

This program runs at 520 am Monday thru Friday

Various days cover topics of Environment, Texas Heritage & History, and Wildlife Conservation.

TPW TV: Save Our Sharks

Friday, January 30th, 2015

As marine predators go, sharks swim at the top of the food chain.

08—Without having these top end Apex predators, you have the ecosystem that gets out of balance, These predators help control everything below them.

But they can't control what's below them if they're gone.

07—Worldwide, sharks have been depleted by overfishing. Between 30 and 70 million sharks [are] killed by humans every year.

Dr. Greg Stunz is a marine biologist with the Harte Research Institute, and appears the week of February 1 on a For Texas Parks and Wildlife PBS TV segment called SOS: Save Our Sharks.

08—One of the things that has contributed to a decline in sharks is shark finning: fishermen actually catch the sharks, cut their fins off, and discard the body.

Illegal in American waters since 1993, finning remains active in foreign waters, as fishermen earn up to \$900 a pound for the fins. Illegal fishing on gear called long lines occurs close to home, too; it's the most immediate threat to sharks in the U.S. says Game Warden Sgt. Luis Sosa.

12—We've got Mexican commercial fishermen that come into US water – Texas waters – on a daily basis. Unfortunately, the most common type of species that is being caught on this illegal gear is sharks.

Save Our Sharks airs the Week of February 1 on PBS stations. Check Local listings. The Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration program supports our series, and receives funding through your purchase of fishing and hunting equipment and motor boat fuel...

History: Enduring Spirit – African Americans in 19th Century Texas

Monday, February 2nd, 2015

Enduring Spirit: African Americans in 19th Century Texas is a yearlong exhibit at the Texas Star of the Republic Museum in Washington-on-the-Brazos.

08—It actually started from a recent acquisition that we acquired. It was about 15-hundren documents from a gentleman names Asa Hoxey.

Houston McGaugh, director of the museum for Blinn College, says Hoxey moved to Washington County in the early 1830s, and brought black slaves with him.

14— And that prompted us to wonder if there are any descendants of those slaves still in Washington County. And we were able to identify some. So, that really made us start thinking about, more of – well, gosh, there's an awful lot of African American history that you don't hear about.

A question the museum wanted answered: when did Blacks first arrive in Texas?

10— And we were surprised to find out they started coming in the 1820s when this was still part of Mexico; and they were actually trying to get land grants like some of the Anglo settlers were in Austin's Colony.

Mexico abolished slavery in 1829, so Blacks here before Texas Independence were free. That changed when Texas became a republic.

07— And, actually, the free blacks that were here, were given one year to either go back into servitude, or leave the Republic.

Many of these free Blacks went to Mexico where their ancestors live today. Learn more about the exhibit and special events and speakers at starmuseum.org.

Hunt | Fish | Cook: Getting Wild in the Kitchen

Tuesday, February 3rd, 2015

If you're a regular listener of this series, you've heard me talk about cooking and eating wild game and fish. This native protein is natural, sustainable, and plentiful; if you shot it or reeled it in – or know who did – you don't have to guess about quality or freshness.

One down side is that game can have a strong flavor some find off-putting. But it doesn't have to when you follow proper handling protocols in the field and in the kitchen.

That's why Texas Parks and Wildlife created a variety of online resources for new and seasoned hunters and anglers who want to eat what they harvest. Find videos on our [website and YouTube channel](#) that illustrate field dressing, proper storage, butchering and cooking your harvest.

We have a growing list of wild game and fish recipes on the website to help you discover new, inventive ways of enjoying this healthy, natural food source. And the digital hunting and fishing issues of [Texas Parks and Wildlife magazine](#) often have game or fish recipes for your enjoyment.

In addition, Texas Parks and Wildlife partners with [Central Market Cooking Schools statewide](#) to offer demonstration and hands on wild game and fish cooking classes every other month. In fact, there's one coming up February 10 at most of the schools that features oysters, pheasant and venison. Just in time for Valentine's Day! Find information about upcoming classes on the Central Market website.

And, make 2015 the year you get wild in the kitchen.

Fishing: Freshwater Fishing for 2015

Wednesday, February 4th, 2015

As the weather warms, seasoned and wannabe anglers yearn to get on the water in the New Year.

18— Overall, the prospects for fishing are good; they're not going to be great because parts of the state are still in a drought. But, East Texas and North and Central Texas have fared fairly well in the current drought, and most of the lakes still have access and the fish are still there.

Larry Hodge is with Inland Fisheries. He says white bass are especially active this time of year.

19— Most of the reservoirs in East Texas, particularly Toledo Bend, will have a good white bass run up the Sabine River. Those fish are legendary for their size and numbers. Some of the lakes in East Texas also have good white bass fishing. The Neches River above lake Palestine is good for their size and numbers.

Catching largemouth bass might prove spotty due to low water levels. Yet, Hodge says traditional places like Falcon, Choke Canyon and Amistad will have fish as always, but anglers may have to work harder to find them.

08— So, you may have to find some new places [in those reservoirs] to fish; use your electronics, frequent the coffee shops, and talk to the locals and hunt 'em down.

Find an article by Larry Hodge's about the best lakes and rivers to fish in 2015 in the digital fishing issue of Texas parks and Wildlife magazine.

The wildlife and sport fish restoration program support our series.

Fishing: Canyon Dam Trout

Thursday, February 5th, 2015 We don't have much in the way of native trout in Texas.

12—The only native trout that we're aware of are maybe some Rio Grande cutthroat trout that were in the McKittrick Canyon area of the Guadalupe Mountains. Other than that, there are no native trout we know of in Texas.

Which is why, says Steve Magnelia, Parks and Wildlife stocks lakes and neighborhood ponds with rainbow trout every winter.

10—The winter trout program is to provide anglers with a different species to fish for during the winter months when our warm water fish like largemouth bass and other species aren't readily biting.

Magnelia, an inland fisheries biologist, says because trout won't survive in water warmer than 75-degrees, the rainbows anglers don't reel in during winter perish as the water heats up—unless they are in the Guadalupe near Canyon Dam.

08—Because it's a cold water discharge from Canyon Lake, the water stays cold enough during the summer to sustain trout all year round.

So, if they've habituated, does that mean they've become a self-sustaining population as well?

08—We don't have any real evidence that the fish spawn and reproduce in the river, but we do know that they carry over from one winter to the next.

Find other [trout stocking locations](#) on the Texas Parks and Wildlife website.

The Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration Program... supports our series as well as conservation programs in Texas.

