

IMAGES FOR CONSERVATION | BOOK ONE



Texas Hill Country Edition



The Images for Conservation Fund (ICF) integrates art, education and natural history through the power of photography to promote conservation of wildlife through sustainable economic incentives. Our goal is to preserve wildlife habitat, create economic growth through new opportunities in nature tourism and popularize nature photography throughout North America.

The Pro-Tour of Nature Photography is a series of professional tournaments, each one limited to a particular geographic region, designed to initiate and support a developing nature photo-tourism industry. Known for its natural beauty and bountiful wildlife, the Texas Hill Country was selected to “host” the first Pro-Tour competition.

A Launch Party in the spring of 2006 kicked off the first Pro-Tour by randomly matching 17 outstanding Texas Hill Country ranches with a professional photographer. The photographers immediately began working with their assigned ranch families to locate wildlife, study terrain and establish photo sites. Some built specialized photo blinds for photographing wildlife in deep water ponds and lakes. Throughout the month of April, the photographers lived on the ranches and developed categorized portfolios to fulfill competition requirements. This highly competitive process has produced astonishing images that are truly wildlife “portraiture”. The world’s richest wildlife photo tournament, the Pro-Tour awards \$160,000 in total prize money.

The ICF Board is proud to present *Images for Conservation, Book One – Texas Hill Country Edition*, showcasing the prize-winning wildlife and landscape photography from the inaugural Pro-Tour of Nature Photography. This booklet represents a sampling of the 192-page, full-color book available October 2006. The images in this booklet were selected by a panel of internationally recognized judges as a random representation of the prize-worthy photography produced by the 17 teams that participated in the 2006 Pro-Tour. The actual winners will be revealed in the published book.



Tom Ulrich | Peaceful Springs Nature Preserve



Gary Vestal | Flying A Ranch



Jess Lee | Los Madrones



Jess Lee | Los Madrones



Cathy Illg | Redcreek Ranch

About Selah, Bamberger Ranch Preserve...



Photographs on pages 4 and 5
courtesy of Sherwood Inkley.

Inspired by Louis Broomfield's *Pleasant Valley*, the restoration story of worn-out abandoned farms in his native Ohio, entrepreneur J. David Bamberger set out in 1969 to purchase the worst piece of property he could find in Blanco County—over-grazed, Juniper-choked acreage which was devoid of water. Massive Ashe Juniper clearing, grass seeding and tree planting, complete with protective cages, have returned the 5,500 acre ranch to a state of natural abundance. Countless springs seep from the hills, supporting a healthy ecosystem that is able to sustain a diverse array of plants and animals.

Once described as the largest habitat restoration project on private land in Texas, the Bamberger Ranch is an operating ranch that also serves as a natural research laboratory. In the early 80's the co-founder and chief executive for Church's Chicken developed an ingenious plan for the AAZPA (now the American Zoo and Aquarium Association) to set aside a square mile—640 acres—in order to establish a zoo-ranch cooperative designed to develop an oryx population large enough and genetically diverse enough to preserve the sub-Saharan scimitar-horned oryx. Today the handsome white oryx with their reddish-brown markings and long curving horns thrive in their Texas home, free-roaming and capable of survival in the wild. The internationally recognized program at Bamberger Ranch serves as a model for species preservation.

Ever fascinated by all creatures great and small, Bamberger turned his attention to the Mexican free-tailed bat. After years of volunteering with Bat Conservation International's Bracken Cave project, plans were made to build a man-made bat cave large enough to house a million bats. Since its completion in 1998 the "chiroptorium" seasonally houses tens of thousands of bats and supplies the ranch with guano.

The ranch's most recent project for conservation and species survival involves the endangered Texas Snowbell (*Styrax texana*), a small understory tree that inhabits the limestone cliffs of the western edge of the Hill Country, producing a bell-shaped white flower in mid-April. J. David Bamberger's quest to find seeds and to propagate and develop genetic material for recovery and reintroduction has grown into a federally recognized program relying



upon the unprecedented cooperation of landowners. In 2003, a recovery plan goaled to reintroduce 500 trees on public and private lands in their native habitat.

Because education and “people ranching” are priorities, J. David and Margaret Bamberger share the ranch and their experience in habitat restoration through workshops, seminars and field trips. The master promoter and motivator has turned his focus to marketing conservation. Accordingly, Bamberger Ranch Preserve offers educational workshops and models for all seven Wildlife Management Use Requirements for Agricultural Tax Appraisal. Selah is accredited with the Texas Education Agency to provide appropriate environmental education to schoolchildren. The preserve is maintained and operated by a dedicated staff and loyal volunteers.

