



Uvalde National Fish Hatchery

Monthly Activity Report

March 2015



Staff

Project Leader • Vacant

Acting Project Leader • Rick Echols

Fish Biologist • Rick Echols

Engineering Equipment Operator • Cirilo Alonzo

Maintenance Worker • Rene Guerra

Administrative Assistant • Mark Dietrich

Biological Science Technician • Catherine Baxter

Volunteer • Mike Brown

Volunteers • Thomas Jetzer & Patricia Schenk

studies will be used in copper toxicity and pairwise mating studies at Uvalde NFH.

Dave Straus and Cindy Ledbetter of the Harry K. Dupree Stuttgart National Aquaculture Center visited the hatchery over three days in mid-March. They have been working to expand the label of copper sulfate to include treatment of *saprolognia sp.* on fish eggs and as a parasite treatment on fish. They helped us to set up standardized experiments based on trials that they are currently running to determine toxicity levels in our endangered aquatic species. Experiments will also be repeated using pond water and our well water. Trials will be conducted on Comanche Springs pupfish, Devils River minnow, fountain darter, and Texas wild rice over the coming spring and summer.

Workforce Management

Rick Echols continued in the role of acting project leader during March.

Marta Estrada visited the station mid-month to provide training to our administrative assistant Mark Dietrich in PExpress and FPPS.

Volunteers Thomas Jetzer and Patricia Schenk have completed over 1,000 volunteer hours over the past 4 years and have now gone back to Indiana to open their KOA campground for the season.

Aquatic Species Activities

Young of the year channel catfish average 12 to 14 inches in length and have resumed rapid growth. They will be of ideal size when our annual fishing derby is held on May 30.

Partnerships and Accountability

As identified in approved Recovery Plans, refugia efforts continue for the Texas Wild Rice, Fountain Darter, Comanche Springs Pupfish, Devil's River Minnow, and San Marcos Salamander. All species are performing well.

The station continues to maintain communications with the San Marcos Aquatic Resource Center (SMARC) and Edwards Aquifer Recovery Implementation Program for existing and upcoming refugia activities of threatened and endangered species native to the Edwards Aquifer system.

The Uvalde NFH continues to hold 500+F1 juvenile fountain darters for USGS life history studies at the Leetown Science Center in West Virginia. Fish that are not needed for USGS

Catfish broodstock were moved from an earthen pond to a lined pond in late March. This will allow for easier collection of eggs as aquatic weeds will not be an issue. This will also help with water conservation as water will not be lost to leaching. Broodstock were of prime size and in excellent condition.



Volunteers Thomas Jetzer and Mike Brown assist Rick Echols with harvest and transfer of broodstock catfish

Volunteers Thomas Jetzer, Patricia Schenk, and Mike Brown have completed 2 of 4 new recirculating tank systems for life history and chemical toxicity studies.

Prep work is now complete as we await the arrival of 4 large new rice tanks. Because of all of the work, we anticipate installation to go smoothly and quickly.

Facility Maintenance

Contractors have completed an electrical expansion project for our main tank house. During their work, the contractor found 2 breakers with evidence of overheating and/or arcing because of loose wires. Faulty equipment was replaced. In anticipation of further electrical expansion, additional capacity was located and will be used for the 4 rice tanks we expect by late April.

Concrete was poured in three locations at the hatchery in March. Steps and an apron were completed at pond 48. An extension of the pad

for our outdoor classroom was poured, and a wheelchair accessible picnic table pad was poured adjacent to the outdoor classroom just off of our nature trail. The walls of the kettle at pond 48 will be poured in April.



Various concrete projects completed in March

Safety

Our 5 staff members and 2 volunteers were recertified by the American Heart Association in Adult / Child / Infant First Aid and CPR, and Adult / Child AED. This all day training also served as our quarterly safety meeting.



Cirilo Alonzo, Rene Guerra, and Rick Echols attending First Aid / CPR / AED training

Facility Visitors

The hatchery hosted approximately 8 visitors for the month.



Hatchery visitors Alicia Balda and John Hillman make use of the lobby sitting area furnished with excess furniture

Weather

Temperatures for March ranged from a low of 29°F to a high of 84°F. Overall, high temperatures were well below normal with the observed average high for the month at 69°F compared to the 111 year average of 76°F. Low temperatures were below normal as well with the average for the month at 50°F compared to the 111 year average of 53°F. Measurable rainfall occurred on 11 days in March with precipitation totaling 1.75 inches. According to US Climate Data, March's monthly precipitation averages 0.98 inches. The Edwards Aquifer is currently at 824.1' compared to 824.2' in February and 833.1' this time last year.

Upcoming Events

Selection of a Directorate Fellowship Program candidate will take place in early April. The selected student will begin their investigative study in late May.

Staff will represent the hatchery at Dia de Los Nino's of Uvalde "Day of the Children". We will bring fish for display and talk to the children about the importance of aquatic species conservation and will have promotional and informational materials available.

Rick Echols will be attending the water recirculation course in Phoenix in late April.

Our annual kids fishing derby will be held on May 30, 2015 from 8 a.m. to noon. Children from 4 to 15 are welcome to participate.

The hatchery should receive additional San Marcos Salamanders within the next few months and start an egg handling study soon afterwards.

Delivery of 4 additional large rice tanks should occur during the month of April.

Uvalde National Fish Hatchery

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Uvalde National Fish Hatchery March 2015

Species	Year Class	Geographic Origin	Approximate Number
Channel Catfish Broodstock	2013	Domestic Strain	185
Channel Catfish	2014	Domestic Strain	3,000
Comanche Springs Pupfish	Mixed	Phantom Springs	80,799
Devils River Minnow (F1)	2013	San Felipe Springs	268
Devils River Minnow (F2)	2014	San Felipe Springs	150
Devils River Minnow (F2)	2015	San Felipe Springs	67
Fountain Darter (W)	2012-2014	Upper Comal River	4
Fountain Darter (W)	2012-2014	Lower Comal River	42
Fountain Darter (F1)	2013/2014	Comal River	518
Fountain Darter (F1)	2015	Upper Comal River	29
Fountain darter (F1)	2015	Lower Comal River	503
San Marcos Salamander (M)	2013	San Marcos River	10
San Marcos Salamander (F)	2013	San Marcos River	10
Texas Wild Rice	N/A	San Marcos R. (A)	54
Texas Wild Rice	N/A	San Marcos R. (B)	37
Texas Wild Rice	N/A	San Marcos R. (C)	15
Texas Wild Rice	N/A	San Marcos R. (D)	12
Texas Wild Rice	N/A	San Marcos R. (F)	19
Texas Wild Rice	N/A	San Marcos R. (G)	17
Texas Wild Rice	N/A	San Marcos R. (J)	3
Texas Wild Rice	N/A	San Marcos R. (K)	12
Texas Wild Rice	N/A	SMR (Unknown)	25

Species and number at Uvalde NFH at the end of the month.