Fishing: Rainbows in the Guadalupe River

Friday, February 6th, 2015

It's trout season in Texas. It's when Texas Parks and Wildlife inland fisheries stocks hundreds of thousands of rainbow trout in lakes and neighborhood fishing ponds to provide a unique winter angling experience.

06—Trout are a cold water species and they like the cold water and they regularly bite at this time of the year.

Steve Magnelia is a fisheries biologist with inland fisheries. If you think Texans are the only ones enjoying this winter treat, Trout Unlimited named the Guadalupe River near Canyon Dam, one of the top 100 trout streams in North America.

10—One of the things I think that gets it into the top 100 is that you can come down here during the winter and enjoy trout fishing. And we get a lot of people from up north that come down to the Guadalupe during the winter months to fish.

And because the water in the river near the dam is cold—below 75 degrees—the fish often survive Texas summers; some of the rainbows can get big and feisty.

18—It's one thing to catch the 8 to 10 inch fish that we stock every winter, but when you hook into a 4 or 5 pounder, it's pretty exciting. It's fun when you hook up with one and they jump out of the water like a tarpon, which they do. Those big ones like to jump and they'll jump out of the water 4 or 5 times trying to throw your bait. It's pretty neat.

Find [other trout stocking locations](#) on the Texas Parks and Wildlife website.

The Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration Program... supports our series as well as conservation programs in Texas.

Nature: Texas Master Naturalist Program

Monday, February 9th, 2015

The [Texas Master Naturalist program](#) trains volunteers in all aspects of the Texas environment where they live.

11— All the way from the plants and why they're named what they're named in their local ecosystem, to the birds and the mammals and the fish and the invertebrates and everything.

Mary Pearl Meuth is assistant state program coordinator through Texas Agrilife Extension.

15— They [volunteers] are encouraged to share their knowledge, either through events with other local classrooms and youth education programs, working and volunteering at state parks or nature centers and natural areas.

Texas' more than 40 Master Naturalist Chapters train and certify volunteers in the specifics of their local ecosystems after they've learned the universal basics.

18—Master Naturalists join the program because they're excited about the environmental world in which we live and the diversity of Texas, which is just incredible. And, once they join, then they can give back to their community that needs that resource.

To maintain certification, volunteers agree to 40 hours of community outreach and eight hours of advanced training annually. Find details txmn.org.

More in the Master Naturalist Program tomorrow.

Nature: Who are Master Naturalists?

Tuesday, February 10th, 2015

When you're passionate about something, it's hard to keep it to yourself. And when that passion leads you to become a [Texas Master Naturalist](#), you don't have to.

13— We develop a corps of well-informed volunteers that provide education, outreach and service around the state in the beneficial management of natural resources and the natural areas within Texas.

Mary Pearl Meuth with Texas Agrilife Extension is assistant state program coordinator. People of all ages and from all walks of life may train to become a certified Master Naturalists, although retirees are strong within their ranks.

27—We do ask that each Master Naturalist provides 40 hours of volunteer service yearly along with their continuing education of 8 hours of advanced training every year to maintain that certification. That is difficult to do on a full-time employee based status – if you're a full-time worker. But, we do have many master naturalists who are able to juggle the load. So, we do have young and old.

Since the program's inception in 1997, Master Naturalists have given back to Texas in millions of meaningful ways. We have details tomorrow.

Nature: The Value of Master Naturalists to Texas

Wednesday, February 11th, 2015

Texas Parks and Wildlife and Texas A&M Agrilife Extension are principal sponsors of the Texas Master Naturalist Program. This program trains volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources where they live.

08— Our master naturalists are able to give back to these partners both through their volunteer service and through their contributions on other ways.

Mary Pearl Meuth with Texas Agrilife Extension is assistant state program coordinator. She says what the more than 9-thousand trained volunteers have given back to the state since the program's inception in 1997 is phenomenal.

12—Texas Parks and Wildlife values the over 2.4 million service hours that have been given back over the 15 year history of the program to at more than 54-million dollars for the state of Texas.

The Texas Master Naturalist Program trains roughly 700 volunteers annually statewide. And new training programs are starting up this spring among 16 of the program's more than 40 chapters.

08—And these 16 chapters are located around the state, offering trainings at different points of the week, and different times of the day.

Tomorrow: training, teaching and discovering with the [Texas Master Naturalist program](#).

Nature: Becoming a Master Naturalist

Thursday, February 12th, 2015

There's a training program for people with a passion for nature. It's called the Texas Master Naturalist Program.

19— The Texas Master Naturalist Program is a volunteer based training program; we develop a corps of well-informed volunteers that provide education, outreach and service around the state in the beneficial management of natural resources and the natural areas within Texas.

Mary Pearl Meuth is assistant state program coordinator. They train roughly 700 volunteers annually, and have sessions this spring in 16 of their 44 chapters.

15— Our curriculum that is used for the training, has 26 chapters in it. So, they march through those 26 chapters all with a large context of the state of Texas, but then developed even more within their local ecosystem.

Once trained, volunteers provide 40 hours of community outreach, and take 8 hours of advanced training annually. The program's not just about taking or facilitating classes. It's also about discovery.

08—Quite a few of our Master Naturalists have identified new species of plants or new species of animals located within the state of Texas.

Are you ready to help Mother Nature? Consider the Texas Master Naturalist program; training sessions starting soon. Learn more at txmn.org.

TPW TV: Ray Roberts Lake State Park Bike Trails

Friday, February 13th, 2015

Looking for a place for two wheeled fun in North Texas? Then make a beeline to [Ray Roberts Lake State Park](#), 20 minutes NE of Denton.

05— From the beginner to the expert, any type of biking that you'd like to do – Ray Roberts Lake State Park has it.

Learn about all the park's trails on the PBS Texas Parks and Wildlife TV Show; park superintendent, Gary Waller.

10—We have everything from single track mountain bike trails, to fairly wide concrete trails for walking and mountain biking and hiking; and then we have equestrian trails, too.

A group that regularly takes advantage of the trails at Ray Roberts Lake SP is DORBA: the Dallas Off-road Bicycle Association. Guy Grey is an active member.

08—I had my dog Haddie with me. I've come out here and done the whole eight miler with her before. It's a little bit different. You don't see too many dogs out on the trail – but it's fun to do.

DORBA member, Will Bloodworth, says the variability of trails can help mountain bikers improve their skills.

