

# KANSAS

*Wildlife & Parks*

SPECIAL PHOTO ISSUE

\$2.25



*Special  
Photo Issue*

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## Kansas Wildlife & Parks Magazine Photo Issue



This issue of Kansas Wildlife & Parks magazine is a rarity. It is the first complete photo issue we've ever published. We hope you enjoy it and pass it on to friends or relatives to show them a part of Kansas they may never see. Kansas is blessed with a unique blend of rural landscapes, wild landscapes and diverse wildlife. The outdoor recreational opportunities are often uncrowded and available to those that ask. We must never take these resources for granted and always remember that they will only survive if we are committed to conservation and sound management. All photos, unless otherwise noted, were taken by staff photographer Mike Blair.



**About the covers**

**Front:** A male cardinal brightens a winter scene. Mike Blair photographed the bird with a 600mm lens, f/11 @ 1/125 sec. **Back:** An antelope skull is a stark reminder of the harshness of the western prairie. Blair shot the scene with a 55mm lens, f/5.6 @ 1/250 sec

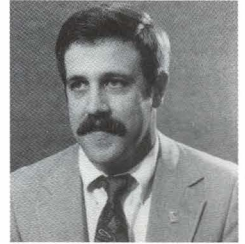
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**Editorial Creed:** To promote the conservation and wise use of our natural resources, to instill an understanding of our responsibilities to the land.

**Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs described herein is available to all individuals without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, sexual preference, religion, age or handicap. Complaints of discrimination should be sent to Office of the Secretary, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, 900 Jackson St., Suite 502, Topeka, KS 66612.**



# The View From Here



Steve Williams

## Accepting Responsibility

In this issue you'll find spectacular photographs of Kansas wildlife, wild places and Kansans enjoying these fine resources. We haven't done many photo issues simply because there is so much information we'd like our readers to have. However, part of the department's mission is to instill an appreciation for these resources. A collection of photographs, displaying Kansas' splendor can play a role in conveying this message.

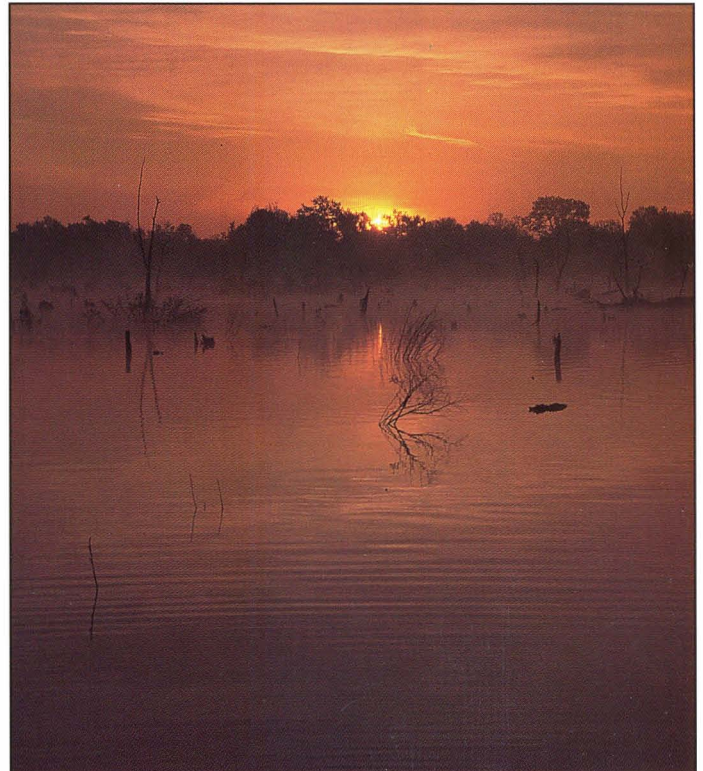
Kansas often gets a bad rap, especially from travelers who pass through on a busy interstate highway. We've all heard the comments that Kansas is flat, featureless and boring. While some non-Kansans are aware of our spectacular bird hunting, many more are ignorant of the variety of beautiful Kansas landscapes, as well as the magnificent wildlife that grace these lands.

If Interstate 70 passed through the Red Hills in Barber County, or meandered through the Flint Hills in Chase County, or perhaps gave travelers a view of the chalk towers in Gove County, much of this rap against Kansas would not exist. But it doesn't, so we'll show off some of these areas in this photo issue. Sometimes you have to get off the beaten path to see the truly wondrous places, and for those who can't, we make this offering.

Truthfully, many of these photos have been on file for some time. While they are beautiful to look at, they didn't fit into the layout of a previous article. This photo issue lets us print the photos, and gives you the chance to see them.

We can't show it all, and I'm sure many of you know a special place you treasure. A photo of that particular region or place may not appear here, but we hope the places we feature are appreciated as much as yours is. It's important to remember that these treasures remain as a result of landowners' dedication and hard work, a private conservation organization's efforts, or perhaps because of a management program paid for by the hunters, fishermen, state park patrons and Chickadee Checkoff devotees, who've provided the millions of dollars necessary for conservation.

Make a New Year's resolution to visit a wild place special to you. Drink in the peace of mind it gives you and remember that it is a privilege to be there. Make your resolution to not take our wild resources for granted. They can provide us with endless enjoyment, but they also require a solid commitment to ensure they

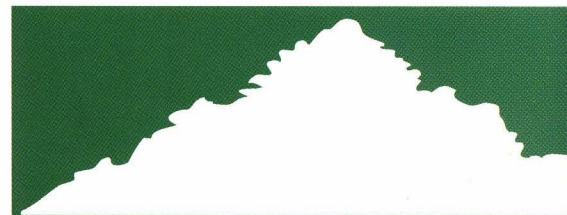


will be here for our children and grandchildren.

