

The Bandera PROPHECT

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Today in Texas history

Prairie Chicken namesake Henry P. Attwater born in England

By Bandera Spirits of Texas

On April 28, 1854, Henry Philemon Attwater was born in Brighton, England. He immigrated in 1873 to Canada, where he soon became interested in natural history.

During 1884 Attwater collected specimens in Bexar County, where he befriended Gustave Toudouze. In 1889 Attwater moved with his family to Sherman and then to San Antonio; in 1900 he moved to Houston to become the agricultural and industrial agent for the Southern Pacific Railroad.

In 1907 Attwater and Mervyn Bathurst Davis served on the committee that recommended passage of legislation requiring hunting licenses in Texas, with all revenues from licenses and fines to be used solely for game protection and propagation. Attwater retired in 1913 to devote himself to the study of natural history.

During the 1920s he sold his collection to the Witte Museum in San Antonio. Attwater's greater prairie chicken ("Tympanuchus cupido attwateri") is one of several species named in his honor. Attwater died in 1931.