

# The Alamo City Rivermen Babbler

Issue MMCCLIX

February 2006

The monthly newsletter of the Alamo City Rivermen

**Padding the fine line between geek and Bubba.**

## *That Time of Year Again*

### Next Meeting

February 8, 2006, Hungry Horse Rest.,  
12333 West Avenue, near the  
intersection with Rhapsody. 6:30 to  
9:00.

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Yes, wouldn't you know it? **Dues are due for 2006:** \$15 a person or \$20 a family. Please send them to Alamo City Rivermen Canoe Club, P.O. Box 171194, San Antonio, Texas 78217.

If you joined in the last four months of 2005, you are golden. Otherwise, cough up. Please. Thank you.

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## **2006 Freeze Trip**

This may be remembered as the 'Irony Freeze Trip.' The statewide drought led to a statewide burn ban, which led to our changing location to Tom Goynes' Pecan Park at San Marcos, where we paddled in the rain. But it rained only a little and just at first. Overall the weather was mild and the paddling was great.



## Upcoming Events

February 8, 2006	Monthly Meeting	Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near Rhapsody. 6:30 to 9:00.
March 8, 2006	Monthly Meeting	Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near Rhapsody. 6:30 to 9:00.
April 12, 2006	Monthly Meeting. Walt Dabney of Texas Parks and Wildlife will be the speaker.	Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near Rhapsody. 6:30 to 9:00.
April 15, 2006 ???	Earth Day Canoe Rides at Woodlawn Lake	?????
April 21??, 2006	Caddo Lake Trip ?????	
May 10, 2006	Monthly Meeting	Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near Rhapsody. 6:30 to 9:00.
May 27-29, 2006	Memorial Day Trip	?????
June 14, 2006	Monthly Meeting	Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near Rhapsody. 6:30 to 9:00.
July 1-4, 2006	Independence Day Trip	?????
July 12, 2006	Monthly Meeting	Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near Rhapsody. 6:30 to 9:00.
August 9, 2006	Monthly Meeting	Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near Rhapsody. 6:30 to 9:00.
September 2-4, 2006	Labor Day Trip	?????
September 13, 2006	Monthly Meeting	Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near Rhapsody. 6:30 to 9:00.



## Paddlecraft Registration

If you've been reading your email, you know that Texas Parks and Wildlife has raised again the issue of paddlecraft registration. The exact form is not set, but at its most extreme, it could require affixing to our canoes and kayaks the same numbers affixed to boats powered by motors. And of course pay the same fees paid for such boats. That could lead to owners of 20 foot sea kayaks paying more money than owners of 15 foot ski boats.

The discussion began with an editorial in the Texas Parks and Wildlife magazine, which is reproduced on the next page. Walter Dabney of TPWD will speak at our April meeting about TPWD's funding dilemma and how they see their options. Come and listen respectfully to what he has to say. He will be a guest and should be treated as such.

If anyone has a digital projector for the presentation, please let me know.

# AT ISSUE

FROM THE PEN OF ROBERT L. COOK

**When I was 8 or 9 years old,** Dad decided we needed a proper boat to fish the Pecan Bayou which ran through Grandpa "Pop" McGhee's ranch southwest of Zephyr. It was maybe the best "catfishing" in the known world. Dad bought a "kit boat" that came in about eight pieces of pre-cut wood with a batch of wood screws and a can of glue. The whole thing cost \$30. Dad wasn't the greatest carpenter, but he was what we politely called "determined," and within a couple of weeks we had that 10-foot boat assembled, painted and declared seaworthy after its maiden voyage in the stock tank. When Dad bought a 2.5-horsepower SeaBee outboard for the boat, I reckoned that we were fixing to get serious about this fishing business. We made our fishing trip to the bayou that summer, and we brought home fish for the family and all the neighbors, and had a barrel of fun while we were at it. We carefully pulled the little boat up high in a pecan tree and smiled at our boating and fishing skills. The next week Pop McGhee made a float trip down his mile or so of the bayou, and unfortunately left our fine vessel tied to the bank, floating in the bayou. That night it rained 6 inches, the bayou came down and the little homemade "kit boat" was never seen again.