For all of his endeavors, Bamberger applies a key maxim: “It’s easier to initiate an action than to sustain it—you’ve got to think of the economic ability to carry the plan through”. As they look to the future, the Bambergers have placed the property for perpetuity in a foundation, The Bamberger Ranch Preserve, which assures the land continues as a living lab and learning center. To J. David, “Selah (a Biblical term from the Book of Psalms, inviting one to stop, pause and reflect) is like Walden was to Thoreau”. The legacy is one of coalition building; the spirit of exploration; practical business application; love and respect for the preservation of nature’s bounty.



SELAH

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Al Perry | Annandale Ranch



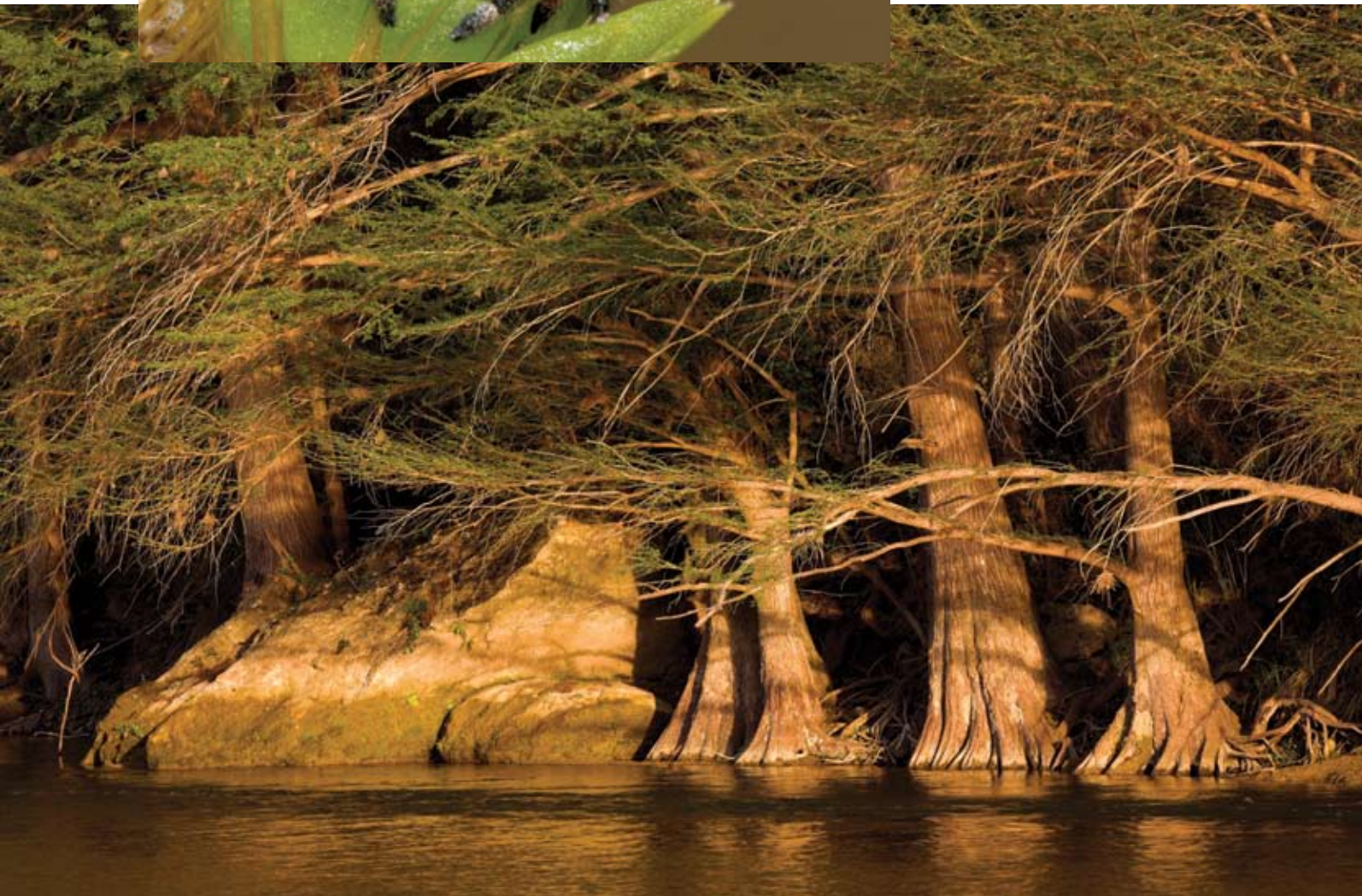
Leo Keeler | The Block Creek Natural Area

D. Robert Franz | Knibbe Ranch



John Hendrickson | Rosetta Ranch

D. Robert Franz | Knibbe Ranch



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for spearheading the
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Project!*

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Images for Conservation Fund (ICF) proudly presents
Book One - Texas Hill Country Edition.

A stunning collage of over
200 prize-winning nature images
from the 2006 Pro-Tour of Nature
Photography awaits you inside.
Seventeen world-class photographers
teamed with 17 beautiful Texas Hill
Country ranches to produce this
enchancing collection
of photographs.
Order yours today.



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