That commitment can be more than purchasing licenses or permits or donating to a cause. It can be communicating your support for conservation to state legislators, voting on critical issues, memberships in private conservation organizations or even volunteer work with various friends groups.

However, money will always be a critical factor, and the department continues to strive for more stable funding sources as it serves an ever-changing constituency. The bottom line is that we all are responsible for Kansas' wild resources, and if we remain committed to that responsibility, we can ensure that those resources outlive us.

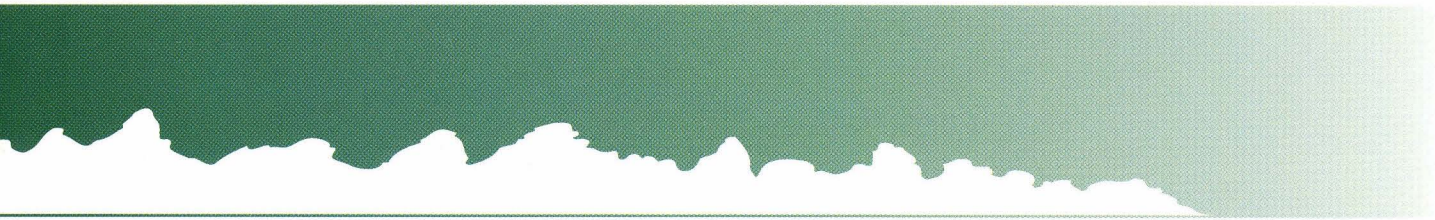
# Kansas



# L a n d s

Quivira National Wildlife Refuge, Stafford County



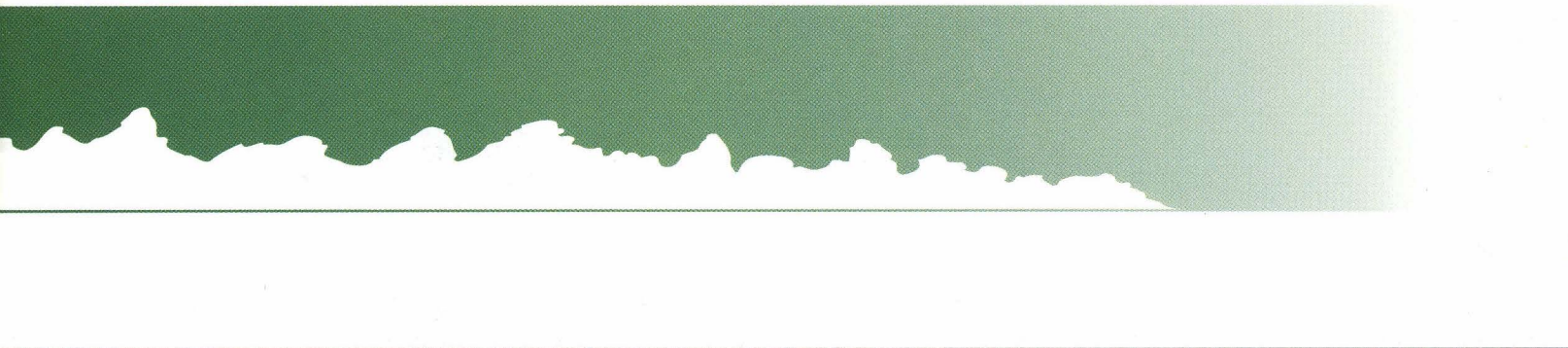


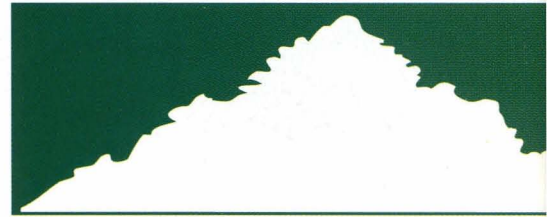
Marais des Cygnes Wildlife Area, Linn County



