

Local

# Prof seeking new duck skins for class use

By JED T. YOUNG  
Campus Reporter

"Duck hunters — desperately need females of Gadwale and Canvasback. You can have the carcass back, we just need the skins." This announcement was seen hanging on a second floor wall in Nagel Hall. Duck skins? With or without feathers?

Dr. Keith Arnold, professor of wildlife and fisheries sciences, wrote the announcement. Not a ferocious duck seap hunter, Arnold uses the skins for display in his general ornithology (study of birds) class at Texas A&M University. Arnold posted the announcement during duck season and he did get these particular samples of the Gadwale and Canvasback ducks, but he said he hasn't been able to complete the "scalping."

Arnold removes the skin from the duck, stuffs it and mounts it for display much like a taxidermist would with a deer head. He said this process is very time-consuming and meticulous, but students learn to tell the different species of birds more precisely when they can see them first hand.

The students study the samples to learn such things as variation of feathers and different kinds of bills and feet. In the lab portion of the class, nine weeks is spent on learning the species of Texas.

Arnold also contributes the samples to the Texas Cooperative Wildlife Collections, which he said is simply the official name for the wildlife collections at Texas A&M. These collections are used to document occurrence of each species in different parts of the state on a county to county basis, Arnold said. When he

came to Texas A&M in 1966, the bird collection numbered 6,200 and now the collection is up to 11,000 birds, Arnold said.

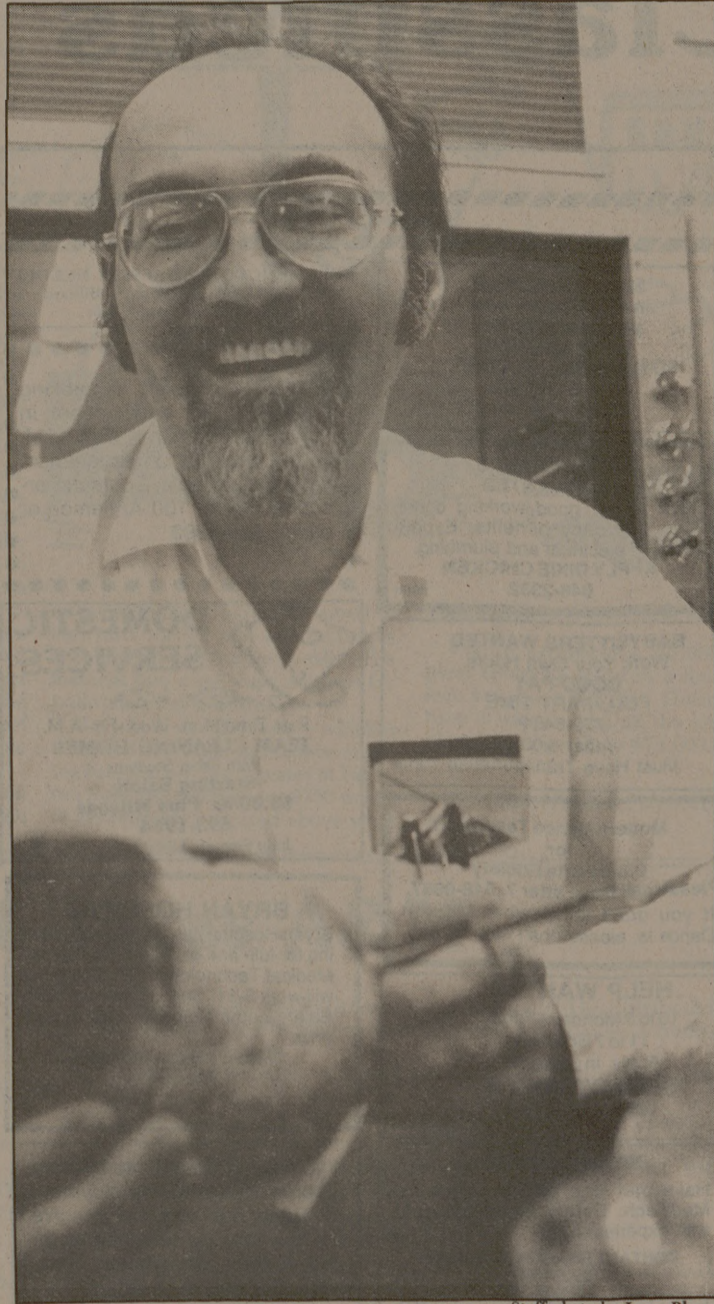
The collection includes most common species of birds, especially birds from Texas, Mexico and Colorado. Arnold said it tries to represent as many families and orders of birds as possible.

