

Wildlife refuge found as hunter's paradise

By GALE KAUFFMAN
If you say the word "wildlife" to some Aggies, visions of all-night drunks, wild parties and dancing come to mind. But to one particular group of Texas A&M students, "wildlife" means deer, wild boars, Whooping Cranes and alligators.

These wild animals were only a few of the things seen by some students of the wildlife science class taught by Virginia Cogar. Cogar and her students made a weekend trip to the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge where they spent their time looking for animals and learning about them.

Good conversation and good bull made the long trip to the refuge, which lies south of Victoria, a pleasant one. The students told stories for entertainment and still managed to ask questions of Cogar about wildlife.

The refuge appeared as a hunter's paradise. The deer were fat and

made perfect targets since they seldom moved when the students stopped to watch them. Eight-point bucks caused even these wildlife students to say things like "I wish I had my gun."

Most of the wildlife was spotted after dark. Driving up and down the roads of the 54,000-acre refuge and shining a spotlight along the sides, even the sly foxes and sneaky bobcats were found.

The students took turns holding the spotlight from the roof of the vehicle. Each time the light caught the eyes of an animal, the lookout would pound on the roof as a signal to stop. As more animals were spotted, the knocking became more frantic.

After about six hours of staring into the glare of the light, it began to get harder to find any animals. But the lookout was on the ball. He started pounding on the roof and yelling, "What's that? What's that?" The spotlight was pointed down the

center of the road. The passengers leaned out of the window and said, "It's a stick!" Well, at least he was trying.

All of the excitement of seeing the varied wildlife was just a sideline, however. The main purpose of the trip was to give the students a chance to see the endangered Whooping Cranes.

The refuge is the only wintering grounds of the Whoopers. They migrate yearly between the Aransas estuary and Wood Buffalo National Park in Canada. These two areas were established in cooperation with the two governments for the main purpose of protecting the

cranes. In order to see the Whoopers, it was necessary for the group to take a three-hour boat trip along the Intercoastal Canal. Great Blue Herons, egrets, vultures, pelicans and water fowl of all types were seen. And then finally, the first Whooping Crane was spotted. A total of eight

were seen and even though they only appeared as small white dots in the distance, it was worth every minute of waiting to see them. Birds and mammals were the main attractions of the trip, but the sighting of a dolphin made the boat ride twice as exciting. One of the students also saw "a shark come

clear out of the water" in a fight between it and some dolphins.

The weekend trip was a success. The Whooping Cranes were sighted and more wildlife was seen by this group in one day than many people see in an entire lifetime. And this "wildlife" didn't even leave the students with a hangover.

United Way fund hits 96% of goal

The College Station United Way fund drive has reached 96 per cent of its goal of \$35,000. Joe Sawyer, chairman of the College Station drive, announced Monday afternoon.

"We have collected or received pledges for \$33,515.41," Sawyer said. He said the last \$1,500 of the drive would come from contributions from citizens. Sawyer said he is asking every

citizen in College Station to "contribute one more dollar" to the drive.

Three Texas A&M University football players, Bujnoch, Ed Simolini and Richard Osborne contributed the first three dollars of the \$1,500 to the fund drive Monday afternoon.

Sawyer said that if the United Way drive fails to reach its goal, other governmental bodies would have to assume the responsibilities for supporting the 15 agencies receiving funds from the drive.



Staff Photo by Alan Killingsworth

Congratulations

Skip Walker congratulates fullback George Woodard after he scores against Rice. Woodard gained 167 yards on 32 carries which enabled him to be named Southwest Conference Back of the week. Woodard and Walker, along with Bubba Bean, will lead the Aggie offense against Texas.

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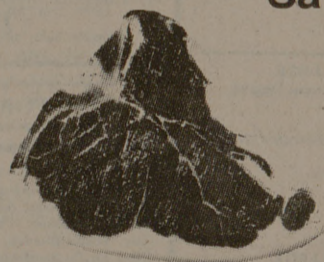
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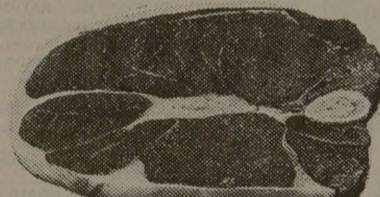
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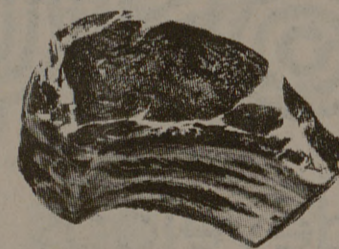
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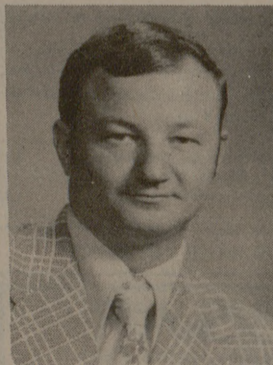
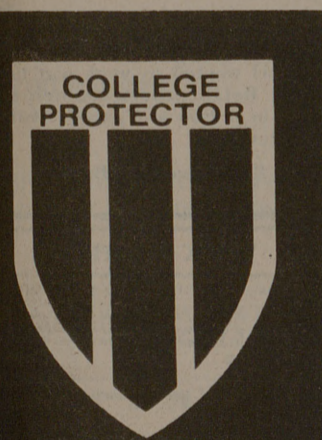
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