Marais des Cygnes Wildlife Area, Linn County



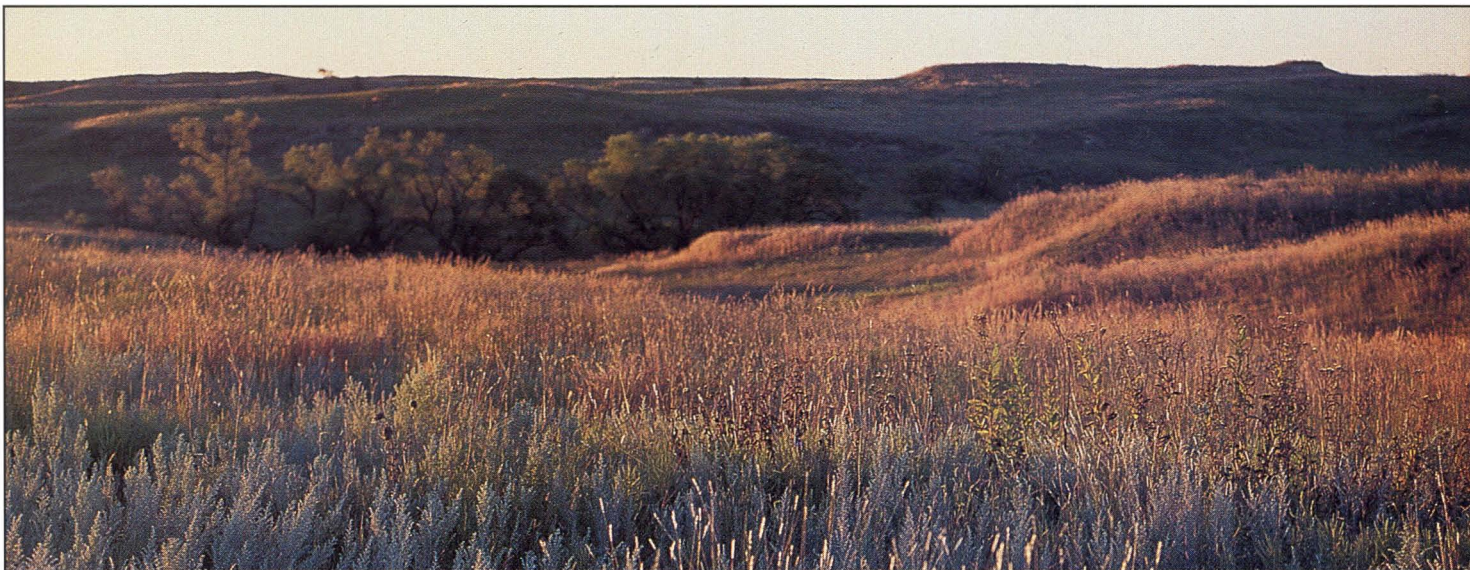




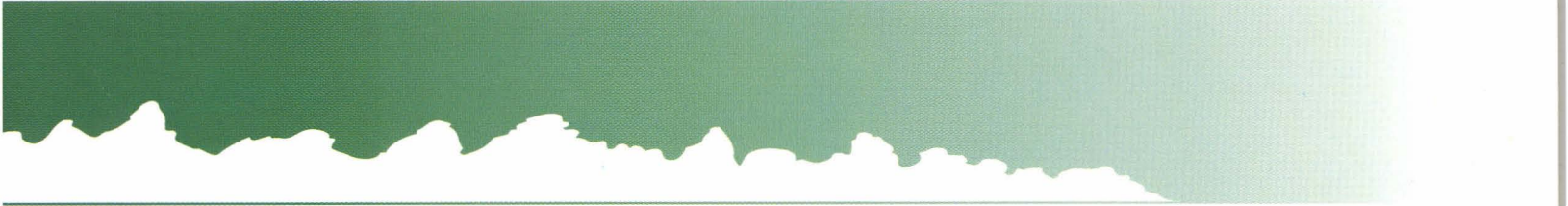
smooth sumac, Pratt County



Barber County

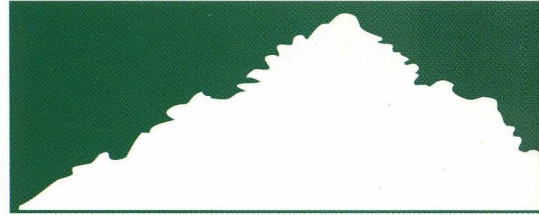






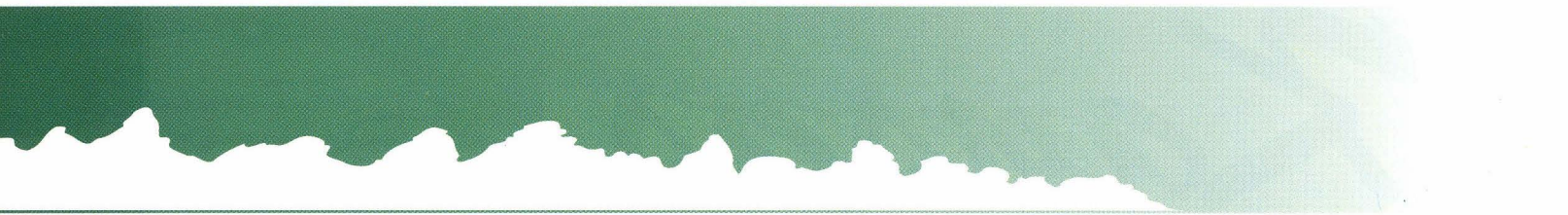
Pratt County





Turkey Creek, Barber County





Gove County



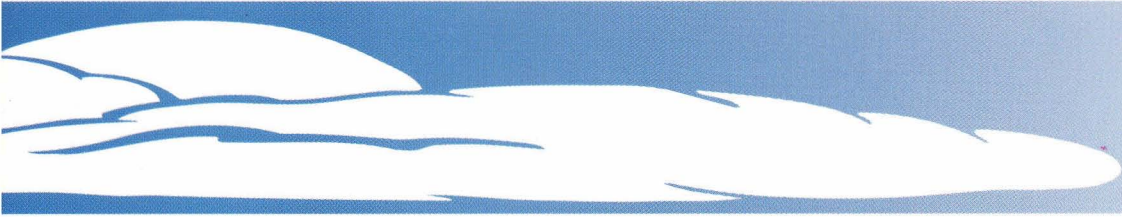
# Kansas



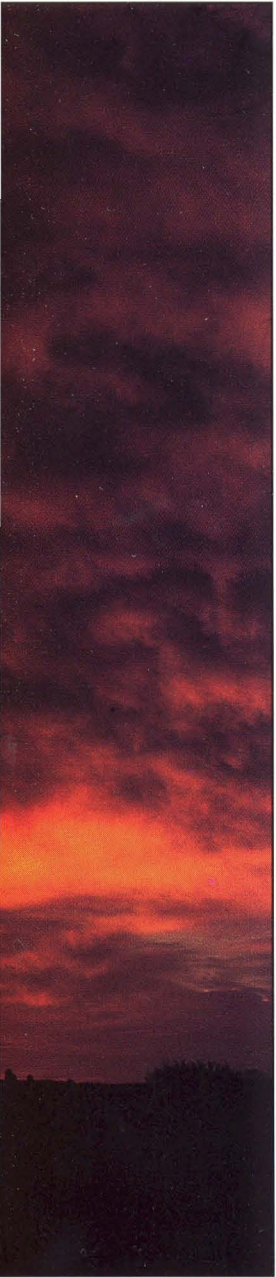
# S k i e s



Barber County



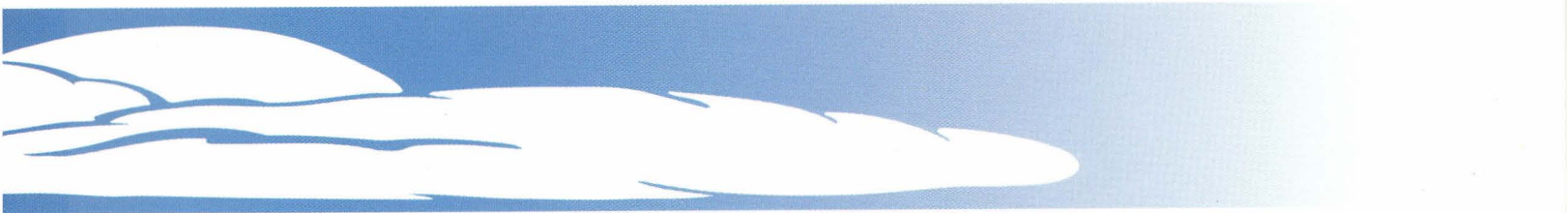
Marais des Cygnes Wildlife Area, Linn County





