really going to make it fly." More than 10 million acres of private land are now under wildlife management plans by Parks and Wildlife.



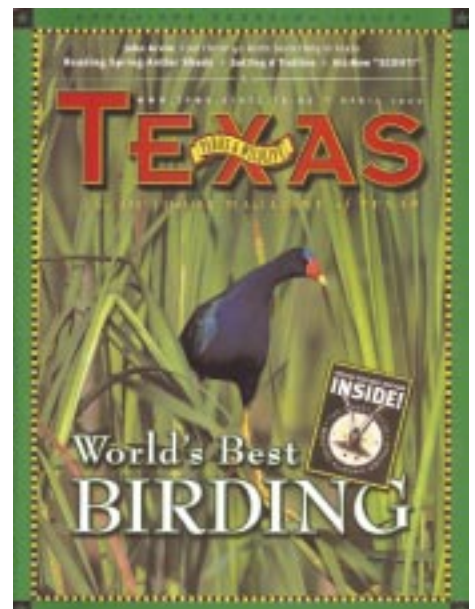
READY TO SOAR



Reaching out in print, on the airwaves, and on the Web

Parks and Wildlife's Communications Division uses a multipronged approach to reach out to the public. "We're trying to reach as many Texans as we can with our conservation message," says Communications Director Lydia Saldaña.

One of the division's most ambitious projects last year was the retooling of *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine. "We took these changes very seriously," says Saldaña. "The magazine has a 57-year history and an intensely loyal readership." The magazine competes in the marketplace with commercial publications, and all indications are that the changes have had positive results. "Circulation continues to increase, and newsstand sales are up as well," says Saldaña.



Disseminating conservation information through the media is another focus of communications staff. "Our weekly news material is used by outdoor writers across the state and is provided to hundreds of newspapers," says Saldaña. "We also place a strong emphasis on broadcast media," she says. "Parks and Wildlife's video news reports are broadcast during newscasts across the state and reach 800,000 people a week."

Parks and Wildlife's television show that appears weekly on the state's public television stations is a companion program to the magazine and reaches an estimated audience of 250,000 weekly. And just as effective is the Passport to Texas Radio Show produced by professional radio talent outside the department, underwritten in part by sponsors, including The Dow Chemical Company. "The way Passport to Texas has evolved is a sterling example of public-private partnerships," says Saldaña.

The division has continued to add new media and methods to Parks and Wildlife's outreach program, including a constantly updated Web site. "With technology changing so fast," says Saldaña, "we have to keep up and adapt to those changes."

Reaching out with a reel, a bang and a binoc

Parks and Wildlife proved again in 1999 that it knows how to throw an outdoor bash, reel in anglers, and draw the world's most competitive birders. The department sponsored dozens of public events across the state, including the Wildlife Expo in Austin, the Texas Fly Fishing Show in San Marcos, and the Birding Classic along The Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail.





Don't be a pain in the boat

Parks and Wildlife continued its successful boating safety campaign, designed to educate boaters about boating safety through a combined effort of enforcement and increasing public awareness. This effort resulted in a decrease in boating accidents and water safety violations from the previous year.

Bringing it all back home

Parks and Wildlife doubled the amount of grant money in its Community Outdoor Outreach Program (CO-OP) to \$500,000. The CO-OP grants, ranging from \$5,000 to \$20,000, are awarded to nonprofit organizations whose programs introduce young people and adults to outdoor services, programs, and facilities. "The success of this program has resulted in quality outdoor experiences for many children," says Andrew Sansom. "The additional grant funds will pay enormous dividends in the long run because the programs that benefit from the grants inspire new generations of Texans to appreciate the natural resources of Texas."



Parks and Wildlife also announced that communities across Texas will receive more than \$15.5 million in a matching grants program through the Texas Recreation and Parks Account, to help underwrite the cost of providing basic public recreation facilities. The town of Rockport, for example, received a grant for a community park, while Bay City received funds for a birding nature center.



Sharing Texas bounty

House Bill 2108 passed by the Texas Legislature allowed Parks and Wildlife to facilitate the transfer of some department facilities to other political subdivisions. Serving as a model for that process was the transfer of responsibility in 1998 for the upkeep of the Governor Hogg Shrine State Historical Park from Parks and Wildlife to the shrine's home town of Quitman.



SETTLING DOWN



Places in history

Heritage Trail

In the summer of 1999, Parks and Wildlife kicked off a series of events celebrating the state's history and diverse cultural heritage. The Heritage Trail, the principal educational component of the program, followed frontier history military and civilian routes around the state.

The project was designed to promote the history of the Buffalo Soldiers, Vaqueros, African-American Cowboys, Native American Indians, Frontier Women, and other groups in Texas during the 1800s, with a focus on our shared cultural heritage.