19— Around the lake is more of an intermediate terrain. Johnson Branch has quite a bit of what we call flowy sections – switchback sections, roots and rocks and sand and open field. So, you get a little bit of everything here. I love it. I think it's very challenging; and if you don't challenge yourself you're never going to improve.

Learn more about bike trails at Ray Roberts Lake SP on the PBS Texas Parks and Wildlife TV series. [Check your local listings](#).

Fishing: Crab Trap Cleanup

Monday, February 16th, 2015

Lost and abandoned crab traps become hazards to marine life in Texas bays.

06— We are particularly concerned because of the ghost fishing effects; they continue fishing unmaintained.

When something gets in the trap and dies, it acts as bait, attracting more marine life, which in turn suffers the same fate. Art Morris is with coastal fisheries at Texas Parks and Wildlife, and coordinates the [annual cleanup of derelict traps](#).

12— And what we do once a year in February, is get volunteers together up and down the coast, and we try to remove all those traps that have been lost, or vandalized or whatever that are potentially ghost fishing.

Volunteers have removed more than 31-thousand traps in the cleanup's 14 year history. This year's cleanup is February 20 through March 1, with a big one day push on February 21. And Texas isn't alone in its efforts.

12— And we're particularly excited this year in that we have a joint closure in Sabine Lake with the state of Louisiana, and we'll be using joint efforts there to remove traps from the Louisiana side of the lake.

Find details on the cleanup and volunteering, on the Texas Parks and Wildlife website.

The wildlife and sport fish restoration program support our series and is funded by your purchase of hunting and fishing equipment and motor boat fuel.

Birding: Chimney Swifts

Tuesday, February 17th, 2015

[Chimney Swifts](#) don't hang around Texas in winter. These small sooty colored birds, with slim bodies and long, narrow, curved wings show up in spring and leave in fall.

05— All our swifts go to Latin America to overwinter; down to Peru.

Ornithologist, Cliff Shackelford, says we'll see them again beginning mid-March when they start their return to the eastern two-thirds of the state. Before European settlers arrived, the birds nested in hollow trees, but now they nest almost exclusively in man-made structures like...well ...chimneys.

13—I have a school that's less than a mile away [from my home] that has an old smokestack. And they didn't tear it down even though it's not in use; and, that smokestack is very popular with the swifts in our area.

While the birds live most of their lives in flight, they do settle in at night. You'll know you're observing Chimney Swifts by the way they approach their roost at dusk.

18—A lot of times you'll see them circle the chimney, and something's wrong, and they don't like it and they don't commit. And, then, they come back and check it out again; they're very hesitant. So, when they finally agree to commit, they turn their wings upward and just like a wad of paper, fall into the chimney.

Learn more about Chimney Swifts at chimneyswifts.org.

TPW Magazine: Hiring a Fishing Guide

Wednesday, February 18th, 2015

Beginners and experts alike can experience some of their best fishing days by using a professional fishing guide. That's what Aquatic education training specialist, Caleb Harris writes, in an article for the digital fishing issue of [Texas Parks and Wildlife magazine](#).

02—The article is written for people who have never hired a guide.

Harris says anglers who have hired guides in the past will also find the article informative. Guides offer expertise and location knowledge and teach new tactics and techniques, he says.

15— I think most people hire a guide so they can become as familiar as possible as quickly as possible with, say, a new technique, or a certain lake, or a river that they've never been on. And these guides have incredible experience in the places that they guide, so they can bring people up to speed really fast.

Finding a guide that's right for you is as easy as joining a fishing club or going online.

22— Guides do best where they have a great deal of experience fishing. You know, they'll kind of dig in in that area; they'll be well-involved in different clubs and different social events. And most guides I know meet a lot of their clients through word-of-mouth. So, if a fisherman gets involved with a local club, or talks to people wherever they go fishing – they can often meet a really good guide just by word-of-mouth that way. But, if you're not in a club, the internet is a great place to start.

Things you need to share with your guide before setting off. That's tomorrow. Meantime find Caleb Harris' article on fishing guides at tpwmagazine.com.

Fishing: When Hiring a Fishing Guide

Thursday, February 19th, 2015

Want to hire a fishing guide? Be clear with them about your expectations.

16—It's going to be nebulous to just say, I'm going to hire a guide to go fishing on this lake. It would be better to say I want to learn how to catch a certain type of fish. Ask yourself exactly what you want to do, and then when you shop around for a guide, be very clear with that guide, I want to do this. I would say that's the primary thing to consider.

Caleb Harris wrote an article about fishing with a guide for the TPW Magazine Digital Fishing Special. He says making this request of a guide can help you know if they'll be a good fit.

07— Please describe a typical day of fishing with you. And then, let the guide describe that, and then you'll have a really good idea of whether or not they're a fit for what you want to do.

Avoid unexpected expenses and misunderstandings, by discussing the guide's expectations in advance.

25— *If you're going to be using a boat, is the fuel included in the cost? If you're going to be using bait, is the bait included in the cost? You know, if you're going out for a whole day, is lunch provided? Do you need your own cooler? Who's going to clean the fish? Is that a part of the fee? Is that extra? What sort of clothes do they suggest? It would be kind of shameful if you got there and the guide was expecting you to wade, and you didn't clarify that and you show up with your nice shoes. That would set the day up for a bad experience. So, clarify as much as possible.*

Find Caleb Harris' article on fishing guides at tpwmagazine.com. The Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program supports our series.

Fishing: Saltwater Fishing in 2015

Friday, February 20th, 2015

Variety and quality – that's what anglers can expect when fishing in Texas bays.

12— *Spotted sea trout and red drum on any given cast. Throw on the occasional flounder and black drum.... There's just tremendous opportunity there for any sort of skill level at any time of the year for that matter.*

Art Morris, with coastal fisheries says his favorite is the Upper Laguna Madre.

24— *I've been fishing it since I was a child, and it's those trophy sized spotted sea trout that I like to go after. You've got clear water, shallow grass flats; you've got deep water reefs, and you use top waters and site cast the fish. And, oftentimes, it's just the perfect setting for sport fishing on the Texas coast – for me, personally.*

Each bay system is different and requires different tactics and baits.

25— *As you move down the coast, the water tends to get clearer, so we tend to use more variety of stuff on the lower coast as far as artificial lures and bait. On the upper coast the water gets a little more turbid; you get more into live bait fishing, dead bait fishing. Some artificial use up there, but yeah, as you move down and up the coast, each bay is unique and have their own techniques that work best in those particular areas.*

Want more? Check out Art Morris' article on bay fishing in the digital fishing issue at tpwmagazine.com.

The Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration program supports our series.

History: Texas Independence Day Celebration

Monday, February 23rd, 2015

Celebrate Texas Independence at [Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site](http://Washington-on-the-Brazos-State-Historic-Site) February 28 and March 1.

07— *And, there'll be lots of activities going on in the park. They'll have special programs and demonstrations down at the Barrington Living History farm...*

Houston McGaugh is director of the Star of the Republic Museum for Blinn College.

12— *We'll have some various demonstrations going on in the museum, and just lots of activities in the park. Food. And, it's a free, two-day event for people to come out and enjoy and learn a little Texas history.*

We remember The Alamo, and the Battle of San Jacinto and their roles in gaining independence for Texas, but what about Washington-on-the-Brazos? On March 2, 1836, it's where delegates signed the declaration of independence from Mexico.

21— And, I think that's something we always keep coming back to. That, you know, it's not necessarily battles; it's the documentation; it's the representatives of the people that come together and say, you know what, we're not going to do this anymore. We're going to be a free and independent country, and have a democracy. And that's really what we celebrate here, I think. It's the birthplace of a democracy. The Republic of Texas.

Find details about this year's [Texas Independence Day celebration at Washington-on-the-Brazos](#) on the Texas Parks and Wildlife website.

[Research | Hunt: Dove Lethality Study](#)

Tuesday, February 24th, 2015

Texas leads the nation in [dove hunting](#) with roughly a quarter million hunters bagging 5 million mourning doves each fall.

03—Dove hunting is kind of a rite of passage for fall for many hunters.

Corey Mason is Wildlife Region Three Director. He says in December (2014), the agency released results of a [two year study examining the lethality of lead versus non-toxic shot](#) for mourning dove.

07— Long story short, what this [analysis] told us is that bagging, wounding and missing rates, they really did not differ across ammunition types.

Mason said the most commonly used shot is a 2 3/4-inch 12-gauge shell, one and one-eighth ounce 7 1/2 lead shot.

10— We compared that to a one ounce seven steel, and a once ounce six steel. It came out with very comparable results. So that statistically speaking, there was really no difference.

Texas Parks and Wildlife staff, trained as observers, spent two years in the field collecting birds bagged by hunters at commercial hunting operations.

14—There were over 5-thousand shots fires; there were over 11-hundred birds bagged. Every bird that was shot was necropsied, x-rayed, and examined. We took information gained in the field – as well as the terminal ballistics – [to determine] the effects those particular pellets had on the birds.

Again, researchers discovered negligible differences between ammunition types. But why study this at all. That's tomorrow.

[Research | Hunt: Learning From Dove Lethality Study](#)

Wednesday, February 25th, 2015

Lead shot is the most common load used when hunting dove in Texas. In high accumulations it is a potential environmental toxin. Texas carried out a two-year study to evaluate effectiveness of lead versus non-toxic shot, should ammunition regulations change in the future.

02—We went into this study no knowing what we would find.

Corey Mason, Wildlife Region Three Director says it was a double blind study.

23— Everyone that was in the field – the observer recording the data and the hunter pulling the trigger – they did not know what kind of ammunition they were shooting. All of the ammunition looked identical on the exterior: all in the same brass, the same hole. No one knew what they were shooting. So, it removed all of that potential bias so that the study results are as objective as they can possibly be.

Mason says Texas needed to determine if a non-toxic ammunition alternative would be as effective as lead.

19—Secondly, we needed to know that information because of our harvest management strategies in which we base the number of days, the daily bag [limit], the opportunities to hunt these birds based on current knowns. And so, if those efficiency and wounding rates were to change it could potentially have an impact on the number of days in dove season, the daily bag – all those sorts of things.

Mason says the final analysis shows virtually no difference in effectiveness of lead versus steel shot. So, for now, it's hunter's choice.

03— We believe in hunter choice, but we want that to be an informed hunter choice.

Nature: Feeling Ownership of the Outdoors

Thursday, February 26th, 2015

Richard Louv, author of *Last Child in the Woods* and *The Nature Principle* is coming to Texas in April for the Children in Nature Network Conference. As a child, he says he felt ownership of the woods near his home, the kind of ownership that often eludes today's youth.

As an 8 year old, I pulled out—I think—hundreds of survey stakes that I knew had something to do with the bulldozers that were taking out other woods. I think I held 'em off for a while. In any case, I was telling the story about pulling out stakes [at a conference]. And afterwards in the discussion period a rancher stood up, and he was sunburned, he was in his sixties, white handlebar moustache...And he said, you know that story you told about pulling out survey stakes? And he said, I did that when I was a boy. And then he began to cry in front of five hundred people. And despite his deep sense of embarrassment, he continued to speak about his sense of grief that his might be one of the last generations to have that kind of sense of ownership of land that has nothing to do with money—it goes deeper than that.

Help children connect with the land. Learn more about the [Children and Nature Network Conference](#) April 7 – 9 at passportotexas.org.

TPW TV: San Jacinto Monument

Friday, February 27th, 2015

Rising from the flat Texas wetlands along the Houston ship channel, the [San Jacinto Monument](#) is one of the most recognizable symbols of Texas history. Larry Spasic is President of the San Jacinto Museum of History Association.

14— This monument was built to be a memorial to remind us of the sacrifices of all those who fought for Texas independence. And when people come here, they see that singular vision in the San Jacinto Monument.

Watch a segment about the monument next week on the PBS TPW TV series. Russ Kuykendall, retired site superintendent, says the obelisk is a soaring monument to commemorate a small battle with huge consequences that took place on that site in 1836.

15— The monument really honors both sides of the battle – both Mexico and Texas. And, of course, independence [was] won for Texas from Mexico at this site. And so, what better site to have this magnificent monument erected to honor all of those individuals.

The San Jacinto Monument state historic site embodies the hopes and dreams of the people who fought for the future of Texas.

Watch a segment on the monument and Texas history next week on the PBS Texas Parks and Wildlife TV series.

Note: As happens from time to time, there's been a change in the PBS TV program schedule. The above show about the San Jacinto Monument will not air until a later date. However, you can still catch a TV segment that highlights the San Jacinto Battlegrounds, called [Charlie and his Cannon](#) through February 28 on the Texas Parks and Wildlife Television series. [Check your local listings.](#)

Spring Break: Family Fun

Monday, March 2nd, 2015

Spend time with the family outdoors this spring break.

I believe it's very important for families to spend time outdoors. Especially in the metropolitan areas, (where) people aren't able to fully experience nature in a natural setting.