Kiowa County





Harper County

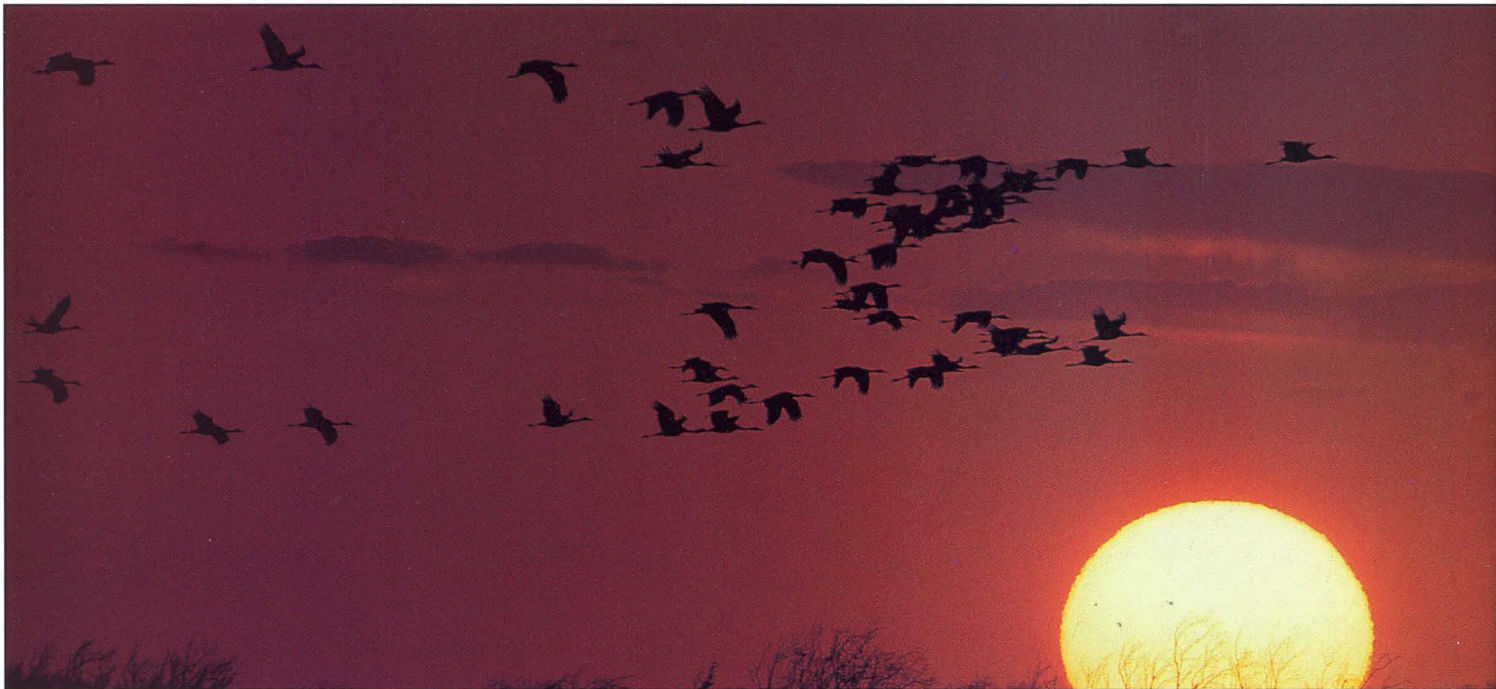




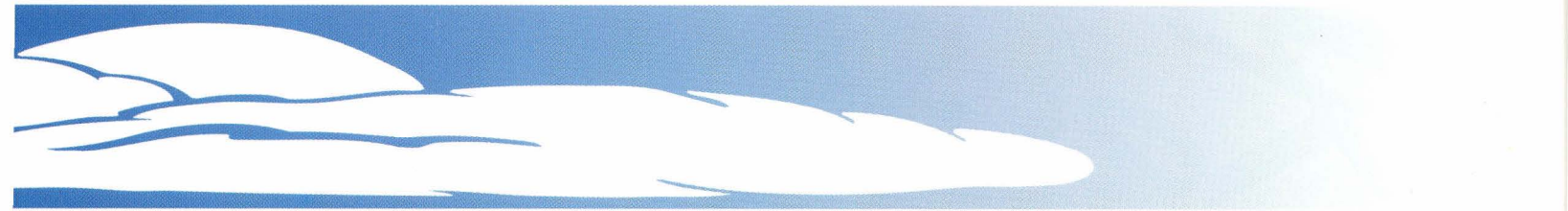
Stafford County



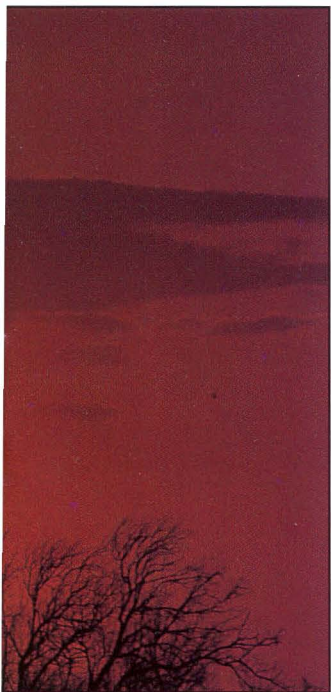
Quivira National Wildlife Refuge, Stafford County







