

Wetlands important to food chain

There is a nursery in which the plants are often abused by unknown Texas. This nursery is the tidewater area of the Texas coast referred to as the wetlands. The food chain for much of the world's people begins with the

plant life in these coastal marshes. Damming to provide water for cities and for irrigation, however, diminishes the water's flow into the wetlands which hurts the growth of this vital plant life.

Man, always a creature of contradictions, is at the same time trying

to save this cradle of life. Researcher Bob Benton of Texas A&M University's Remote Sensing Center is carrying out a study on the impact of the storage and diversion of water on the Texas wetlands' environment under contract by the Texas Water Development Board.

"Acre for acre the wetlands are the most productive area on earth," Benton said. "Much of the life in the sea got its start in the wetlands one way or another. The food chain begins with the growth and decay of marsh plants. The decayed material is eaten by zooplankton, the zooplankton by shrimp, and so on to successively larger fish and to man. Only the plants are food producers; the rest are consumers."

"Since the basic food element in the wetlands is the marsh vegetation," Benton continued, "if that's harmed by man then the wetlands' productivity is diminished accordingly."

"So, by monitoring the growth, spread and condition of the wetlands' vegetation and relating it to variations in fresh water inflow, the impact of upstream reservoirs can be determined," he said. "The board is studying this effect using field investigations and mathematical models. We're providing remote sensing information on baseline conditions over a full growing season."

"Remote sensing, in this case from aircraft, using color infrared aerial photography, can provide an economical method for determining the extent and species makeup of the marsh plant communities and for detecting subtle changes in plant condition and growth," Benton explained. "This project is a study of seven critical areas of the Texas coast. A major purpose is to determine the seasonal changes in the plant communities."

"Construction of reservoirs changes the flow into the estuaries in some important ways," he said. "For one, the amount of inflow decreases because of diversion and evaporation of the water in the reservoirs. For another, reservoir evaporation increases the saltiness of the released water. These changes in quantity and quality can affect large sections of plant life."

"As a result, the Texas Legislature passed what researchers refer to as an enlightened bill directing the TWDB to study the effects of water diversion on the ecological environment of the bays and estuaries and to

recommend how reservoir outflows can be regulated to provide for maintenance of estuarine resources. It will then be up to the Texas Water Rights Commission to insure that releases are made from reservoirs on schedule."

"Color infrared aerial photographs are used to identify vegetative species and their areal extent in addition to their relative condition," Benton said. "We're also providing seasonal maps showing the species makeup and boundaries of the plant communities."



Battalion photos by Steve Goble

Don Sanders

Houston entertainer Don Sanders brought his personal blend of dry wit and folk music to the Basement Friday night. Sanders, perhaps best known for his songs "Open My Third Eye, Moma" and "Roaches," was, as usual, the hit of the evening. The artist plans a return appearance at the Basement in September.

BULLETIN BOARD

- WEDNESDAY**
Dinner Theater "The Fantasticks," 6:30 p.m.
Bridge Club meets, MSC 212, 7 p.m.
Grove "Yellow Submarine," 8:30 p.m.
- THURSDAY**
Grove "The Twelve Chairs," 8:30 p.m.
- FRIDAY**
Commencement, College of Veterinary Medicine, 8 p.m.
Grove "Serpico," 8:30 p.m.
- SATURDAY**
Alpha Zeta Conference, 8 a.m. — 5 p.m.
Grove "Paint Your Wagon," 8:30 p.m.
- SUNDAY**
Alpha Zeta Conference, 8 a.m. — 5 p.m.
Chess club meets, MSC 212, 7 p.m.
Grove "Bridge Over The River Kwai," 8:30 p.m.
- MONDAY**
Grove "The President's Analyst," 8:30 p.m.
- TUESDAY**
Grove "Where Eagles Dare," 8:30 p.m.

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Bugle stand, gift of '36, rebuilt and rededicated

Reveille will sound more solid this fall when the Corps of Cadets return to uniform.

The "you can't get 'em up in the morning" first bugle call of the day will be played through a renovated bugle stand.