Doug Huggins works with state parks in the Houston area, but when we spoke, he worked at [Bastrop State Park](#). Parks buffer visitors from the hubbub of city life.

16—It's a good place to see nature; to look at the flora and fauna, and get out of the city and feel like you're away from it all... and you can leave all the hustle, bustle and business behind, and slow down for a little while to think about what's going on right here right now.

Spring break can be sunny and warm or cold and wet; whatever the weather you can enjoy the Texas outdoors. If an overnight stay is in your future, and the weather warrants, consider cabins—like those at Bastrop State Park.

20—They're nice and cozy. They also have heaters and they have fire rings outside so you can have fires and roast marshmallows and make s'mores. It's a great place to spend time with the family; and in the winter time we still have some people that come out who take advantage of the bluebird days when it's mild and the sun is out, to look at what winter residents we have at the park.

Find a link to [state park information and reservations](#) at passporttotexas.org

Spring Break: Photography

Tuesday, March 3rd, 2015

Introduce youngsters to photography this spring break as a fun and affordable way to get them interested in nature and the outdoors.

08—I believe that all children have a basic connection with the outdoors and I do feel that photography is a good way to develop that bond. It can really enhance that experience altogether.

Texas Parks and Wildlife photographer Chase Fountain says picture taking is a great way for kids to record and enhance their experiences in nature.

15—Let's say you're out and about and you're on a family vacation... that's a great way for you to be able to record those memories and take them back with you. With today's technology and digital cameras only starting at \$20, it's affordable for almost any family to buy cameras for the kids and let them experience nature.

The key to getting kids outside is to find something that makes going outdoors sound like even more fun.

09—As far as utilizing photography... you know every kid is different and maybe some kids won't like photography, but for some that might just be the proper tool to get them outdoors.

Visit passporttotexas.org for more ideas for [getting your kids engaged in the outdoors](#).

[Spring Break: Fishing and More](#)

Wednesday, March 4th, 2015

Sometimes things sneak up on us before we're ready. Take spring break, for example. Are you at a loss for what to do with the family? Robert Ramirez with Outreach and Education at Texas Parks and Wildlife says there's something for everyone when you visit a state park.

There is something for everybody: everything from hikes to stargazing. The little "techie" kids can grab their iPads and iPhones and utilize those at night. There are things for the adults. The Go Fish programs are for both kids and adults alike. All our parks are great for fishing, and you never know what you're going to get in some of those bodies of water down there.

What if you don't have tackle?

Our state parks – most of them – have [tackle loaner programs available](#). Just look online at the park you're going to visit and double check to make sure they do have a tackle loaner program available.

Speaking of online, is this where people can go to plan their last minute, but very fun, state park getaway for their spring break vacation?

Yes. Definitely. Go to our website, and [under 'calendar' click on 'kids'](#) and the mid two weeks of March are just chock full of events for kids and families and things for them to do.

Remember: Life's Better Outside.

[Hunting: Spring Turkey –All About the Bird](#)

Thursday, March 5th, 2015

Upland game bird hunters look forward to [spring turkey season](#), which begins March 21 in the south zone.

08— In Texas, what we've seen over the last several years – maybe over the last decade – is a continuing interest and growth in the number of spring turkey hunters.

Robert Perez is the upland game bird program leader at Parks and Wildlife. Perez says fall turkey hunting is often incidental to deer hunting.

05— Say, someone's in their deer hunting blind, and they see some turkeys and decide, "Okay, I'm going to take a turkey."

But, in springtime it's all about the bird.

25— It's more involved as far as calling a strutting male, or a male that's going into breeding season. He's going to be more colorful; he's going to be looking for hens and responding to a hunter's call. So, he'll [the hunter] be imitating the calls of the hen, completely decked out in camouflage at the base of a tree or somewhere – trying to get that bird to get close enough to him to shoot. And it can be a very exhilarating, very exciting experience to successfully call in a bird. So, it's quite addictive.

Find out when and where to hunt turkey this spring when you log onto the Texas Parks and Wildlife website.

The Wildlife Restoration Program supports our series, and works to create hunting and wildlife-oriented recreational opportunities in Texas.

Hunting: Spring Turkey in Texas

Friday, March 6th, 2015

Spring hunting season for turkey kicks off this month.

04— In Texas – the majority of the state – the western two-thirds of the state are going to be Rio Grande Turkey.

Robert Perez, upland game bird manager at Parks and Wildlife, says over the long term, Rio Grande turkeys are doing well in their range. Another sub-species is the Eastern Wild Turkey, which occurs in deep East Texas.

13— And it's population, for many years, Texas Parks and Wildlife and partner –the National Wild Turkey Federation – worked very, very diligently to restore that bird. But there is a spring eastern season in certain east Texas counties only.

And that season runs April 15 through May 14 and encompasses 28 Eastern counties. Find those counties in the Outdoor Annual on the TPW website. Meantime, if you plan to take advantage spring turkey season...

13— To hunt any upland game bird, there's the upland game bird stamp – a seven dollar stamp – required to hunt pheasant, quail, turkey, or chachalaca. So, to hunt those species, you buy that stamp, and then that goes toward the conservation of that bird.

Find license, hunting and management information for all game species on the Texas Parks and Wildlife website.

The Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program supports our series, funded by your purchase of fishing and hunting equipment and motor boat fuel.

Tech: Outdoor Annual App Helps Anglers

Monday, March 9th, 2015

Smart phones and tablets continue to grow in popularity among the general public.

04— We've also noticed that our anglers are using those devices.

Tim Peterson, Texas Parks and Wildlife's director of creative and interactive services, says that as the weather warms, anglers want to get on the water. With the [Texas Outdoor Annual app](#) they can spend more time fishing and less time wondering if they're in compliance.

15— If an angler is sitting in a particular water body or lake – or near a water body or lake – they can use the GPS function in the app, locate the lake that they're at or near, and they can see the bag limits and the exceptions for that particular lake.

The FREE Texas Outdoor Annual app is a convenient way for anglers of all ages to keep up with regulations.

24—The whole idea with the app was not only to make it mobile, but also make it easy for folks to use while in the field. We're seeing a wide range of ages [using mobile devices], so it's not just a younger audience; it's a new audience. Anecdotally, I will tell you that I spent some time with my 80-year-old father-in-law this last weekend, and he used his mobile device as much as my 12-year-old daughter.

The free Texas Outdoor Annual App is available in iTunes or Google Play storefronts and you can also find more information on the Texas Parks and Wildlife website.