solar eclipse, Barber County, May 1994



# Kansas



# W i l d l i f e

lesser prairie chicken, Pratt County

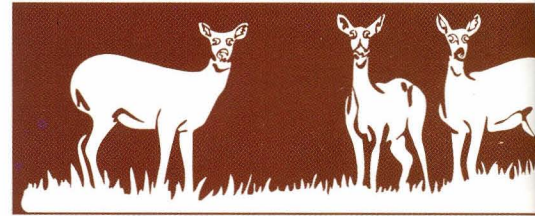


black-capped chickadee, Pratt County



barn owls, Barber County





Canada geese, Marais des Cygnes Wildlife Area



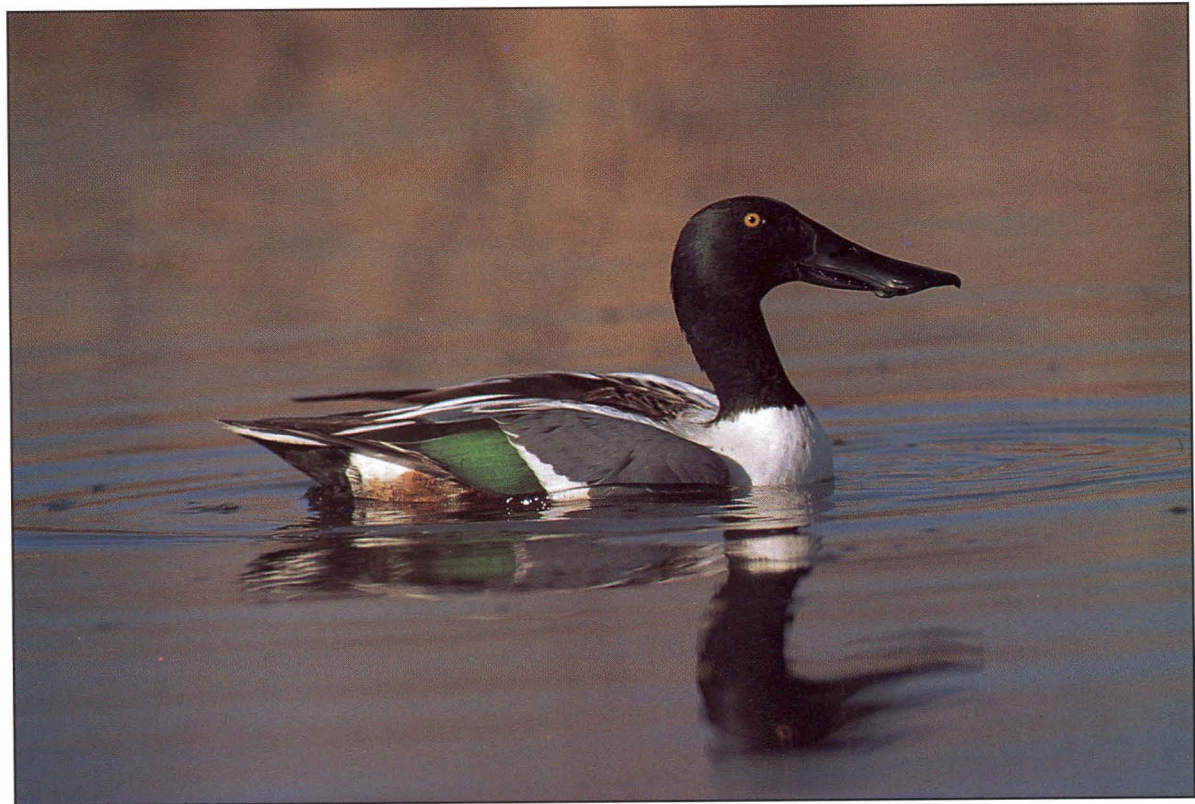
ring-necked pheasant, Mitchell County

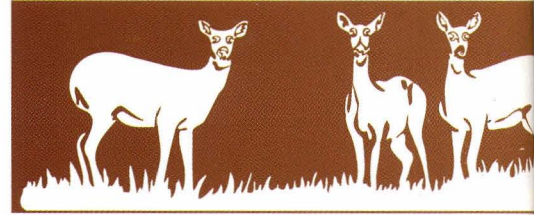


cardinal, Pratt County



shoveler duck, Texas Lake Wildlife Area, Pratt County





Rio Grande turkeys, Barber County

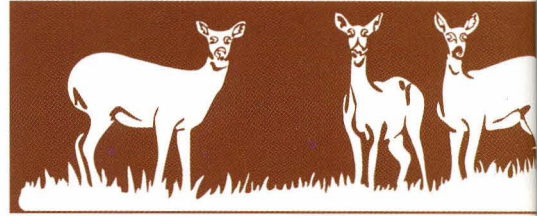


white-tailed deer, Pratt County

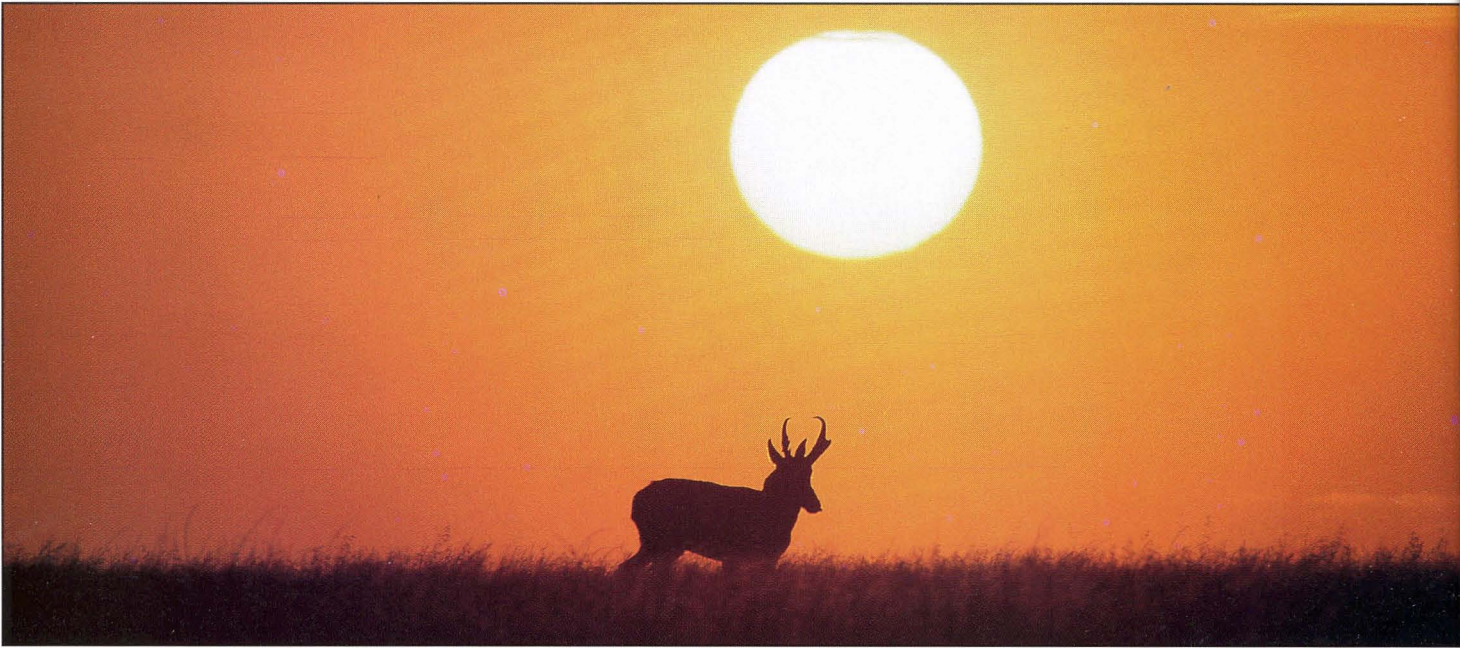


pronghorn, Wallace County





pronghorn, Wallace County



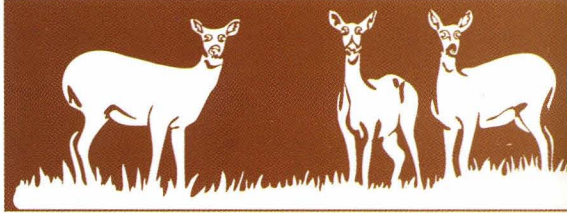
albino mule deer, Barton County



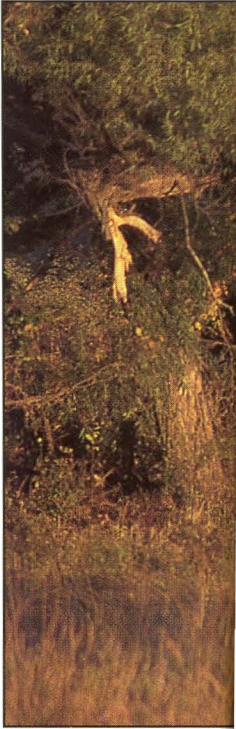


bison, McPherson Wildlife Refuge, McPherson County





coyote pups, Pratt County



white-tailed deer, Barber County

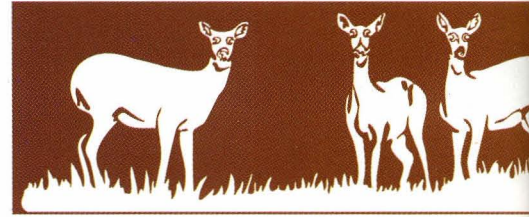




white-tailed deer, Barber County



rehabilitated bobcat release, Butler County

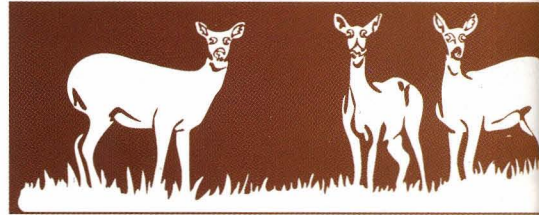


coyote, Barber County





swift fox, Wallace County

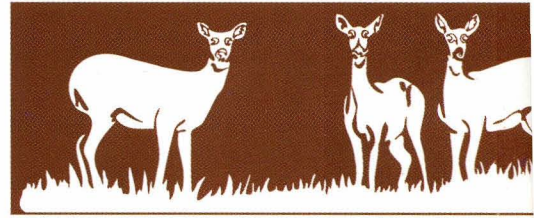


prairie dog, Ellsworth County

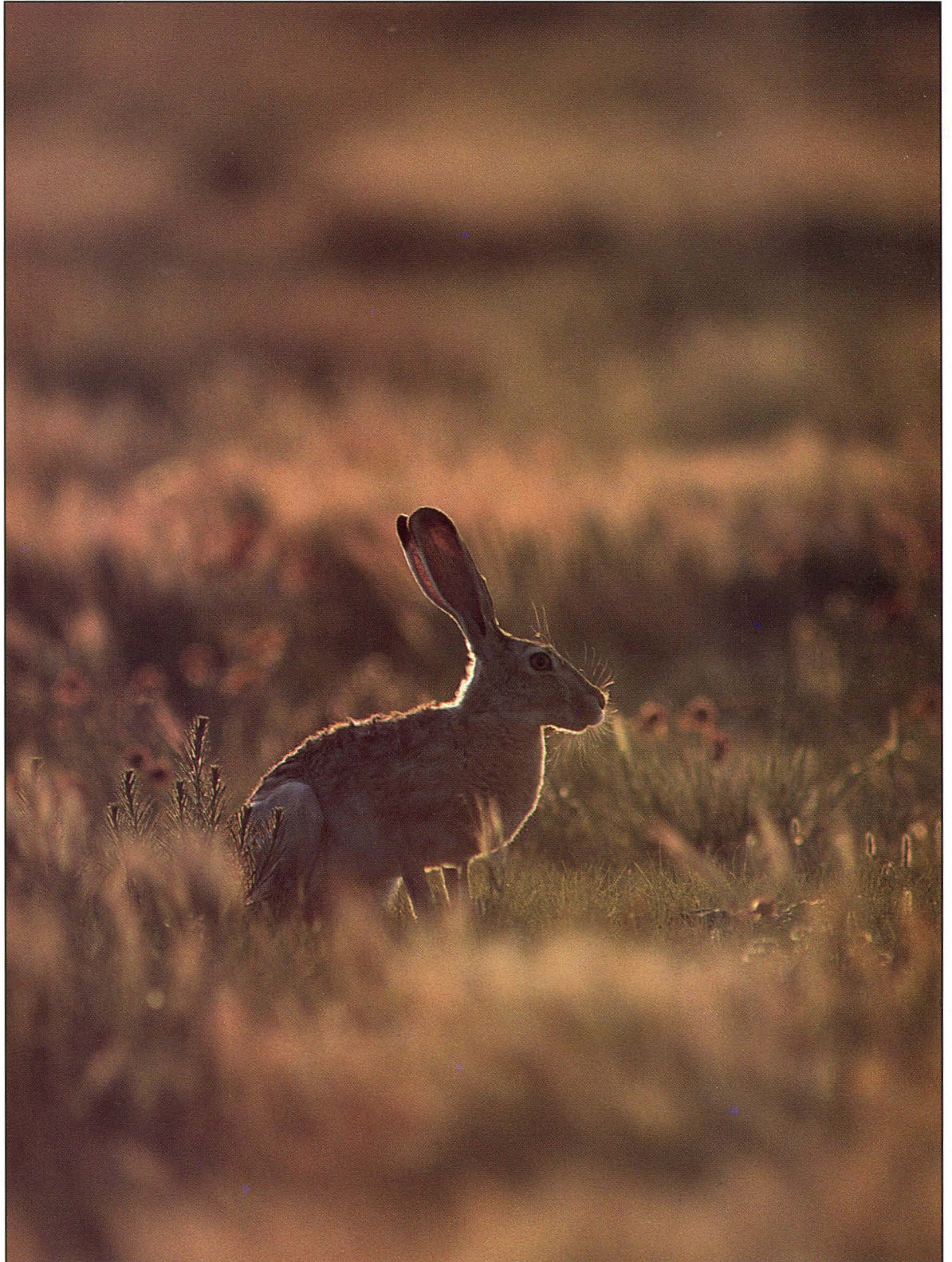




raccoon, Barber County



jackrabbit, Morton County



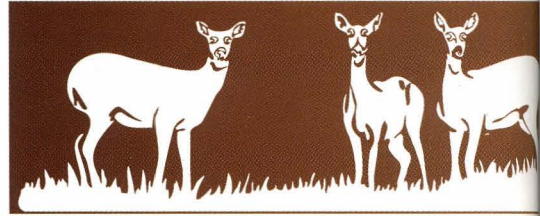




swift fox, Wallace County

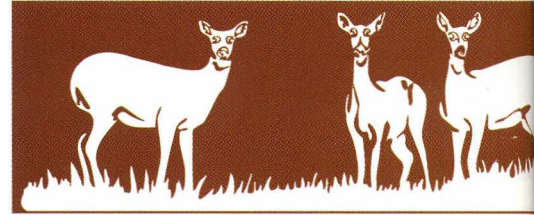


thirteen-lined ground squirrels, Wallace County



