

# South Texas Man Hunts Rattlers For A Living

KERRVILLE, Tex. (AP)—Warm weather brings out two things—people and snakes—usually in just about equal numbers. Snakes, in turn always bring out man's ancient fear and fascination for serpents.

Texas has the dubious distinction of providing just the right climate for snakes. In the more remote and rugged areas, they are thick if you know where to look.

It nearly always comes as a bit of a shock to the average person that snakes of all kinds are as afraid of man as man is of them and will do just about anything to stay out of people's way.

Naturalists, herpetologists and professional snake handlers have deplored the indiscriminate killing of every snake in sight. Many species are not only harmless to man. They actually devour their friendly cousins.

"Snake" to most Southwesterners means rattlesnake. There is no more typical Western than the ill-tempered Western Dia-

mondback. Here is a critter to be avoided — unless you have had some very specialized training.

There are a select few that eagerly seek out these unlovely creatures for a living. While this profession is not exactly overcrowded, there is actually good money in it, according to one of South Texas' full-time rattlesnake hunters — colorful, bearded Tom Shelton.

Former rodeo cowboy Shelton Brackettville has been hunting, gathering, processing and selling rattlesnakes for seven years.

He and Kerrville free-lance photographer Casey Williams, a sort of specialist in rattlesnake portraits, can get about a buck and a half a pound for prime rattlers. This is pretty good money for livestock most ranchers and farmers are only too glad to be rid of.

Who gives a buck-and-a-half for these "prairie eels"? Several firms that pack exotic foods, leather goods manufacturers, curio

makers and animal dealers make up most of the market. According to Tom, the demand is always great.

Despite the high price per pound, Tom declares he must have 500 or so to make it profitable. He says only the really big ones are worth fooling with.

## A&M And Game And Fish Commission Will Have Big Exhibit At State Fair

The Agriculture Show at the 1962 State Fair of Texas will feature an extensive exhibit prepared by A&M in cooperation with the Texas Game and Fish Commission.

Animals and plants of forest, plains, desert and seashore will take the spotlight in the show at the fair, Oct. 6 through 21 in Dallas.

The show will tell the complete

story of Texas wildlife and game, with the benefits of recreation and the responsibilities of conservation.

Live specimens along with color photographs and moving pictures will illustrate the story.

The show will set a precedent by presenting wildlife and conservation as material resources of Texas agriculture.



Tom and the Friendly Ones

Tom Shelton proudly holds in his right hand a seven-foot non-poisonous Blue Indigo snake. In his left hand is a rare, non-poisonous Mountain Rat Snake with its beautiful markings. (AP Wirephoto)

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Ph. D. Language Examination Examinations for meeting the foreign language requirement for the Ph. D. degree will be given Friday, August 24, 7 A. M., 10:00 A. M. and 2 P. M. in Room 129, Academic Building. Students wishing to take this examination should leave the material over which they wish to be examined with the Secretary in the Department of Modern Languages not later than 5:00 p. m. Wednesday, August 22. J. J. Woolket, Head, Department of Modern Languages. 132fn

**SPECIAL NOTICE**  
SUL ROSS LODGE, NO. 1300, AF&AM. Stated meeting Thursday, August 9th at 7 p. m. Special program on "What Masonry Means To Me".  
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