A 40 year fixture of the Texas A&M campus, the stand was reworked through contributions of the Class of 1936. The class originally conceived, donated and dedicated the stand.

Until the 1950s, it was situated on a circle in the middle of the intersec-

tion of Houston Street and Old Main Drive, between the YMCA and drill field. It was later moved to the 12-dorm quad, and has been there since.

The bugle stand was dedicated by the Class of '36 in May of its senior year in memory of Edwin O. "Pat" Bellinger. A member of the Texas Aggie Band and Cadet Corps bugler, he died in an artillery summer camp mishap.

The '36 group, which includes Engineering Dean Fred J. Benson

and Gen. Ormond R. Simpson, assistant vice president for student services, at its 40th reunion last spring decided to renovate and rededicate the stand.

W.H. Taylor of College Station suggested the project. Class members raised funds to replace the megaphone part of the stand, and attach a new plate: "Restored by the Class of 1936, TAMU, 40th Class Reunion, April, 1976."

Library gets art prints

Additions to the Texas A&M University Library lending print collection have been realized through a spring book sale.

Sixteen prints have been acquired. They are on display in the library until September, when they will be checked out to students. The collection previously consisted of 72 prints. Completely loaned out each semester, it was placed in circulation in the late 1960s.

This is the first addition to the collection.

Dr. Henry Alsmeyer, associate director, said the library has never spent appropriated or budgeted funds on the collection. He noted that the library week committee chose to apply the book sale funds to acquisitions for the lending print collection.

Mary Kuder, committee chairman, said the new works "are high quality prints of a variety of artists and artistic styles." They were purchased from the New York Graphic Society.

Shown in second floor display cases, the prints are of paintings by Moran, Ekholm, Monet, Aalund, Picasso, Corot, Van Gogh and Unesco, among others.

The collection of 88 prints will be placed on loan to students early in the fall semester. They will be checked out on a first-come, first-served basis.

The National Library Week book sale, supervised by Tamara Frost, raised \$1,000. Books sold were donated to the Friends of the Library by library staff, students and community residents.



Battalion photo by Steve Goble

Untitled lady

This untitled pen-ink-and-watercolor by Mary Pfander is part of a group of works currently on display at the MSC Gallery. Five local artists — Pfander, Celia Jeter, Sherrie Eubanks, Ken Morris and John Mounce — contributed to the show. All five are employed as art professionals at A&M.

Aggie flight trainer retires

A man who has been on the Texas A&M scene 22 years closes the association this week.

Jack Taylor of Texas Airmotive Inc. also plans to end 34 years in aviation.

He is selling interest in the firm that has contracted with the U.S. government to train ROTC flight cadets at A&M since 1957. A veteran pilot with 18,000 hours flying time, Taylor leaves the Easterwood Field office Monday. It was opened in 1954.

Taylor plans to continue making Bryan his home.

Since starting the flight program at Easterwood, Taylor and his instructor pilots have trained more than 2,000 Aggie pilots.

"Some of them that started out

with us are still flying, and nearing military retirement," Taylor remarked.

"A lot of people don't realize that Texas Airmotive is the largest ROTC training organization in the U.S.," the former military pilot added.

"Through the years, it has been No. 1."

When the operation was at its peak, Texas Airmotive employed seven instructor pilots, plus Taylor. Military flight training has been drastically curtailed in the last few years.

Along with the 2,000 cadets, the firm has trained numerous civilian pilots and conducted rental and charter business under Taylor's guidance.

The firm's outgoing president is

concerned about the automaton training requirements of the Federal Aviation Administration, remarking that "pilots are being taught too much by numbers."

A member of the old Army Air Corps, Taylor flew B-17 bombers in World War II. He was recalled to active duty in the Air Force during the Korean conflict and flew F-84s. He was discharged as a captain.

Taylor was chosen Flight Instructor of the year in 1975 by the Houston FAA district. The award recognizes flight instructors who make outstanding contributions to air safety through flight instruction practices. He was chosen by FAA personnel in consultation with members of the aviation community.

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