On July 28, a Buffalo Soldiers Capitol Salute was held in Austin to honor the African-American soldiers who were given their name by Native Americans.





Remembering Goliad

A series of events, including a Cinco de Mayo festival and a reenactment of the Battle of Coleto, were held last year in Goliad to commemorate the 250th anniversary of Presidio La Bahía, the old Spanish fort, and to highlight the area's rich history and culture. Parks and Wildlife joined with the city of Goliad, the Goliad Heritage Council, the Texas Historical Commission, and other community groups to spread the word about Goliad as the birth-

place of Texas ranching and a center of Tejano culture as well as the site of important events in Texas history.



Multicultural program at Varner-Hogg Plantation

Three new wayside exhibits opened at the Varner-Hogg Plantation State Historical Park to commemorate Black History Month. The exhibits showcase the contributions made by African Americans to the sugar plantations of Texas, and in particular to the old Patton Plantation, which was one of the most prosperous operations in the state before the Civil War.

Lone Star Legends

Youth Award:

Joe Andy Mendoza

Fort Leaton State

Historical Park, Presidio



Joe Andy Mendoza has worked with the Living History program at Fort Leaton for three years. He spends 16 to 20 hours each weekend working at the Fort or attending reenactment activities. He helped establish the student/docent program and has worked hard to maintain high standards for tour guides.

Lone Star Legends

Education Award:

Clay Patterson

Fort Griffin State

Historical Park, Albany



Clay Patterson has been a driving force for more than eight years in developing a volunteer group for Fort Griffin. Under his leadership, the Friends of Fort Griffin have given more than 90,000 volunteer hours to the fort in the areas of living history, interpretive, and educational programs. In addition to his work at the fort, he travels an average of 12,000 hours annually to participate in educational and interpretive programs around the state.



Places in the wild

New exhibit at Big Bend

A major new exhibit about the desert opened at the Barton Warnock Environmental Education Center, the eastern gateway to Big Bend Ranch State Park. Titled "*Una Tierra - One Land*," the exhibit is the result of an international partnership between state and national park experts in Texas and the Mexican states of Coahuila and Chihuahua. It interprets 570 million years of geological history and the five biological landscapes of the Chihuahuan Desert.



Birders of a feather

Nearing completion at the end of FY99, following five years of work, was The Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail, a trail for bird watchers that links more than 300 premier birding sites from the Big Thicket down to the Rio Grande Valley. The trail is marked with distinguishable brown signs and detailed in special birding trail maps. The trail, for which complete information is available on the Web (www.tpwd.state.tx.us/birding-trails), makes self-guided tours easy and fun.



GO WITH THE FLOW



Protecting a precious resource at the source

“Just about everything we do at Parks and Wildlife involves water, from parks to wildlife and fisheries,” says Larry McKinney, senior director of Aquatic Resources. One of the most important events relating to water in FY99 was the detailing of Senate Bill 1, a complex, multi-year phase-in historic water reform law. Says McKinney, “Senate Bill 1 acknowledges that the population of Texas is going to double in 20 years, and we need to get ready for that time. It gives us all the tools to make sure that we protect our resources as we meet the demands of a growing population. The challenge to us is ensure that those tools are used.”

One of Parks and Wildlife’s most important functions is putting together conservation plans: Bringing citizens and state and federal agencies and landowners to accord on workable plans. Thanks to an array of Parks and Wildlife partners such as Ducks Unlimited, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, wetland conservation efforts continued in earnest during 1999. For example, under the Texas Prairie Wetlands Project, a private lands program in the coastal region, more than