long-billed dowitcher, Pratt County





king rail, Quivira National Wildlife Refuge, Stafford County

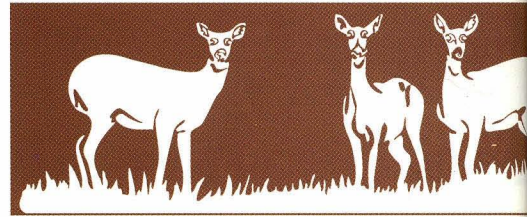


common gallinule, Texas Lake Wildlife Area, Pratt County



avocets, Quivira National Wildlife Refuge, Stafford County





great blue heron, Quivira National Wildlife Refuge, Stafford County



coot, Quivira National Wildlife Refuge, Stafford County



long-billed dowitcher, Pratt County



# Kansas



# Peopple

Cheney Reservoir



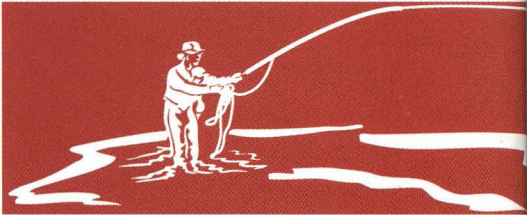


fishing clinic, Pratt County Lake



Wilson Reservoir





Cowley County



Barber County

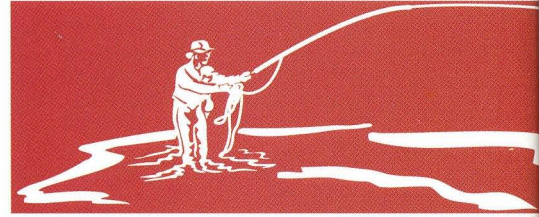


Pratt County





Barber County

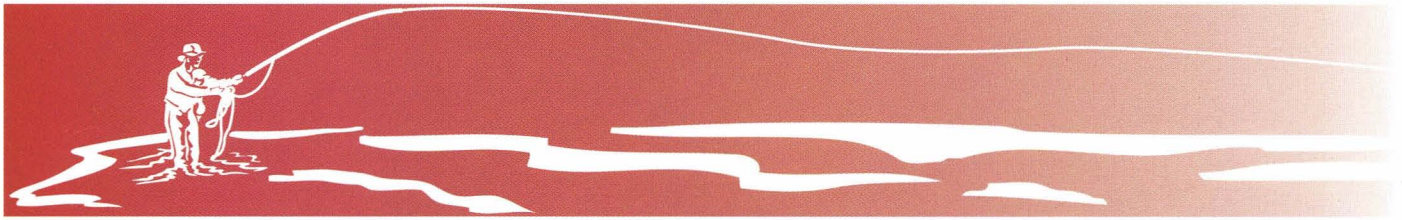


McPherson County



Barber County





Linn County



El Dorado Reservoir





by Mike Miller

## Cold-weather Tough Guys

**W**ildlife photographers, like Mike Blair, whose photos appear in this issue, must have an incredible amount of endurance. They sit for hours waiting for just the right shot, and this often means enduring bitter cold. It's apparent that cold doesn't affect them the same way it affects us normal folks.

They've either developed a resistance to the cold or it's inherited. The process of natural selection weeds out wanna-be wildlife photographers who can't take it. They move on to more comfortable work surroundings, photographing weddings and such.