Today, boaters in Texas register more than 600,000 vessels with our agency. All motorized watercraft, sailboats and personal watercraft in use on public waters must be registered. Fees average \$20 per year, per vessel, with fees varying depending on the length of the boat. For example, the fee for boats of less than 16 feet is \$15 per year, while boats over 40 feet in length cost \$45 per year. Boat registration and titling is a very important revenue source for us, generating close to \$20 million for the agency's use in enforcing boating safety regulations by our game wardens. Last year \$2.8 million of this revenue was allocated to the operation of our state parks, as approved by the Texas Legislature. Folks who recreate and fish on our public rivers and lakes appreciate the oversight, search and rescue and community-based enforcement provided by our Texas game wardens. Likewise, users appreciate and enjoy our state parks, especially those who frequent our boat docks, boat ramps and marina facilities.

Some might ask, shouldn't "paddle-powered" canoes and kayaks be registered also? Don't they use the same public resource of our rivers and lakes? When they need help, don't those same game wardens come to their rescue and assistance? Don't they use our same state parks, boat docks and boat ramp parking areas? Yes, they do. Canoes and kayaks that are not motorized do not present many of the management problems, resource issues and human conflicts as do the other boats. But, they are using the resource, occupying space on our public lakes and streams and requiring some of the same oversight as motorized boats. On the other hand, kayakers and canoeists need additional public access points to put in and take out along our rivers and streams. Would it be reasonable to ask that canoeists and kayakers help fund the conservation of our natural resources, pay a portion of the boating safety effort and fund additional public access points to our rivers and streams? I wonder if those users would be receptive to an \$8 to \$10 annual fee if the Legislature dedicated 25 percent to state parks, 25 percent to boater safety, 25 percent to improving and increasing public access points to our rivers and streams and 25 percent to improving our fisheries.

Motor or no motor, I think we would have proudly registered our little homemade wooden boat, knowing how much fun we were going to have in the great outdoors of Texas.

Get involved. Get outdoors. Enjoy.

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*Texas Parks and Wildlife Department mission statement:*

**To manage and conserve the natural and cultural resources of Texas and to provide hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.**

(Paddlecraft registration, continued)

We need not fear that registration will be imposed immediately. The Texas legislature meets only in odd-numbered years. But even-numbered years are when a lot of mischief is planned, so we must be alert in 2006 as well as 2007.

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## For Sale

### Porta Potti 155



Mike Fox is selling one of these.  
mikefox at satx dot rr dot com

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2 Perception Swiftys (one red, one yellow) for sale at \$150 each.  
Debbie Lockey, 281-416-2305

(Ed., the first decent picture I found was blue. )



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## First Annual Texas Gulf Coast Sea Kayak Symposium

Austin Outdoor Gear and Guidance invites you to join us for the First Annual Texas Gulf Coast Sea Kayak Symposium **March 31 through April 2** at San Luis Pass, Texas. The symposium will feature British Canoe Union (BCU) trainings and assessments, paddling clinics, boat demos and much more.

We have a tremendous group of instructors flying in and driving in for the symposium including Nigel Dennis, Dale Williams, Kelly Blades, Larry Koenig, Mimi Clifton, Carla Jennings and Mark White.

Saturday evening will feature a presentation by Nigel Dennis about his recent circumnavigation of South Georgia Island. We will have a limited number of plastic and composite boats available for rent for out of town participants.

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**A Snake You Might See on the River**  
**Plain Belly Water Snakes**  
(nonvenomous)



