



# CADDO LAKE NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE GREATER CADDO LAKE ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

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[Greater Caddo Lake Association of Texas](http://www.glaoftx.com)

August 2015

## Water, Water Everywhere...and I do Mean Everywhere!

By Robert Speight

Texas was dry.....

And then it began to rain. And rain. And....well you get the point. The month of May turned what had the makings of a year of average rainfall to a year of extraordinary rainfall. May 2015 was the wettest May on record in Texas. Some reports say it was the wettest May in the United States since recordkeeping began 121 years ago!

For the first time in my memory it was easier to name a place in Texas where it was raining than to name a place where it was not. At one point 241 of the 254 counties in Texas had flood watches or warnings issued at the same time.

Most places received between 10 and 30 inches of rain in the month of May....Big rains...Drought-busting rains. Lakes filled up, some, like Texoma, Lavon and Grapevine, had water spilling over their uncontrolled spillways. As of today (July 9) Texas reservoirs are 84.6 % full. A year ago they were 67 % full. That is an increase of 12 MILLION acre feet of water. An acre-foot of water is approximately 325,000 gallons of water. ... A football field is about an acre in size so imagine a football field covered with 1 foot of water. Now imagine 12 MILLION football fields covered in 1 foot of water...that is how much more water the State has in storage than last year.

Closer to home, we have received 44.5 inches of rain at the Lake O' the Pines (LOP) dam this year. LOP has released 440,000 acre-feet of water (remember the football fields) down Big Cypress to Caddo this year and still has almost 90,000 acre-feet in the flood pool to release. Caddo Lake stores about 170,000 acre-feet at elevation 168.5. So the water released from LOP has been enough to fill Caddo Lake up almost 3 times! As if that number is not staggering enough, keep in mind that LOP only contributes about 35% of the water that flows into Caddo. Black Cypress and Little Cypress contribute the majority of water flowing down Big Cypress.

One last tidbit. The Red River at Shreveport recently crested

at 37 feet, the highest it has been in 70 years. At it's peak the Red was flowing around 150,000 acre-feet of water every 24 hours past the gage at Shreveport .... that is almost enough to fill Caddo up in one day!

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## Hungry Weevils Put to Work Munching Giant Salvinia

By Donna McCann

With the Morley Hudson Weevil Greenhouse in full operation for the 2015 warm weather season, the community supported project has provided a steady supply of weevils for placement in areas of Caddo Lake infested with Giant Salvinia. Under the direction of Lee Eisenberg, volunteers have responded and assembled at first light when notified each time a batch of Weevils has been ready for distribution. The crew firsts collects salvinia infested with weevils from the greenhouse tanks using pitchforks and nets, filling 20 gallon plastic totes. After most of the water escapes from the totes through drain holes, they are weighed to allow an estimate of weevil numbers to be calculated.

This year, the higher water level has allowed transport of the totes for release by boat rather than from shore. This is a much less labor intensive method and allows easier placement in desired areas. To save time, all the totes have been loaded into pickups and mud boats, then driven to the boat launch at the Wildlife Management Area on the west side of Carter Lake. From there, it is a short distance down boat road C to an unmarked cut through the reeds into the Willowson Woodyard area. where they can be released into thriving patches of Salvinia. By agreement with Texas Parks and Wildlife, who oversee the spraying of some portions of the lake with herbicides, the release area near Willowson Woodyard has been left untouched to allow the weevils to try and gain a foothold.

So far in 2015, releases have been made on 6/10, 6/24, 7/15, 7/16, 7/22, 7/23, and 7/28. More details concerning the strategy and results of the weevil releases is found in an article by Lee Eisenberg on the page 2.



# Biological Control of Giant Salvinia: the View from the Greenhouse in the Summer of 2015

By Lee Eisenberg

Conditions this spring were far from ideal for our biological control efforts, but it's hard to convince Mother Nature to change her ways. When the high water receded and I was able to get to the release site, I was surprised to find very little salvinia there. I had expected to find a small number of overwintering weevils, because I had found one in my samples in January, but a great deal of salvinia had apparently floated out of Willowson Woodyard, and there was no way to know where our weevils had gone. Vanessa Neace and Stephanie Price (TPWD) went deep into Willowson's, deeper than they had been before, and they said the bottom (southern) half is open-hardly any salvinia. I have sampled near our release site whenever I see a likely patch of salvinia, but so far, I haven't found any weevils. They may turn up after a while, or they may be on their way down the Red River.

With the salvinia population reduced, the alligator weed grew at a dizzying pace. At this point in time, the alligator weed flea beetles released by TPWD have defoliated a great deal of it. This has worked particularly well in shaded areas like Willowson Woodyard. Crested floating heart has been cropping up in small patches around the lake. TPWD has been treating it with a "cocktail" of herbicides which seems more effective than those that were previously used.

Due to the storms and flooding, I reined in the weevil population, which was slated for an early spring release. Of course, like anyone else, I would have liked to carry out our original plan. However, there really was no good place to release in April or May, or any expectation that they would stay where we put them. In the absence of a decent release site, or a source of fresh salvinia to restock our tanks, a burgeoning weevil population may very well have crashed. This was a risk we could not afford to take. In any event, we did release on a salvinia population that was in the early growth stages, as intended.