Some ornithology students help in the upkeep and preparation of the collection, which is located in 215 Nagel. Students not involved in the study of birds can see the birds, but Arnold said he prefers that they contact him if they are interested.

As far as the value of the bird specimens, many are not as valuable as others. Arnold explained that the minimum value of any specimen is \$20. "But how can you put a value on a sample like the bald eagle?" he asked.

Although he would like to accept any contribution, Arnold said he must be selective due to lack of storage space. For instance, a teal duck, a brown duck seen on local ponds and lakes, is not wanted as much as the Common Merganser duck, which is usually black with a crested head and slender bill. Mergansers are known to migrate to coastal regions although none have been located on Texas coasts. Arnold said he needs these desperately.

There are other ducks that Arnold needs for his class and the wildlife collection. Although duck season and hunter's shooting privileges ended Jan. 20, some avid duck hunter may have "wanted" ducks in his freezer. Arnold said he will readily accept contributions, especially scoter ducks.



Staff photo by Lynn Blanco  
Keith Arnold, professor of wildlife and fisheries sciences, has been collecting ducks for his ornithology class. The stuffed ducks make the study of birds easier for his students, he said.

# MSC Council proposes budget increase for '81

By ANGELIQUE COPELAND  
Campus Staff

A 19 percent budget increase for 1980-81, including a request for an additional \$22,271 in student services fee funding, was approved Monday night by the Memorial Student Center Council with very little debate.

The proposed \$1,261,436 budget for the 20 MSC committees is divided into two categories: money allocated from student service fees and funds generated by the committees through ticket sales, donations, and other fund raising events.

The current budget of \$1,062,144, an 89 percent increase over last year, was reached with a 6 percent decrease in student service fee money due to a remarkable 130 percent increase in generated revenue from \$394,594 in 1978 to \$906,042. Generated revenue is projected to increase by only 20 percent next year.

Most of the budget increases will be used to purchase equipment including a large screen television and other video equipment costing approximately \$34,000. An additional \$10,000 was allotted to the MSC Outdoor Recreation Committee next year to continue to expand its equipment rental program.

The budget now goes through student government and Dr. John Koldus, vice president for student services, for approval.

In other business, the council approved combining the MSC Arts and MSC Crafts and Arts committee into a single committee. As a result, the MSC Arts film program will be transferred to Aggie Cinema and in-

cluded in its Classical and International series, and "crafts" will become a subcommittee of MSC Arts. Kerrie Kernan was approved as acting chairman of Arts until elections are held Feb. 18.

Teresa Beshara, vice president of programs, said the committees were combined to resolve past problems with low manpower but high attendance in the Crafts and Arts program, and high manpower but low attendance in the Arts.

After some debate, the council decided to approve Andrew Young as a MSC Political Forum speaker. Young's speaking fee is \$6,000 including travel expenses, and there was discussion of his marketability on the campus and in the community.

MSC Political Forum members Sheryl Stout and Chuck Mullins presented a budget breakdown justifying the cost of getting Young based on their ability to raise \$1,200 through admissions (800 students at \$1 each and 200 non-students at \$2 each).

The budget was approved on the recommendation that MSC Political Forum conduct a survey on interest in the former U.N. ambassador and member of the House of Representatives, and also seek co-sponsorship with other groups to aid in funding the program.

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# Residents using 'golden opportunity'

By CAROL HANCOCK  
Campus Staff

Gold markets and dealers around the world have been busy since the price of gold has skyrocketed recently. Bryan-College Station dealers are no exception.

Local jewelers and dealers said the number of students and residents selling used gold has jumped since the first of the year, while the number of purchases has not increased by much.

Ron Alfred, a salesman at The Diamond Room, said that within the last three weeks, the number of people selling back gold has more than doubled.

The most prominent items, he said, have been high school rings. "A lot of high school students are selling their class rings so they can afford college rings," he said. Only two Aggie rings have been brought back.

Alfred said the prices his store pays for the used gold fluctuate in correspondence with prices on the New York market. Large day-to-day increases or decreases in New York prices have not greatly influenced the number of selling and buying customers, he said.

Ed Simmons, a salesman at Diamond Brokers International, Inc., said since they started advertising to buy back gold, the response has been fantastic.

High school rings are also the most

common selling items at Diamond Brokers, Simmons said. Aggie rings are unusual, he said, but they have received one.

Simmons said they have set prices for 10, 14, and 18 karat gold but a major change in world market prices

would change the set price. The gold they buy back is melted down and resold as a special Texas gold piece, he said.

Local pawn shop spokesmen said there has been little if any increase in customers pawning gold jewelry.

"Most people are trying to hold on to their gold," said Bobby Vickey, manager of American Pawn Shop. Managers of both American and Jim's Pawn shops said they vary prices according to the national market.

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