**Lone Star Legends
Conservation Award:
Dr. Don Winsor
Brazos Bend State Park,
Fort Bend County**

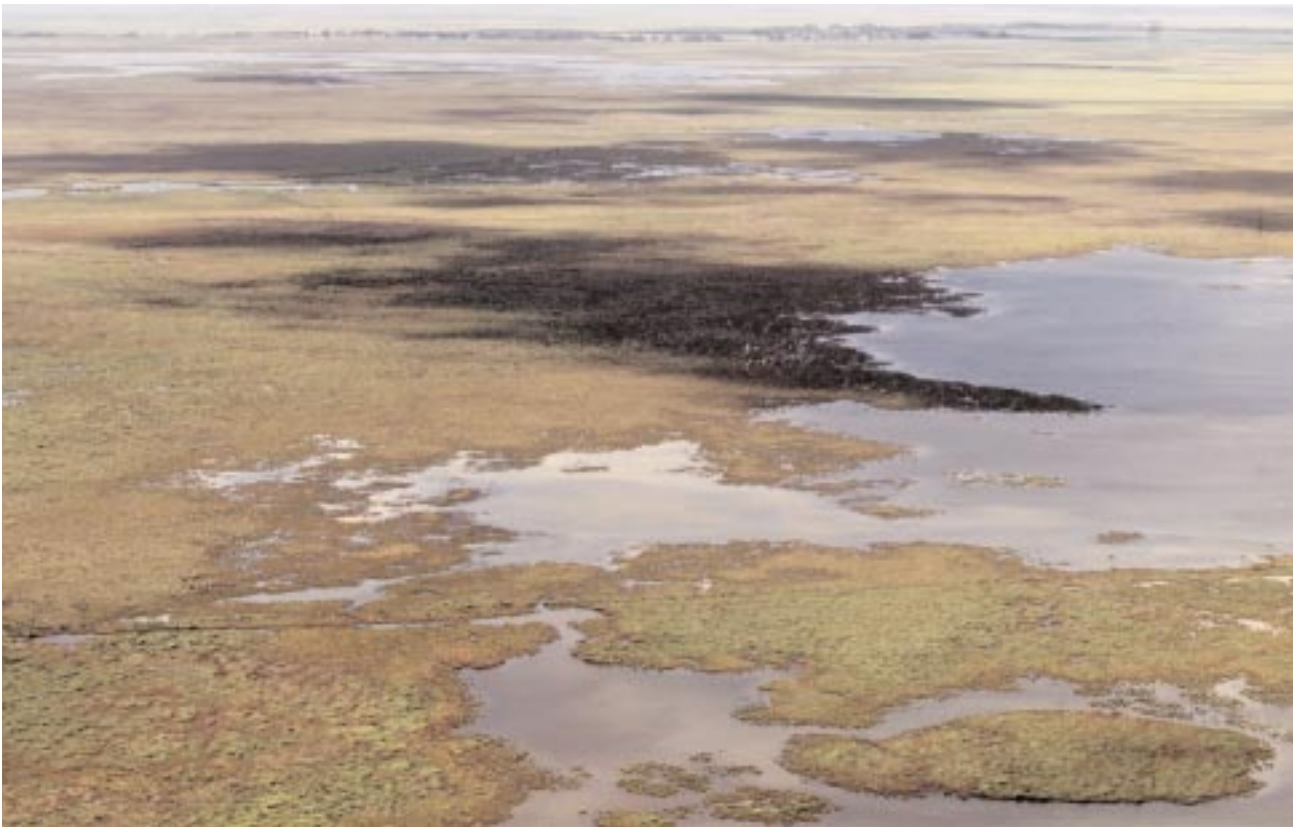
3,000 acres were conserved. Under the MARSH (Matching Aid to Restore States' Habitat) program, a statewide Ducks Unlimited partnership with Parks and Wildlife, some 2,400 acres of wetlands were enhanced. Parks and Wildlife continues to implement the Texas Wetlands Conservation Plan through the development of the Forested Wetlands Incentive program. Restoration of bottomland hardwoods at nine sites on private lands was begun in 1999. The Shamrock Island Restoration project in Corpus Christi Bay conserved more than 800 acres of coastal habitat and one of the most productive waterbird nesting sites in the state. Through the work of Fish and Wildlife and nine other federal, state and private entities, this project was awarded the 1999 Partnership Award from Coastal America. Parks and Wildlife also adopted the Seagrass Conservation Plan for Texas, aimed at preserving the state's submerged seagrass meadows, which provide a unique sub-tropical habitat in many Texas bays and estuaries.

Alien invader

Protecting resources sometimes means countering a new threat that has invaded from outside the state. When an aquatic fern called giant salvinia was spotted in Toledo Bend Reservoir, a team of biologists from Parks and Wildlife fisheries took aim at the rapidly spreading plant that has created environmental havoc on waterways around the world. "We do not often have the opportunity to stop something in its tracks as we did on Toledo Bend," says Larry McKinney.



Dr. Winsor has averaged 500 hours of volunteer work a year at Brazos Bend State Park. He initiated and has guided the "Texas Watch" water monitoring program in the park, conducts a mammal census in the park and has assisted with amphibian population studies and reptile diversity studies in other parks.





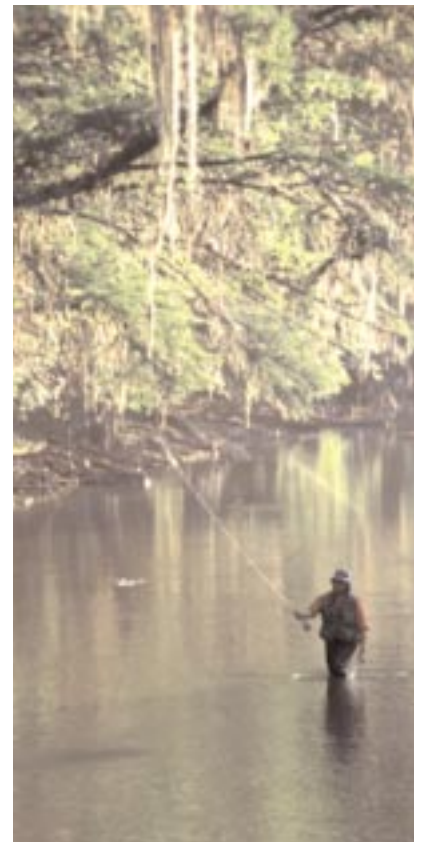
Inland waters

The Inland Fisheries Division is responsible for managing the state's diverse freshwater fisheries resources. Says Phil Durocher, director of the division, Parks and Wildlife's goal is nothing less than "providing the best freshwater fishing in the world." In spite of strong demands made on the state's freshwater resources, he observes, the inland fish population is holding up well — the result of extensive planning and research and aggressive, innovative management.



