



Uvalde National Fish Hatchery

Monthly Activity Report

December 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

As we have welcomed our two volunteers, Thomas Jetzer and Patricia Schenk back to Uvalde, we said goodbye to Rick Echols. Mr. Echols worked at Uvalde NFH both as a volunteer and as a fish biologist for the past 6 years. He left at the end of December to take a job as the manager of fisheries and lakes in Bella Vista, Arkansas. We wish Mr. Echols the best of luck in his new endeavor.

Pat Duncan attended the project leader's meeting in Albuquerque, NM from November 29-December 3. She also attended the project leader academy at NCTC in West Virginia from December 6-18. Not only was this a great opportunity to get training but also served as a valuable chance for meeting other service project leaders and learning about their programs.

Partnerships and Accountability

As identified in approved Recovery Plans, refugia efforts continued for the Texas Wild Rice, Fountain Darter, Comanche Springs Pupfish, Devils River Minnow, and San Marcos salamander in December.

The station continued 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 collaboration with the Southwestern Native Aquatic Resources and Recovery Center (SNARRC) and other partners, Uvalde NFH will be raising Rio Grande silvery minnow again in 2016. These fish produced at Uvalde will augment the numbers released to the Rio Grande in recovery efforts.

Workforce Management

Aquatic Species Activities

Young of the year channel catfish continued to thrive while feeding slowed due to the seasonal decrease in water temperature. The smaller size class averaged approximately 8 inches while the larger fish were approximately 13 inches in length.

Late in December, discussions were held for planning for studies on Comanche Springs pupfish pond population assessment with Dr. Randy Stewart. The trials conducted at Uvalde NFH, will be in conjunction with pond trials with other species at other facilities, to develop better models to predict actual fish pond populations from improvements in sampling methodology.

Production of Devils River minnow continued in tank house raceways. Transfer of gravel trays from tanks with broodstock Devils River

minnows to net cages for collection and hatching of eggs and larval fish rearing continued in December. Larger fry from fish spawned in November were moved from screen net cages to grow-out raceways.

The annual report for threatened and endangered species activities for 2015 was prepared and submitted to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department by Mr. Rich Echols.



Northern Pintails take flight from pond at Uvalde

The station is still occupied with a variety of birds from the fall bird migration. Black Bellied Whistling Ducks have been replaced by a varied mixture of waterfowl. Ring-necked ducks, Lesser scaup and Grebes joined the assortment of waterfowl at Uvalde in December. Other waterfowl remaining at the station included American coot, northern pintails, mallards, gadwalls, widgeon, northern shovelers and a spattering of mottled ducks. The numbers of Sandhill cranes arriving at the station continued to increase during December. Fewer cormorants have been seen this year compared to previous years.

Facility Maintenance



Improvements in drainage sluice at Uvalde

Work continued on repairing, and cleaning out the sluice drain in the upper station. Flood rains earlier in the year had moved debris into the canal slowing the movement of water which required major clearing. Mr. Cirilo Alonzo is nearing completion of this task in time before the new rains in the spring. Work also continued on the forms for the repair of concrete kettles in pond 48.

Annual maintenance was conducted on the fleet and other equipment including scheduled oil and filter changes.



Volunteers Patricia Schenk and Thomas Jetzer repaired and set up numerous new aquaria which increased the replicates available for our recirculating aquaria research systems. They have also finished cleaning most of the facility, from the outside of the buildings and throughout the inside of the administration building and the tank house.

Outreach

Mark Dietrich provided an educational tour of the hatchery for the Harlingen High School Stem Club on December 21.

Facility Visitors

The hatchery hosted approximately 35 visitors for the month, including one hatchery tour.

On December 19, the annual Christmas bird count was again conducted at Uvalde NFH by volunteers led by Dr. Susan Cook of the Texas A&M Agrilife Center of Uvalde.

Weather

Temperatures for December ranged from a low of 33°F to a high of 80°F. Pond water temperatures ranged from a low of 53°F to a high of 61°F for the month of December. No measurable rainfall occurred in December in Uvalde.

Upcoming Events

Uvalde Tourism Council meeting on January 26.

The La Pryor High School Agriculture Class will be visiting the station on February 1.

Mark Dietrich will be attending the administrator's conference at the regional office in Albuquerque from February 1-4.

Patricia Duncan will be presenting information on opportunities in fisheries and wildlife management at the Uvalde High School Career Day on February 11.

Uvalde National Fish Hatchery

754 County Road 203

Uvalde, Texas 78801

PHONE:

(830) 278-2419

FAX:

(830) 278-6042

[http://www.fws.gov/southwest/
fisheries/ualde/index.html](http://www.fws.gov/southwest/fisheries/ualde/index.html)

Uvalde National Fish Hatchery December 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	151,601
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	400
Fountain Darter (W)	2012-2014	Upper Comal River	15
Fountain Darter (W)	2012-2014	Lower Comal River	14
Fountain Darter (F1)	2013/2014	Comal River Mix	260
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.