



Uvalde National Fish Hatchery

Monthly Activity Report

November 2015



Staff

Project Leader • Patricia Duncan

Fish Biologist • Rick Echols

Engineering Equipment Operator • Cirilo Alonzo

Maintenance Worker • Rene Guerra

Administrative Assistant • Mark Dietrich

Volunteers • Thomas Jetzer and Patricia Schenk

Volunteers Thomas Jetzer and Patricia Schenk have arrived for their 5th year in a row of providing their vast experience in all matters concerning maintenance around the hatchery. They immediately integrated back into their usual routine around the tank house, welding, repairing, cleaning and maintaining grounds.

Aquatic Species Activities

A second trip to collect Texas wild rice tillers from GPS marked locations occurred in mid-November. This time effort centered on collecting specimens from the second geographic location headed downstream on the San Marcos River. Twenty-four new plants were added to the rice refugium at Uvalde from section "B".

Now in two ponds, young of the year channel catfish continue to thrive and grow. The smaller size class averages 7 inches while the larger fish are approximately 12 inches in length.

The fall bird migration was late this year, but was completed quickly with the passing of two sharp cold fronts. Black Bellied Whistling Ducks have been replaced a varied mixture of waterfowl, Bluewing Teal arrived first and many have remained on station for the winter. We have also seen greenwing teal and a few cinnamon teal, American coot, northern pintails, mallards, gadwalls, widgeon, northern shovelers and a spattering of mottled ducks. sandhill cranes continue to arrive as do the predatory double crested cormorants. Fewer cormorants seem to be sticking around this year as all of our vulnerable fish are under protective netting.

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.

The station continues to maintain communications with the San Marcos Aquatic Resource Center (SMARC) for existing and upcoming refugia activities of threatened and endangered species native to the Edwards Aquifer system. Discussions and planning will be conducted with the regional office and the Southwestern Native Aquatic Resources Center (SNARC) for fish production activities for the 2016 growing season.

Workforce Management

Pat Duncan attended the project leader's meeting in Albuquerque, NM late last month. Prior to the meeting, she met with Jennifer Fowler-Propst and Manuel Ulibarri concerning planning for Rio Grande silvery minnow production at Uvalde NFH in 2016.



Dabblers and Divers have arrived for the winter in South Texas

Facility Maintenance

The Environmental Compliance inspection was conducted by Bernie Freeman from the regional office this month. No major problems were detected.

The Spurgeon well was finally put back into service. A nonfunctional meter was repaired, and a broken relay to our computer was identified and is scheduled to be fixed. The pump itself is functioning properly.

A large patch of netting material has been spliced into the existing net covering our catfish fingerlings in order to make it cormorant proof.

Outreach

Mark Dietrich attended the monthly Uvalde Tourism Board luncheon this month. Pat Duncan attended the monthly CEO meeting in Uvalde where she planned outreach activities with local garden groups in the future.

Facility Visitors

The hatchery hosted approximately 12 visitors for the month, including one hatchery tour.

Weather

Temperatures for October ranged from a low of 31°F to a high of 82°F. Overall, high

temperatures were below normal with the observed average high for the month at 69°F compared to the 111 year average of 72°F. Low temperatures were above normal with the average for the month of 51°F compared to the 111 year average of 48°F. Above average nightly temperatures can be attributed to abundant cloud cover. Measurable rainfall occurred on 13 days in November with precipitation totaling 2.41 inches. According to US Climate Data, November's monthly precipitation averages 1.6 inches. The Edwards Aquifer level continues to rise and is currently at 856.8' compared to 854.0' last month, and 825.3' this time last year.

Upcoming Events

Patricia Duncan will be attending the Project Leader Academy for two weeks in early December.

Uvalde National Fish Hatchery

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Uvalde National Fish Hatchery November 2015			
Species	Year Class	Geographic Origin	Approximate Number
Channel Catfish Broodstock	2014	Domestic Strain	200
Channel Catfish	2015	Domestic Strain	5,945
Comanche Springs Pupfish (Pond)	Mixed	Phantom Springs	153,864
Comanche Springs Pupfish (Tank)	Mixed	Phantom Springs	150
Devils River Minnow (F1)	2013	San Felipe Springs	218
Devils River Minnow (F2)	2014	San Felipe Springs	40
Devils River Minnow (F2)	2015	San Felipe Springs	241
Fountain Darter (W)	2012-2014	Upper Comal River	20
Fountain Darter (W)	2012-2014	Lower Comal River	20
Fountain Darter (F1)	2013/2014	Comal River Mix	284
Fountain Darter (F1)	2015	Upper Comal River	31
Fountain Darter (F1)	2015	Lower Comal River	8
Fountain Darter (F1)	2015	Comal River Mix	60
San Marcos Salamander (M)	2013	San Marcos River	4
San Marcos Salamander (F)	2013	San Marcos River	7
Texas Wild Rice	N/A	San Marcos R. (A)	63
Texas Wild Rice	N/A	San Marcos R. (B)	36
Texas Wild Rice	N/A	San Marcos R. (C)	15
Texas Wild Rice	N/A	San Marcos R. (D)	11
Texas Wild Rice	N/A	San Marcos R. (F)	15
Texas Wild Rice	N/A	San Marcos R. (G)	22
Texas Wild Rice	N/A	San Marcos R. (J)	3
Texas Wild Rice	N/A	San Marcos R. (K)	11
Texas Wild Rice	N/A	SMR (Unknown)	80

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