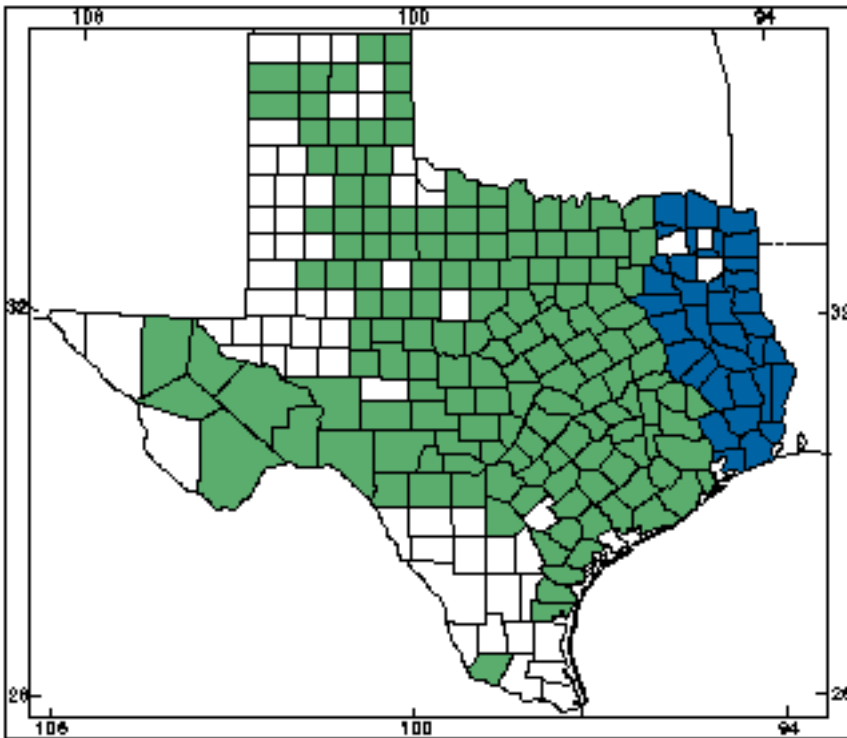
Adult Size: 24-48 inches

**Nerodia erythrogaster flavigaster:** Dorsal color ranges from gray to olive. No dorsal markings are usually present, but faint cross bars may be present on the back. Ventral surface is yellow to orange and unmarked.

**Nerodia erythrogaster transversa:** Dorsal ground color is highly variable and could be any shade of gray or brown. A darker blotched dorsal pattern is often seen. The full blotched pattern sometimes fades and lighter crossbars with dark borders are all that remain. The ventral surface is yellow to orange and unmarked.

Other: Scales are keeled, 23-27 scale rows at midbody, Divided anal plate

Distribution:



## Alamo City Rivermen Mileage Log Sheet

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ River: \_\_\_\_\_ Put in: \_\_\_\_\_ Take Out: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Miles: \_\_\_\_\_ Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ River: \_\_\_\_\_ Put in: \_\_\_\_\_ Take Out: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Miles: \_\_\_\_\_ Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ River: \_\_\_\_\_ Put in: \_\_\_\_\_ Take Out: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Miles: \_\_\_\_\_ Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ River: \_\_\_\_\_ Put in: \_\_\_\_\_ Take Out: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Miles: \_\_\_\_\_ Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ River: \_\_\_\_\_ Put in: \_\_\_\_\_ Take Out: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Miles: \_\_\_\_\_ Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ River: \_\_\_\_\_ Put in: \_\_\_\_\_ Take Out: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Miles: \_\_\_\_\_ Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ River: \_\_\_\_\_ Put in: \_\_\_\_\_ Take Out: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Miles: \_\_\_\_\_ Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ River: \_\_\_\_\_ Put in: \_\_\_\_\_ Take Out: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Miles: \_\_\_\_\_ Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

## Alamo City Rivermen Membership Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

The Alamo City Rivermen try to keep their activities safe, but risk is inherent in water sports. We cannot and do not guarantee safety. The Alamo City Rivermen disclaim liability for accidental injury or death in any sponsored event. As a condition of membership and participation in club sponsored events, I release, acquit, and forever discharge the Alamo City Rivermen and its officers, agents, and members from all liability arising out of or relating to a sponsored event, even if negligence of the club or its officers, agents, or members is a cause, and even if I die or am injured This release includes not only actual paddle trips but also all other club events and driving or riding to and from club events.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership dues are the same for an individual or a family. As a member of the Alamo City Rivermen, you are automatically entitled to our monthly newsletter and subscription to our email list. Details on these benefits are available in our newsletter.

I prefer to receive the newsletter: (Please circle the one you choose)

Dues if newsletter sent by email     \$15.00

Dues if newsletter sent USPS     \$20.00

(Note: Newsletter copying and mailing has been our biggest expense; using email frees up money for other activities, including our website.)

*Mail this completed form, together with a check, to:*

Alamo City Rivermen Canoe Club

P.O. Box 171194

San Antonio, Texas 78217