The weevil population grew very slowly in the greenhouse

this spring, the main factor being the lack of sunlight. Without the energy that plants harvest from sunlight, the salvinia plants could not grow, or bud out, so the larvae developed very slowly. I was doing everything possible to bring the colony along, but the adult numbers continued to fall as the overwintering individuals aged. (Actually, this happens every spring; it was just more obvious this year). When we finally got some sunshine, the population grew very rapidly. One tank went from 2 weevils per kilogram (w/k) to 30 w/k in 2 weeks. Some tanks had weevil counts that climbed quickly into the 50's and 60's (per kilo). These are higher numbers than I normally like to see, but larval populations were also very high, so host plants had not been damaged enough to cause mortality among the immatures. I added a bunch of fresh salvinia to the tanks shortly before this "population explosion", and I did notice that almost all the buds were chewed off shortly afterward. It appears the hungry weevils moved to the better host plants to feed and lay eggs.

It is quite common to have a mass emergence of weevils in the spring, but this was extreme. Under the circumstances, I had no choice but to release tanks as soon as they were ready. Delaying even a day or 2 may have caused a population to crash. Female weevils will begin to reabsorb their eggs within a few days if nutrition is inadequate, but the weevils I was seeing in my samples did not appear to be overly stressed. So it was full steam ahead for the last 7 or 8 weeks. Production has to be priority #1.

Partial releases of the greenhouse worked out very well. It was relatively easy to organize, and in each case, the bugs were put out before the heat of the day. I was able to turn the tanks around in the afternoons (and following mornings), and count weevils in the evenings. It was very hectic, but we did put out around 90,000 (adult) weevils in June and July. So, we are more than halfway to our stated production goal of releasing 165,000 adult weevils, in spite of the bad weather. Right now all the tanks are in the early part of the growth phase. This should give me a chance to regroup.

I'd like to thank Robert Speight, Donna McCann, Ted Barrow, Jan and David Cook, Steve Sedberry, Vanessa Neace, and Stephanie Price for their help with the releases. It could hardly have gone better. And thanks to all those who share our common goal and whose support helps to keep the dream alive.



# Atwood Print Raffle

By Patti Webb and Stella Barrow

Ron Atwood, renowned wildlife artist (<http://www.ronatwoodart.com>) has generously donated a print titled "Mossy Break" to Greater Caddo Lake Association. The print is #6 of 100, is signed on the back by Don Henley of The Eagles and is beautifully framed. Atwood and Henley have asked that any proceeds raised by the sale of this print be directed to the Caddo Biocontrol Alliance Morley Hudson Weevil Greenhouse.

GCLA has 1,000 tickets to sell at \$10.00 dollars each or 3/\$20.00. PayPal is available through the GCLA website ([gclaoftx.com](http://gclaoftx.com)). A picture of the print is on the Greater Caddo Lake Association of Texas Facebook page. You can send this page a personal message and a board member will be in touch with you regarding tickets.

The print will be displayed at the following locations, as of this printing. July 13-July 26 at Gecko Pest Control (Daren Horton), 108 East Travis, Marshall TX. July 27-August 9 at SIG Insurance Services (Doug Heard), 214 South Lafayette St., Marshall TX. August 10-August 23 at State Farm Insurance (Ray Settles), 210 South Walcott, Jefferson TX. There will be more locations announced via the Facebook and GCLA website pages. PLEASE STAY TUNED!

If all tickets are sold before the September 5, Annual Labor Day BBQ, the print will be given away that day. If not, it will be given away at a special event before the end of the year.

Thank you for your continued support of GCLA!



## 37<sup>th</sup> Annual GCLA BBQ

Crip's Camp in Uncertain is the place to be on Saturday, September 5<sup>th</sup>. We'll be serving up brisket and sausage with all the trimmings, along with homemade desserts. Plates are \$10 each – serving starts at 11 AM and goes until the food runs out. GCLA memberships, tee shirts, a silent auction and raffle tickets will be available. If you have something to donate to the auction, please contact Jan Cook at (903) 789-3430. Bring the whole family and enjoy great company and great food!



### It's Membership Time!

GCLA needs YOU! August 31 marks the end of your 2015 membership, unless we have received dues anytime in 2015. It's only \$10 per person, per year and you can mail it in, or better yet, come to the annual BBQ and pay in person! We are still fighting giant salvinia, alligator weed, and now we have a new invasive species, the crested floating heart. Please help us Keep Caddo Lake Natural!

### Want To Be More Involved?

GCLA, like the Marines, is looking for a few good men and women! Due to relocations and term limits, we are in need of new board members. If you are interested or have questions, please email us at [gclaoftx@gmail.com](mailto:gclaoftx@gmail.com).



# KEEP CADDO LAKE NATURAL!

## Join GCLA

Dues are only \$10.00 per person per year. This includes membership in The Greater Caddo Lake Association of Texas, plus you will receive our newsletters which are printed on a semi-regular basis; more often if needed. There is no better way to keep up with the issues that concern the lake.

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

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email\* \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone (     )- \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Names \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_ (\$10.00)\*(number of members)

New Members: \_\_\_\_\_ Renewals: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Years: \_\_\_\_\_

We will send one newsletter per address, unless otherwise instructed. This allows us to mail copies to our politicians and government entities to let them know how we feel on the issues!

\*Your email address is voluntary. It will only be used to keep you informed of developments on the lake. It will not be given or sold to anyone.

Make checks payable to GCLA of Texas    Mail to GCLA of Texas. P.O. Box 339, Karnack TX, 75661

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