

# The Bandera PROPHEET

September 29, 2020

Growing Up In Bandera

By Glenn Clark

The Bandera Prophet

Every morning when I head out the door to fill my bird feeders I think about how I didn't have a clue back in the day about the different species of birds common to our area. Most of the common ones we see daily I was familiar with but the finches and buntings were something I was clueless about. It has been an interesting learning experience for me here in retirement getting an education and most of it right from my front porch.

At times it is almost like having a job trying to keep the feeders filled with birdseed and hummingbird nectar. I never knew that nyjer is what thistle seed is called and how it really isn't thistle at all. Confusing when you start searching for information but it attracts those beautiful Goldfinches. It amazes me how much those little birds eat every day. Autumn has just begun as I'm writing this so that means the hummers are beginning to feel the need to head south. My labor of love will soon be less demanding. I cut back to three feeders this year because they were wearing me out. It's a chore keeping the feeders clean and filled but I will soon miss them buzzing my head when I get near the feeders. Among some of the other critters, which are more plentiful now than when I was a kid roaming the hills, is the porcupine. Travel down any highway out of Bandera and you are sure to encounter porcupine roadkill. I wonder if buzzards prefer snacking on coons or squirrels rather than having to deal with all those quills while dining and simultaneously dodging cars. Seems to me it would be quite challenging. Axis deer were a rare sighting in my early years traveling around the area. Exotic game ranches were just getting started around Texas and we

couldn't have predicted what would follow. I can take a short walk from my house here in town today and watch herds of Axis deer numbering in the hundreds grazing near the river. Most people will agree that the meat of Axis deer is favored over whitetail. I personally like both so if anyone has an overabundance of venison I can help you with that problem.

The whitetail herds we enjoy these days are the result of Texas Parks and Wildlife and landowners herd management efforts. There are discussions about why we have so many deer in town and why people shouldn't feed them. I think they will come anyway because it's a haven where yards and plants are watered and they are free range animals. After all, the wildlife was here long before my great-great grandfather Amasa Clark came along. Should I stop feeding the birds too? PFFT!!!

Following my Growing Up In Bandera tales will reveal just how much freedom has been lost just over my lifetime here in Bandera. We can't Keep Bandera "Bandera" if people don't know Bandera's true history. Back in the day we had sheep, goats and cows in town. So I ask you, "What has changed?"

#249

2020