Angling: Fly Fish Texas March 14, 2015

Tuesday, March 10th, 2015

If you've always wanted to learn to fly fish, check out the 16th Annual Fly Fish Texas event March 14 at the [Texas Fresh Water Fisheries Center in Athens](#).

09— Our entire facility – several dozen acres – is converted into a gigantic fly fishing school for beginners and intermediates alike.

Jim Booker coordinates the event, where among other activities, attendees will learn to cast for and catch fish.

10— We'll have over a hundred volunteer instructors coming to man the different stations and activities. And these are volunteers that come from fly fishing clubs all over Texas.

Speakers will share tips on where to fly fish in Texas and beyond; and outdoor seminars take place all day.

13—In fact, we've just added a really interesting one called tenkara fishing. Tenkara fly fishing is the ancient Japanese form, which involves just the rod, the line, and the tie – no reel is involved.

Fly Fish Texas, March 14 at the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center offers hands on opportunities for attendees, too.

08—We have an actual classroom here, and on a walk-in basis, from noon until 4 p.m. we will do beginning fly tying classes.

Dive shows, tram tours of the hatchery, vendors and good food round out the day – Fly Fish Texas activities are free with regular paid admission to the center; find a [schedule of events on](#) the Texas Parks and Wildlife website.

The Sport Fish Restoration Program supports our series.

Hunt | Research: Browse Survey

Wednesday, March 11th, 2015

An estimated four million whitetail deer roam Texas' public and private lands; biologists help landowners determine deer density on their property by surveying what the animals eat, including "browse."

10— Deer have all sorts of different things they'll eat, browse being one of those items. So, essentially browse is the woody twigs and stems on plants and trees.

Heidi Bailey is a wildlife biologist in Northeast Texas. She says deer prefer some plants more than others, and calls those Blue Bell Ice Cream plants; their least favorites: Brussels sprouts. Everything in between: Meat and potatoes.

19— We go out and we look at these Bluebell plants, and we determine how much they're eating those. Then, we'll look at the meat and potatoes plants, and then we'll get down to the Brussels sprouts and see how heavily the deer are eating those. And if they're eating the Brussels sprouts plants – they're eating a bunch of stuff they don't care anything about – then you know you've got issues.

Issues like overpopulation. The browse plants that provide the best clues of this include...

12— Things like cedars, pines, American holly, sweet gum, post oak, and blackjack oak, wax myrtle. There's lots out there, but boy, it's not too tasty for them, for sure.

Recommendations biologists make based on browse surveys. That's tomorrow.

The Wildlife Restoration Program supports our series and works to restore and manage wildlife for the benefit of the public.

Research: Using Browse Survey to Manage Deer

Thursday, March 12th, 2015

Biologists can estimate deer density by observing what they've eaten, or browsed. Browse survey results can help guide managers to maintain healthy herds and habitat.

15— Of course, we could go out and run one of a multitude of deer counts – whether that be spotlight counts, or camera counts. This is one we do fairly regularly in the wintertime on properties to get out there and get a look at deer densities.

Wildlife biologist, Heidi Bailey, says when deer browse less tasty plants like pines, overpopulation may be the cause.

15— For instance, on most properties, if I see five percent use on some of these pines and cedars and things that they really don't like, that's when I start getting a red flag and thinking, Hmmm...maybe we need to increase the harvest a little bit on this property.

Increasing harvest rates can help keep habitat in balance. But not all managers remove animals from the landscape.

16—A lot of people turn to planting food plots and putting out protein feed to supplement a deer's diet. Of course, from the wildlife biologist's standpoint, [we] always encourage people to manipulate their existing habitat as opposed to supplementing or putting a band aide on a problem.

Find landowner technical assistance information on the Texas Parks and Wildlife website.

The Wildlife Restoration Program supports our series and works to restore and manage wildlife for the benefit of the public.

Fishing: Sharelunker Program

Friday, March 13th, 2015

If you catch a 13 pound or bigger largemouth bass, your first instinct may be to take a photo with it, and then release it. Or...you could donate it to the [Toyota ShareLunker program](#) at the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center.

04—The ShareLunker Program is probably the reason this facility is here.

Allen Forshage is Director of the Center, which is a state-of-the-art fish-care facility that contains special tanks known as the "Lunker Bunker".

17—The way this center was built, particularly the extensive hatcheries, improved our ability to do a selective breeding program where we've been taking these ShareLunkers and spawning them with males that are also offspring of ShareLunkers in an effort to try to improve the genetics of fish that we put back into public lakes.

Find out how to donate a fish to the program on the Texas Parks and Wildlife website. The program will accept donations of live fish through April 30. Every time an angler donates a fish to the program they make bass fishing better for everyone.

13—One of the measures of success for the program is how many column inches are being written about the ShareLunker Program. A lot of the outdoor writers use the ShareLunker Program as a barometer to measure how good fishing is in Texas.

It's darned good if you believe what you read. And you should. Find details about the Toyota ShareLunker Program on the Texas Parks & Wildlife website.

The Sport Fish Restoration Program supports our series and provides funding for the operations and management of the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center.

Event | Birding: Great Texas Birding Classic

Monday, March 16th, 2015

Calling all twitchers, listers and dudes...The [Great Texas Birding Classic](#) invites you to form a team to watch birds.

09— It's a really great win-win, where people are able to go birding with their friends or family. And then they're raising money for a really great cause: conservation right here in the state of Texas.

Shelly Plante, nature tourism manager, says teams go into the field and ID bird species from a checklist over the course of a few hours or even a few days. Tournament winners determine which avian habitat conservation projects receive preservation and restoration grants.

05— And the more habitat we're able to preserve here in the state, the more birding opportunities there are going to be for birders.

Birders of all ages and skill levels that register at birdingclassic.org by the April first deadline may participate in this statewide series of tournaments.

22—Go online. Fill out your registration form. Pay online. And then you're ready to go. Everything I do is through email: I'm going to email you updates; I'm going to email you how to submit your checklists to be in the running for the prizes; I'm going to let you know who won, where the award ceremonies are. So, it's all done online to save on costs so as much of this money goes to habitat conservation as possible.

The Great Texas Birding Classic, April 15 through May 15, is for beginners and advanced birders. More on the classic tomorrow.

Event | Birding: A Bird Count for All

Tuesday, March 17th, 2015

The Great Texas Birding Classic – the world's biggest, longest and wildest bird watching tournament – welcomes birders of all ages and abilities to form teams.

