



BORN WILD

BY TOM ABBOTT

Each year a new generation of wildlife young makes their debut into the outdoor world. Like all children, these young have a tremendous curiosity about their new surroundings. They are playful, exploratory and eager to learn from their elders the many necessary lessons which are essential for survival in a world filled with many pitfalls for the untutored and unwary. Being naturally inquisitive, they often stray from the protection of their home while the parent is absent in search of food; however, the animal parent usually has no trouble locating a wayward offspring and ushering it back to safety and security.

During various outdoor activities, many human children and adults discover wildlife young that seem to be lost or abandoned. Acting with a sense of compassion and responsibility, plus the novelty of having made a unique discovery, we take these fascinating creatures home as pets. Usually, we humans sincerely believe that we have the best interests of the animals at heart. However, there are sound reasons why we should control such a protective impulse, which can only condemn Nature's young to a twilight zone of existence between wildness and domestication, with results that can be tragic to both captor and captive.

Strictly enforced State and federal laws govern the taking of certain wildlife species and holding them in captivity. These laws were initiated for the sole pur-

pose of insuring the health, protection and general welfare of man and wildlife alike. Serious, unexpected problems usually arise from unqualified attempts to domesticate creatures which natural laws intended to be wild.

Removing wildlife young from their natural environment robs them of an opportunity to learn to survive. They must be taught vital knowledge necessary for survival, knowledge that can be learned only from their parents while in their natural habitat. Young wildlife in captivity are prevented from learning about their natural enemies and how to defend against them. They are prevented from knowing how and where to obtain shelter and the proper food their systems require. If a young wild animal were kept in captivity for a prolonged period of time and managed to escape or had to be returned to its wild environment, the pampered creature would be completely at the mercy of its enemies and the elements, with little chance for survival. Keeping it captive for even a short period of time is inviting disaster for a young animal.

Disappointment, grief, disease, injury and even death has occurred in the wake of some well-meaning person's bringing home a wildlife pet. These persons may unknowingly introduce into the home harmful or deadly parasites and diseases such as virus bearing ticks and fleas, rabies, tetanus, or tularemia. Adults and many children are bitten, clawed, serious-

ly injured, and some even killed every year, by wildlife pets which should have remained undisturbed in Nature. Pet deer which were raised from fawns, losing their natural fear of man, have reverted to their wild instincts and, without warning have maimed or killed their compassionate captors. Remember, it is usually children who bear the brunt of tragedies involving pets.

In many instances, captive wild animals are improperly nourished because their natural food requirements cannot be duplicated. Commercially prepared foods may not have the essential balance of nutrition required by a particular animal's system. Most captors experiment on their wildlife pets by trying out a wide assortment of human foods to see what the animal likes and will eat. Many animals will accept and relish some of these foods, but often become sick or die because their system simply was not designed to tolerate this type of nutrition. The average person has little knowledge of the balanced food requirements of our various wildlife species.

Success in raising captive wildlife with satisfactory results is rarely achieved by the average individual. Captors expose themselves to a great deal of sorrow and regret which could be avoided if they curbed the desire to interfere with the lives and destinies of the wild young creatures entrusted to Nature's care.

Our young wildlife are born wild and free. Leave them that way.

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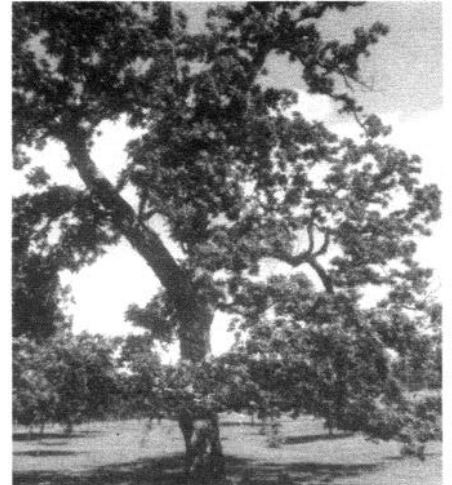
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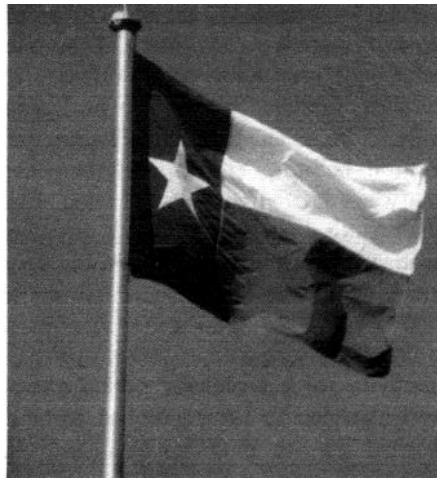
“FACTS SHEET”



State Tree-Pecan

TEXAS FACTS

State Name-Derived from "tejas"
an Indian word
meaning "friendly"
State Nickname-Lone Star State
State Capital-Austin
State Motto-Friendship
State Song-"Texas, Our Texas"
State Stone-Petrified Palmwood
State Gem-Topaz
State Grass-Sideoats Grama
State Dish-Chili
State Fish-Guadalupe Bass

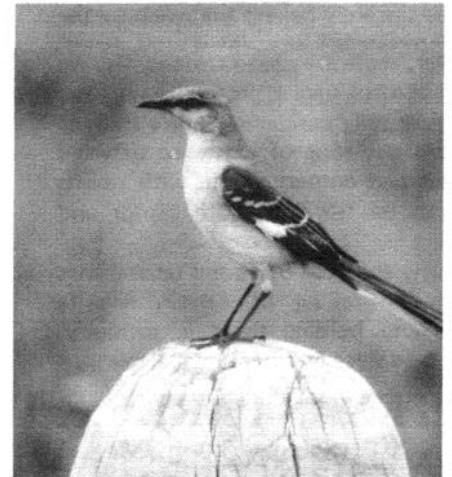


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DEFEND FROM WASTE THE
NATURAL RESOURCES OF
MY COUNTRY - ITS SOIL
AND MINERALS, ITS
FORESTS, WATERS,
AND WILDLIFE



State Shell-Lightning Whelk



State Bird-Mockingbird