



Uvalde National Fish Hatchery

Monthly Activity Report

August 2015



Staff

Project Leader • Patricia Duncan

Fish Biologist • Rick Echols

Engineering Equipment Operator • Cirilo Alonzo

Maintenance Worker • Rene Guerra

Administrative Assistant • Mark Dietrich

Pathways Program • Rueben Mendoza

Directorate Fellowship Program • Justin Crow

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, Rio Grande silvery 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. In addition, updates to the care and maintenance of the Rio Grande silvery minnow were provided by the Southwestern Native Aquatic Resources Center on a regular basis.

Workforce Management

Cirilo Alonzo and Rene Guerra provided their pond cleaning expertise to the San Marcos Aquatic Resources Center for nearly a week. Special care is necessary when operating heavy

equipment on plastic pond liners. In addition, they provided training to San Marcos staff on proper patching of the liner with a specialized welder. Temperatures in lined dry ponds can reach 130°F in the middle of the day, so they were sure to take long breaks and drink plenty of water.

Justin Crow completed his Directorate Fellowship Program in mid-August. We now have a draft document for reproducing Comanche Springs pupfish in tanks.

Rueben Mendoza finished his summer stint in the pathways program on August 21. The Rio Grande silvery minnow he had been caring for are doing well. He has returned to his studies at the University of Montana. Both Justin and Rueben attended an intern workshop in Albuquerque at the end of their terms and gave presentations on their work at Uvalde.

The Southwest Native Aquatic Resources Center is sending biologists in rotation for one to two weeks to cover the work involved in caring for these fish. Ian Paige was the first, arriving on August 24.



Ian Page

Aquatic Species Activities

Comanche Springs pupfish produced by Justin Crow for his DFP project continue to grow and thrive.

Monthly monitoring of Comanche springs pupfish continued in August. Results indicate healthy populations in each of the three ponds with all sizes present. Young of the year fish continue to recruit to our minnow traps adding to our population estimates. August's estimates are provided at the end of this document.

Young of the year channel catfish are approximately 5 inches in length and are growing steadily.

Facility Maintenance



Workers in the process of pulling the Spurgeon well pump

Maintenance to our Spurgeon well commenced in late August. Review of a previous video from 2010 indicated advanced deterioration to the casing. The contracted maintenance firm suggests recasing the well which would alter the well from a 12" bore to an 8" bore and reduce the flow of water. Alternatively, they suggest drilling a new well.

Work continues to install concrete steps adjacent to the kettle in pond 43. Forms will be

installed for steps on pond 36 as well, before concrete is ultimately poured. This will ultimately alleviate safety concerns by providing solid footing on one of our deepest and steepest ponds.



Step construction is underway in pond 43 and about to begin in pond 36.

Pond cleaning began in late August. Two lined ponds with bird netting will be prepared so that catfish can be moved under protection from cormorants that arrive in October.

Outreach

Patricia Duncan attended the monthly Uvalde Tourism Board luncheon. Plans were made for upcoming outreach events and interaction with local wildlife educational programs.

Safety

Rick Echols completed the station's safety inspection. Staff continue to correct findings brought to light by the inspection. All corrections should be made by the end of September.

Facility Visitors

The hatchery hosted approximately 10 visitors for the month. Visitors took part in hatchery tours and partook in the facilities ample birding opportunities.

Weather

Temperatures for August ranged from a low of 64°F to a high of 101°F. Overall, high temperatures were above normal with the observed average high for the month at 97.6°F compared to the 111 year average of 96°F. Low temperatures were normal as the average for the month and the 111 year average were 72°F. Measurable rainfall occurred on 3 days in August with precipitation totaling 0.10 inches. According to US Climate Data, August's monthly precipitation averages 2.6 inches. The Edwards Aquifer level has been fairly level for the month and is currently at 851.2' compared to 850.0' last month, and 825.9' this time last year.

Upcoming Events

Patricia Duncan will be attending the project leader's meeting in Albuquerque in late September.

The station's environmental compliance inspection originally scheduled for August will be completed in October.

The station plans to attend the annual Outback Oasis Dove Expo in early September. This will be another opportunity for the hatchery to showcase what we do with tank and poster displays. Staff will be on hand to answer questions from the public.

Uvalde National Fish Hatchery

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Uvalde National Fish Hatchery August 2015			
Species	Year Class	Geographic Origin	Approximate Number
Channel Catfish Broodstock	2014	Domestic Strain	200
Channel Catfish	2015	Domestic Strain	10,000
Comanche Springs Pupfish (Pond)	Mixed	Phantom Springs	417,002*
Comanche Springs Pupfish (Tank)	Mixed	Phantom Springs	298
Devils River Minnow (F1)	2013	San Felipe Springs	224
Devils River Minnow (F2)	2014	San Felipe Springs	40
Devils River Minnow (F2)	2015	San Felipe Springs	203
Fountain Darter (W)	2012-2014	Upper Comal River	25
Fountain Darter (W)	2012-2014	Lower Comal River	25
Fountain Darter (F1)	2013/2014	Comal River Mix	375
Fountain Darter (F1)	2015	Upper Comal River	31
Fountain Darter (F1)	2015	Comal River Mix	59
San Marcos Salamander (M)	2013	San Marcos River	5
San Marcos Salamander (F)	2013	San Marcos River	7
Texas Wild Rice	N/A	San Marcos R. (A)	52
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)	16
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)	22

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

*Young of year pupfish have recruited to traps resulting in increased estimates this month