07— We've added some really good entry level tournaments, so beginning birders can take part; it's not just the hard core listers anymore. Anyone can do this.

Shelly Plante is nature tourism manager for Texas Parks and Wildlife.

20— I loved seeing more families involved last year; a family of four could go out and do a sunrise to noon tournament because it's an all ages tournament. A group of co-workers and their kids might go out and do a Big Sit, because there's an unlimited number of people that can be on that team – it's not a three to five person team like some of the others. So, there really is enough variety that you can find something that fits your needs.

The deadline to register a team is April 1. And your team can compete any day from April 15 to May 15.

23— And you don't pick that ahead of time. Some people have really flexible schedules, and so they don't tell me until 24 hours out from their tournament day that they're going to go birding. They wait, look at weather patterns, see when birding is going to be really good. If it's a really good birding day, and there's a cold front, and birds are everywhere – they can just pick on the fly: "We're going to go tomorrow; that's our day." And they just shoot me an email. So, it's really flexible.

Check out all the Great Texas Birding Classic tournaments and register your team by April 1 at birdingclassic.org.

Event: Birding Classic Puts FUN in Funding

Wednesday, March 18th, 2015

For the first 16 of its 19 year history, birders had to flock to coastal areas to participate in the [Great Texas Birding Classic](#).

09— We've now gone statewide. So, this will be our third year to be a statewide competition, and people love it. They're coming out to do all the different tournaments.

Shelly Plante is nature tourism manager for Texas Parks and Wildlife. The tournament has experienced 40% growth in participation since expanding statewide, and a 50% increase in funds available for grants.

23— The whole point of the event, and the reason this growth is so great, is all the money raised goes towards conservation grants for birding and birders. So, they can be enhancement grants, which can be boardwalks, or birding blinds. They might be acquisition grants, or restoration grants that restore native habitat that's great for birds, or remove invasive species. So, it's a really great win-win.

Since becoming statewide, Shelly Plante says they've seen greater diversity in habitat projects that receive funding.

11— Two years ago, we funded a community park project in Utopia, Texas – Central Texas Hill Country area – and that was our first project ever to not be on the coast. So, that was very exciting.

The event is April 15 – May 15. Registration ends April 1. Check out all the Great Texas Birding Classic tournaments and habitat projects at birdingclassic.org.

[Nature: Texas Wildflowers](#)

Thursday, March 19th, 2015

Spring in Texas is a colorful time of year thanks to wildflowers growing statewide. Jackie Poole says these native plants create a sense of place.

09— That is something Ladybird Johnson said that was so great about these wildflowers: they really are unique to different areas.

I spoke with Jackie, a former Texas Parks and Wildlife Botanist, at the [Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center](#). To get a sense of how wildflowers define a locale, she says look beyond the roadside.

20—If you get away from the roadside, you'll notice that the wildflowers are different in South Texas to Central Texas to the Trans Pecos to East Texas to the High Plains. And so, they're all unique; it's like having a home town. You can always go back and you can recognize these areas of the state by the plants that are growing there.

As bluebonnets and Indian paintbrushes start winding down, look for other flower forms to begin popping up.

21— [Such as] Little yellow daisy-like flowers. Later in May, there's a plant that called the basket flower; it's a tall plant, three to four to even six feet tall with large pinkish-white flowers. Right before that, you'll have Mexican Hats and Fire wheels starting in April and going through May and maybe even going into June.

Find more wildflower information at the [Texas Parks and Wildlife website](#).

[TPW TV: Buffalo Soldiers](#)

Friday, March 20th, 2015

With a lack of relatable role models, it's easy to understand why some urban youth may feel estranged from the outdoors.

04— You get raised thinking: Okay, these things are not really for me.

Twenty-two-year-old Devonte Hill recently graduated from college, and makes short documentary films about the outdoors. Meet him on the Texas Parks and Wildlife TV show.

07—What I really want to be is a storyteller. I just want to show people things that maybe they hadn't seen before – give them a different reality.

Hill learned about the Buffalo Soldier Program when he was a State Park Ambassador, and started sharing their reality with other young people.

13—The Buffalo Soldiers were created in 1866 to assist and protect the settlement as it continued to move further out west. Luis Padilla works with the Buffalo Soldier Program; he says they were the first black professional men in the US Army.

14—When the Native Americans saw the Buffalo Soldier, he wasn't used to seeing a man of this color in the wool uniform. So, the only thing the Indian could do at that point is compare this new soldier to something he knew out on the frontier. And that something on the frontier just happened to be the buffalo.

The soldiers also had a reputation for being fierce fighters. Learn about their contributions to Texas history on the [PBS Texas Parks and Wildlife TV series](#) the week of **March 29 through April 4, 2015**. Check your [local listings](#).

[Tech: New App for TPW Magazine](#)

Monday, March 23rd, 2015

In the midst of World War II, Texas Game and Fish—the predecessor to Texas Parks and Wildlife magazine—hit newsstands.

09— So, can you imagine what it would be like to start a magazine at that time? We have a print version of the magazine that's been published continuously since then, and that print version is not going to go away.

Publisher Randy Brudnicki says the 73 year old publication, with black-and-white text and visuals, gave way to modern design, writing and brilliant color photos. What hasn't changed is its mission to inspire Texans to preserve and enjoy the natural wonders of Texas.

16— We cover most of the concepts that support Texas Parks and Wildlife Department: hunting, fishing, state parks, and other conservation areas. [We have] articles about [the work of] game wardens, biologists...what's happening with endangered species. Just a big, wide variety of what happens in the [Texas] outdoors.

Audiences change, and Texas Parks and Wildlife magazine is keeping pace beginning with digital issues, which require an internet connection to read, to [a new app](#), which doesn't. Art Director, Nathan Adams.

16— Well, it was very important to me that we didn't just take the print version and throw it onto an app. Paper

and digital are completely different media. And so, when we sat down and said we are going to do an app, it was very important to say how do people interact with digital media.

Tech: TPW Magazine Evolves with the Times

Tuesday, March 24th, 2015

Before Texas Parks and Wildlife Magazine Art Director, Nathan Adams started work on an app for the publication, he wanted to know:

03— How do people interact with digital media?

Whereas print readers may find a comfy chair to sit and digest content at a leisurely pace, digital readers consume their content on the go.

06— [So] it was very important to me that we didn't just take the print version and throw it onto an app.

The app addresses expectations of younger readers coming to the magazine.

08— It's not just a matter of reading, but there's interactivity; there's an expectation that you can touch and that the app will react to swipes and touches and whatnot.