Celebrating Phase II of the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center

One of the key factors in the department's success is the continuing growth of fisheries production — an effort that has been boosted by contributions from the private sector. In May 1999, the opening of Phase II of the state-of-the-art Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center in Athens was marked by a major donation from the Lone Star Legacy program. A contribution of \$450,000 from the Parks and Wildlife Foundation of Texas, Inc. was augmented by a \$50,000 donation from Athens resident and former Parks and Wildlife Commission chair Edwin L. Cox. Production at the center has proceeded apace. Says Phil Durocher, "We produced a million and a half Florida bass, and that's very good for the first year." The center is also the division's flagship for the future in terms of education and outreach. It has seen a steady increase in the number of visitors. And with the help of corporate partner Anheuser-Busch, Inc. the center is completing a marketing plan with the goal of making the facility self-supporting within five years.



Lunker bounty

Another key to public participation in the improvement of the freshwater fisheries is the Budweiser ShareLunker program, which reached a number of high-water marks in 1999. Each year, the program accepts 13-pound-plus "lunker" bass that are used as breeding stock. Last year's 17 entries included a 16.63 pounder landed by angler Flo O'Brain in Lake Fork — the largest recorded lunker ever caught by a woman angler in Texas.



Coastal waters

The management strategies of the Coastal Fisheries Division are directed at making the best long-term use of the marine resources of Texas. Although the division's mandate covers four million acres of salt-water, including the bays and estuaries and out to nine nautical miles in the Gulf of Mexico, the state's marine resources are not infinite. In fact, the growing demand in the last decades by commercial and sport fishing interests, along with a deterioration in habitat, have put a tremendous strain on the offshore fish population. Says Hal Osburn, "We've had too many fishermen chasing after too few fish."

One of the keys to addressing the problem of supply and demand has been a limited-entry program that is one of the most progressive in the country. The program works by encouraging the voluntary buy-back of licenses from commercial fishermen. In 1999, the shrimp license buy-back program had a record number of license purchases. "We retired nearly 200 shrimpboat licenses," says Hal Osburn.



Hatchery production for coastal fisheries was up, in large part because of the outstanding skill of Parks and Wildlife's hatchery biologists. "It's a skill that is really an art as well: These folks put a rocket booster on Mother Nature," says Osburn.



FY99 was also a good year for the popular artificial reef program known as Rigs-to-Reefs. Five obsolete oil rigs became new habitat for marine life, resulting in a donation of \$630,000 to increase marine habitat and scuba-diving opportunities. "These rigs are like an oasis in the desert," says Hal Osburn.



Lone Star Legends

**Customer Service Award:
Walter Aucoin
Sea Center Texas,
Lake Jackson**



Walter Aucoin has been a vital member of the Sea Center staff since construction on the facility first began: He has provided more than 1,000 hours of service to the center. As a volunteer who has also devoted 65 years to the Boy Scouts of America, he has had to learn well the Boy Scout motto of "Be Prepared." In his later years, his vision began to decline, and he is now legally blind — a particularly hard fate for a master craftsman: Aucoin also happens to be known as a woodcarver of extraordinary talent. Aucoin no longer serves as a regular tour guide at the center. However, he has still found ways to continue his service: He works as a greeter two days a week.

ON THE HORIZON

At the end of FY99, Parks and Wildlife prepared to welcome the 44 new employees whose hiring was enabled by the 76th Legislature. Most of those new Parks and Wildlife faces would be going to work in parks around the state, so that the citizens of Texas would be better able to enjoy the natural and cultural resources that are their inheritance.

The Sunset Review process continued to make progress in assessing the work of Parks and Wildlife.

Parks and Wildlife leaders felt that the department had reached a maximum level of achievement and efficiency, given the current state of funding and resources. "We've done all we can do within the resources that we have," said Andrew Sansom. "Now it's time to move to another level."





About This Report

This is the Annual Report of Texas Parks and Wildlife for the fiscal year ending August 31, 1999 (FY99). The report is one of several documents Parks and Wildlife produces to provide information to our employees and the public. More information can be found on the Texas Parks and Wildlife Web site at www.tpwd.state.tx.us.

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