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SPORTS

A week for making plans

By Luke Clayton

Mar 14, 2016

In a sense, the past week was a “rain out” for my outdoor plans; at least plans that involve actually being “out there.” Because of high water from recent rainfall, my round two with those spawning creek white bass had to be postponed. But, on the bright side, about the time you are reading this, water levels should have receded and those big female spawners should have followed the male bass up into the creeks. I plan to be “on station” late this week, spinning rod in hand with a good supply of quarter-ounce Road Runners!

My down time this past week was put to good use, though. I firmed up plans with my long time friend Randy Routh to do some turkey hunting on a very special ranch near Glenrose that he has hunted for years. Randy has been a top fishing guide down at Lake Whitney for decades and thanks to the red hot striper bite currently underway, he’s been very busy, but not too busy to plan a turkey hunt with his old buddy.

I’ve long been fascinated by early Texas history and especially the frontier life and how, very slowly, the Comanche were pushed out of frontier Texas into reservations in Oklahoma. Comanche Chief Quanah Parker was a major player in planning and leading raids on these isolated homesteads. Of course, Quanah later became a great leader who went from a Stone Age warrior to a world with automobiles and airplanes in a matter of a few decades. One of Quanah’s sons, White Parker, was a frequent visitor to the ranch situated not far from Glenrose, owned by the White family.. This is the ranch that Routh has been hunting for many years and the place where he invited me to hunt turkeys.



Cyrus Reddell, grandson of guide Randy Routh, with a fine gobbler he harvested with his grandfather on the White Ranch near Glenrose, where White Parker, Quanah Parker's son, often hunted. *photo courtesy of Randy Routh*

Randy has told me much about this historical ranch where he's spent many hours not only hunting deer, turkey and hogs, but working cattle and fixing fence as well. He's talked about the old log house that the White family built on the ranch and how the famous cattleman Charles Goodnight later helped to restore the house to its original condition.

Randy informed me that turkeys are plentiful on the ranch and that he has a camper set up that we can use for a headquarters on our hunt. A turkey camp! Right up my alley! Chicken-fried turkey breast, cream gravy and some canned green beans from last year's garden. It's been a couple years since I hunted from a tent "turkey camp" and I'm making plans to set up a tent at our camp and hunt with my bow. I think the Parkers would have liked it that way! Of course, I'll bring along some homemade sugar cured and smoked wild hog ham and eggs for breakfast and, possibly some frozen turkey breast, just in case! I bet even Qunah or his son White didn't arrow a big gobbler on every hunt!

Some fishing news

Everyone that knows the rudiments of catfishing understands that current from recent rainfall creates ideal conditions for catching catfish in shallow water. Whiskerfish pull into these areas in large numbers, feeding on bait pushed down by the moving water.

I checked in with catfish guide David Hanson at Lake Tawakoni after the rains and he says he's targeting both blues and channel catfish around the mouth of creeks.

"After a major influx of water like we had last week, finding catfish is easy. For channel catfish, use earthworms or punch bait in areas with current close to the mouth of creeks," says Hanson. "We are also catching some big blue cats in the same area, using fresh shad."

At Lake Fork, guide Seth Vanover reported catching channel catfish from water as shallow as one foot, around the mouth of feeder creeks, using Stubby's Punch Bait. When the run off from the rain ceases, a large percentage of catfish should remain in the warmer, shallow water and baiting with soured grain or range cubes should begin to pay big dividends soon.

Striper fishing at Lake Texoma has been way below par lately and many guides say a catch of 10 to 12 stripers per day is a good average, nothing like the non stop striper action that is usually underway this time of year. But the good news is that channel and blue catfish are and have been the past month, biting like crazy.

You might remember an article I did with my friend Larry Sparks www.sparkysguideservice.com a few weeks ago when we landed 3 quick limits of channel catfish using punch bait and then proceeded to catch some big blue cats on jug lines. According to Sparks, this action is still underway.

"Over the weekend, we had two groups out and we spent time vertical fishing with punch bait and landed lots of channel catfish in the 2-6 pound range, and then we ran the 20 jug line sets and caught blues up to 30 pounds," says Sparks. "Our clients were stocked up with enough fillets for several big fish fries."

If last week was a time for planning upcoming outings, this week should be one for action. I'm planning to spend time sharpening my bow shooting skills in preparation for the upcoming turkey hunt with Routh and I'll also attempt to put some catfish and white bass fillets in the freezer as well. Hummm... Fried catfish fillets for supper while on the turkey hunt? I'm still refining my plans!

Listen to Outdoors with Luke Clayton and Friends on radio stations from Nebraska to Texas on weekends on anytime online at www.catfishradio.com. Check out Luke's book on hog hunting and cooking, *Kill to Grill* on the website.

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