Blair is known for coming into the office after a winter morning in the field wearing only jeans, a hooded sweatshirt and rubber boots. While his cheeks may show the redness of the cold wind, he never mentions it as he describes the big buck that walked into a clearing as the Nikon motordrive snapped shot after shot.

I don't like to admit it when I'm cold, especially if I'm hunting or fishing. It's a sign of weakness in the outdoorsmen's fraternity. Once while rabbit hunting on a frigid afternoon, I was trying to work blood back into my frozen fingers. Even with gloves on, carrying two cottontails left my fingers stinging and stiff. Gene Brehm, our videographer, walked up carrying three cottontails, with no gloves on his hands.

"Aren't your hands cold?" I asked. Gene simply shrugged and tromped on through the snow. Later he politely told me that sitting in photo blinds for hours in cold weather had acclimated his body to the cold. Secretly, though, I was afraid he was just tougher than me.

Since then I've quit complaining about the cold. In fact, I like to brag about my cold toughness with some of my hunting and fishing buddies. "Yeah, it was so cold this morning in the deer stand that my breath would freeze and fall to the ground like tiny snowflakes. But I stuck it out." The real truth is that for the first half hour, I pleaded with the sun to hurry above the horizon. (The sun delights in teasing me on these cold mornings, peaking over the horizon, then waiting as I shiver for its arrival.) For the next hour, I tried to find a way to hold my bow without losing the feeling in my fingers. I never did. My left hand was a frozen hook until my pickup's defroster finally kicked in on the way back to town.



Dustin Teasley illustration

Icemen also fit into the tough-guy fraternity, as long as they wear a mustache or beard. On those really cold, windy days, we can compare nose icicles that hang down from our mustaches. A big icicle is sort of a cold-weather badge of honor. Minor casualties can occur, though, when one of the icicles breaks off while being admired, taking several short hairs with it. This would explain the little jumping, spinning dances often seen within a group of icemen. Rather than dances of joy over catching a fish, as is often mistaken, the frenzied movements are the result of excruciating pain.

Through experience, I've learned that staying comfortable in the cold is really a matter of dressing properly and of course having the right frame of mind. Yes, some of being warm in the bitter cold is mental. How else could my wife, who freezes when the nighttime temperature dips below 60 degrees, be so happy and warm as we rode a ski lift in a raging mountain snow storm last winter. She loves to ski, and her enthusiasm overrides her cold-sensory system. I didn't admit it, but I was cold on that ski lift. It didn't help matters that I was wondering how the guys back in Kansas were doing ice-fishing — without me.