Adams said these new readers expect traditional print content integrated with the agility, innovation, and depth of a digital platform.

32—[As well as] the expectation of always being connected and of always having whatever information you wanted right at your fingertips. So, for example, if you were reading in the magazine about an activity at a state park, there is an expectation digitally that you should be able to push a button and find out how to get to that state park. How far away is it from where I'm at? Is there a map to that state park? What are the hours? All of that information which would be very labor intensive, very space intensive, in a printed publication becomes just a tap away in a digital version.

The user experience; that's tomorrow.

Tech: A New User Experience for TPW Magazine

Wednesday, March 25th, 2015

Texas Parks and Wildlife Magazine has a new app.

09— This is a digital delivery of the magazine; you'll be able to download it to a device like an iPad, and then you'll be able to carry it with you.

Publisher, Randy Brudnicki says the app provides the core content of the print edition. But, Art Director Nathan Adams says the experience is entirely new.

21— It would be like if you took Beethoven's Fifth Symphony and handed the sheet music to Yo Yo Ma – a classical cellist – you'd expect a certain performance to come out of that. If you handed it over to Elvis Costello and the Roots, you're going to get a completely deferent feel; different sound from that experience. Although the core music is the same, the experience is very different.

Elements of discoverability in the app will keep outdoor loving techies engaged, says Brudnicki.

11— So I think people will be able to say: ‘Well, what happens if I touch here? What happens if I hit this button, or swipe this way? What happens? We’ll have some instructions, but we’ll leave some of that discoverability up to the reader.

Free to download from the iTunes store, the app includes video, audio, and a variety of free content. Readers may purchase the magazine individually or as a subscription—print or digital.

11—You’ll be able to tie in the digital version with your print version if you want, and you can do a combo buy, where you can get both the print and the iPad version for just a few dollars more.

Find details on the [Texas Parks and Wildlife website](#).

Wildlife: The Nine-Banded Armadillo

Thursday, March 26th, 2015

The nine-banded armadillo is a Texas icon that has captured the imagination and hearts of Texans and non-Texans alike. Sadly, though, the only time some of us have seen an armadillo is in a flattened state on Texas highways.

About the size of a terrier dog...and covered with bony plates the color of pavement...it’s easy to understand why motorists might not see the armadillo as it attempts to cross roadways on summer evenings in search of food.

Speaking of the preferred cuisine of armadillos... they enjoy a diet of worms, beetles, larvae and caterpillars, among other “delicacies.”

Armadillos generally live where the soil is easily dug – because they probe for food beneath its surface. You’ll find the largest populations of armadillos where the soil texture is sandy.

Although the armadillo can swim, it tires easily when forced to go a long distance. Yet, if the stream is narrow enough, you might just see this unusual little creature enter the water on one bank, walk underwater along the bottom, and come out on the other side. Interesting, huh?

They’re also able to ingest air, which makes them more buoyant for the times when they do swim. I bet you never think of armadillos in quite the same way again.

TPW TV: Collegiate Climbers

Friday, March 27th, 2015

To these University of Texas at Austin students, climbing to the top takes hard work, but in the end, it’s about fun.

04— I’m Will Butcher; I’m Christina Nguyen; I’m Zephyr Suerte Lutz-Carrillo, and I’m a member of the UT Rock Climbing Team.

They are all members of the team, and you’ll meet them in a segment on the PBS Texas Parks and Wildlife TV series next week.

05— *I enjoy rock climbing because it's really just you and the rocks; so, it's very meditative in that sense.*

Collegiate climbing didn't exist until this guy came along:

13— *I'm John Myrick, the head coach of the climbing team at the University of Texas. Collegiate climbing didn't exist until 2008 when I started the pilot series here in Texas. And in 2009, the nationwide collegiate climbing series was born.*

During the TV segment, watch these climbers compete against other schools on an indoor rock climbing course.

13— *Whenever you see your teammate on the wall, just cheering them on; because that, really, is what helps them get to the top. You push a little further – maybe it's to the top, maybe it's not – but you definitely get a second wind by them cheering you on and having your back.*

Find out how the UT Climbing team did at the most recent collegiate championships, next week on the [PBS Texas Parks and Wildlife TV show](#).

[Check your local listings](#).

[Wildlife: Leave Baby Wildlife Alone](#)

Monday, March 30th, 2015

Springtime brings with it reports to Parks & Wildlife from people certain they've found abandoned baby animals.

09— *What could have happened is you walked up there, and mama ran off and hid – and baby is hiding there. And, as soon as you leave, mama will come back.*

That's not true in every case, says Jonah Evans, Texas Parks and Wildlife mammalogist. For example, if you see an abandoned baby possum, mom may be gone for good.

14— *With 184 some odd mammals in the state, it's probably pretty difficult to give you a list of which mothers will come back and which ones won't. So, what I recommend is before touching and animal – call a [wildlife] rehabilitator.*

[Licensed rehabilitators](#) know animal behavior and can tell you which ones could benefit from intervention.

09— *If you contact one of the many throughout the state – and there's a whole long list of them on our website – they are really the experts in this. Not Parks and Wildlife.*

Jonah Evans says although he researches and studies warm-blooded animals, rehabilitators have skills suited to helping citizens' where abandoned baby animals are concerned.

Find a list of licensed rehabilitators by county on the Texas Parks and Wildlife website.

[Wildlife: Legality of Helping Wildlife](#)

Tuesday, March 31st, 2015

Spring is about reawakening, renewal, and baby animals. That last part – baby animals – can be tricky. You see, sometimes we find infant wildlife when we're outdoors, and want to "rescue" them, which might actually be more like kidnapping.

08—For example, a baby deer [or fawn] will hide quiet and mama will almost always come back. That's their strategy.

Jonah Evans, a mammalogist at Texas Parks and Wildlife, says unless an animal is injured or in distress, leave it alone. Monitor it at a safe distance if you're concerned, but even then...

06— I recommend, before touching an animal, call a rehabilitator and ask them.

Licensed rehabilitators know animal behavior and can provide guidance, which may also include instructions to leave the animal alone because of legal considerations.

12—There are actually some regulations about possessing certain wildlife that you have to make sure you're not violating. Possessing a non-game animal without a license, could be in violation of certain laws.

You'll bypass a life of crime when you know who to call. Find a [list of licensed wildlife rehabilitators—by county](#)—on the Texas Parks and Wildlife website.

The Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration program supports our series and funds diverse conservation projects in Texas.