

# WATERSHED WEEK IN REVIEW



## 700 Springs Tour

***APRIL 24, 2021***

As A Reminder...

2021's Tour of the 700 Springs Ranch is scheduled for Saturday April 24th! Anyone interested should meet at the Kimble County Court House at 10:00am then caravan out together. It is suggested that you bring a chair, a sack lunch, and a jacket.

If you have never seen these Headwater Springs of the Llano, this is your chance!

## Why are Deer Densities So High in the Llano?

*By David Hillis*

*Mason County News*

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There are a lot of Whitetail Deer in Texas—about 5.6 million of them. In part, that is because there is a lot of Whitetail Deer habitat in Texas. If we exclude areas of West Texas where Whitetails do not occur, there are about 113 million acres of Whitetail habitat in Texas. That means an average density of about one Whitetail for every 20 acres of range in Texas.

Whitetails are not equally abundant across the Lone Star State, however. The Edwards Plateau Ecoregion alone supports 2.3 million Whitetails, or about 41% of the state total. Across the Plateau, there is an average of about one Whitetail for every seven acres.

[Continue reading](#)



# Opportunity to Improve your Riparian Zone

## *Still Openings Available for Site Visits*

The Llano River Watershed Alliance is offering riparian landowners the opportunity to give an additional kick-start to helping their riparian areas, especially those areas damaged by the 2018 flood.

Over the next few months, LRWA will be offering on-site technical guidance visits to inform landowners of the role of properly functioning riparian areas provide to the aquatic ecosystems and the Best Management Practices (and plants) to restore these areas.

If you are interested in this opportunity, please contact [southllanoriver@gmail.com](mailto:southllanoriver@gmail.com).

This service is free to all, but priority will be given to Alliance members.



Photos: Ryan McGillicuddy, Texas Parks and Wildlife



## Axis Webinar Available



### AXIS DEER IN THE TEXAS HILL COUNTRY

**DANIEL OPPENHEIMER**  
HILL COUNTRY ALLIANCE  
LAND PROGRAM MANAGER

**MATT BUCHHOLZ**  
TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY  
DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
MANAGEMENT

Hill Country Alliance and Texas Tech University Department of Natural Resources Management recently teamed to present a webinar on Axis Deer in the Texas Hill Country. Matt Buchholz who has been studying axis deer for his dissertation discussed both his findings as well as his 'still unknowns' regarding white-tailed deer competition, riparian area degradation, and reproductive rates.

[A Recording of the Webinar can be found here.](#)

Colleen Schreiber with *Livestock Weekly* also recently [published an article regarding Axis Deer](#) based on the webinar, if you prefer.

Thanks to David Langford for sharing the link.

## Leon Hale and the James River Bunch

The Llano River lost a good friend last week when Leon Hale, former columnist for the *Houston Chronicle*, passed away at the age of 99.

Leon Hale, along with John Graves (*Goodbye to a River*), Bill Shearer (Shearer Publishing-*Roads of Texas Atlas*) and a cast of characters camped on the James each spring for about 20 years. They became known as the James River Bunch. Leon Hale wrote several 'fish stories' for *The Chronicle* describing their experiences.

The Facebook page, "[Traces of Texas](#)" shared a piece written back in 1989...

"The prettiest wildflowers I've seen this spring along a highway are between Fredericksburg and Mason. It's a great year for prickly pear white poppies. On that Fredericksburg-Mason highway the poppies sometimes make the pastures look like fields of open cotton. The best Bluebonnets I've seen are growing in a place I never expected them, and in one sense that's too bad because very few folks will get to enjoy them. They're blooming in an outrageous way along several miles of a dirt road west and south of Mason.

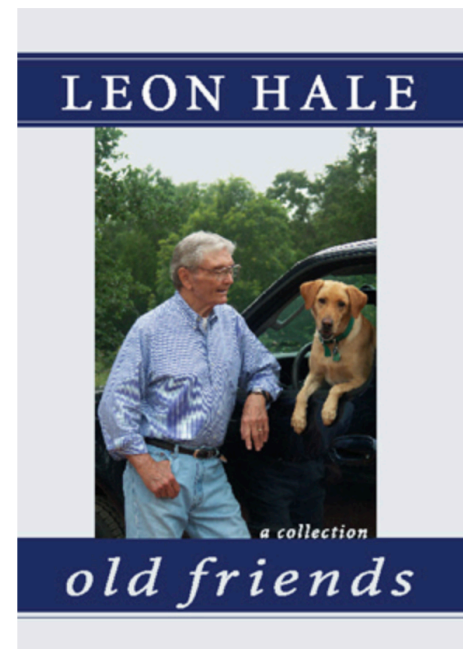


Photo : [leonhale.com](#)

It's the county road we use to reach our James River campsite here on the Schulze Ranch... I grew up on land like this, but I never before saw rocky, brushy hillsides covered with Bluebonnets. Blossoms so thick they seem artificial. . . The color in places is so intense the land seems to heave in blue and white and



pink waves. I wish you could see it.

We've been coming here. . .on the James River several years. Right now we are four. The others are off fishing, and I won't see them until the pinto beans are done... I volunteered to stay in camp and cook beans this morning. I pretended it was a sacrifice, but the truth is I needed the solitude to get this report done. Also I like being here...cooking beans and listening to the music of the river and the birds and the wind. I feel good here. I have invested a lot of myself into these beans. I want them to be good. I want them to be bragged on. I want somebody to say "Best beans ever cooked on a river bank and stirred with a screwdriver." I may say that myself if nobody else does...

I am fixing way too many beans. Four pounds, dry weight. But I brought my great restaurant-kitchen pot, and you can't, with any good grace, cook two cups of beans in a pot that big. Two cups would insult it. The beans are coming along, but they lack something. Wish I had an onion about the size of a Pecos cantaloupe. Did I mention the yucca blooms? They are on the face of the cliff across the river from camp. .. From a distance they give the image of big creamy white faces, staring out of the brush. We are talking about a plant sometimes 12 feet tall, making a cluster of flowers 2 feet long and 10 inches wide. From this rock I count ninety-three of them across the river. The beans are getting better, but they still lack character. I am thinking about pouring two cups of red wine in them. What do you think?"

----- Leon Hale, Texas Chronicles, 1989