

**TRANSCRIPT**

**INTERVIEWEE:** David Blankinship (DB)

**INTERVIEWER:** David Todd (DT)

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**LOCATION:** Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge, Alamo, Texas

**TRANSCRIBERS:** Lacy Goldsmith and Robin Johnson

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**REEL:** 2090

**DT:** My name is David Todd. And I'm representing the Conservation History Association of Texas and it's February 28, the year 2000. We're at the Santa Ana Wildlife Refuge in South Texas near Alamo, Texas and we have the good fortune to be interviewing David Blankinship who runs the refuge for the Fish & Wildlife Service, and before that, worked for the National Audubon Society running its sanctuaries in Texas. And through those two agencies he's been able to do a great deal for conservation in Texas. And I wanted to thank Mr. Blankinship for spending some time with us to discuss all these things.

(misc.)

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**DB:** You might get some difference of opinion that I run the refuge.

(misc.)

**DT:** I wanted to start with some of your early days if we could. Maybe you could discuss any family members, teachers or friends who might have influenced your interest in the outdoors, conservation.

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**DB:** Well it's—it's always been sort of a mystery to me as to why I had a—an interest in—in the outdoors like—like I do. I—really—my—my parents—no one in my family was really involved in—in the outdoors other than my dad took me hunting a—a few times. I think that hunting is—does play a part in getting a lot of people interested in the outdoors. Some continue to hunt and others don't but it does—it does help to get people out and—and involved and aware of—of the—of the outdoors. But they really weren't into the conservation movement. You know, there really—when I was growing up, that—it wasn't that big a thing. Most people didn't even think about conservation much except the few real professionals other than any—much in the way of grass roots conservation movements and so forth. I guess I—but—but for as long as I can remember, I was interested in—in wildlife. My first books that I got were, you know, field guides or identification books of fish and birds and reptiles and so forth. And—and—sort of like what I learned to read on. And that's—I was always—just always interested in that. And one of the biologists with the Texas Parks & Wildlife said he could remember when I was about nine years old, I used to

come over and sit in his back yard and—and watch the caged doves that he had there for hours. And he never really thought about the fact that a few years later I'd be working for him. But as a biologist. But anyway, that's—I guess that's the—something that just sort of came—came by naturally. And I really can't account for it otherwise.

**DT:** Would you discuss some of that work you did on White Wing Doves, in banding them and counting them?

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**DB:** Well I went to—started to work with White Wing Doves in 1956. That was the summer after my sophomore year in high school and I went to work for Mr. Bill Keel(?) who was a biologist for Texas Parks & Wildlife Department. And I guess if I had a—ever had anyone that was a mentor, it was Bill Keel. He sort of was—guided me as I first started learning about the—wildlife biology. And we worked on the White Wing Dove research project for the state. This involved running transects, nesting transects. We did—we trapped White Wings—White Wing Doves and banded them. We banded nestlings, went to the—took the birds out of the nest and put bands on them and so forth. And then, over the years, I continued to work every summer with the Parks & Wildlife until 1963 under several different biologists and we were involved in all those projects and also in revegetation efforts. Some of the first ones that were done in the Valley in reestablishing brush as the—the natural vegetation here and we also worked with Grackle control. The Great-tailed Grackles are a very important predator on White Wing Doves and are—by controlling their numbers in some of the nesting tallies, experimentally we were able to increase the numbers of White Wings very significantly. And, in fact, this later became a—a—a little—carrying this project on a little further, this Grackle control was what I used for my—my Master's Thesis. Was to control Grackles and we raised the numbers of White Wings nesting in an area from about 150 pairs per acre to over 500 pairs per acre by removing Grackles. And so it was a pretty significant increase in populations.

**DT:** I understand that you were also involved in trapping and release of other birds, including the Chacalacas. Can you talk about that effort?

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**DB:** Well one of the things that we've observed here in the Valley is that a lot of species have greatly increased. And when I first started working with wildlife back in the 1950's, for example, Chacalacas were rather rare and limited in their distribution here in the Valley. We did do some trapping in some of the state areas, particularly the McManus(?) Unit down south of Weslaco, where—there were still a few Chacalacas. We trapped some of them and moved them around to other brush tracts throughout the Valley. And now then we've got Chacalacas everywhere. I'm sure some of that spreading of Chacalacas has occurred by their own efforts but moving those Chacalacas around, I think, certainly speeded up the process and put Chacalacas in areas where they didn't have a corridor to

travel through eventually as their population did increase and they began to spread. There were still areas that—that they couldn't get to without being transplanted.

**DT:** I understand that you've also been involved in research to help encourage the recovery of the Whooping Crane and the Brown Pelican. Can you talk a little about their decline and their subsequent recovery to some extent?

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**DB:** Well I worked for the National Audubon Society on the Whooping Crane project. Actually sort of restarted that project that had been carried on in the late '40's and in the early '50's by Robert Porter Allen by the—for the National Audubon. And then I started another project in—in 1970 and worked on that for seventeen years on the Texas Coast where Whooping Cranes have been reduced. The population in Texas in the—in the '40's was down to—depends on whose count you use—somewhere between 14 and 16 birds. Now then we're up to about 185 or so I think this year. It was—that was very rewarding. We were able to do a lot of work with studying their habits, their food habits but particularly working to preserve their habitat. That's the key to virtually everything is—is habitat. And we were able to work to protect the habitat of Whooping Cranes from things like dredging projects that would of destroyed some of it. Also worked to reduce effects of erosion by boat wakes as they went up and down the Intracoastal Waterway which goes right through the Whooping Crane habitat on the Aransas Refuge, able to work with oil companies so that they would locate their drilling operations so that they wouldn't be impacting the—the—the cranes and their food supply. All sorts of—of projects like that and also was able to serve on the Whooping Crane Recovery team and that, for several years, and that was—an Advisory Group that advised the Fish & Wildlife Service on activities that would be beneficial and help the Whooping Crane to recover in numbers. And that—in that program, we were involved with different foster parent programs and reintroduction efforts and also designating areas along the migration route for protection so that the cranes would have places to stop on their migration between Texas and—and Canada. Also worked on some radio tracking projects where we actually had little radios mounted on leg bands on the—some of the Cranes. And we tracked them on their migration, back and forth, between Canada and Texas. And we—then we were able to gather information on their migration stopovers. This was a big mystery. People really didn't know where these cranes stopped and what kind of habitat they used in migration. And so we were able to get a lot of information on that and—

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and, as a result, several areas we—have been set aside as critical habitat. That was another thing we did was to designate the critical habitat for the cranes here on the Texas coast. Dr. Harold Irby and myself were both on that team and we worked together on that—that critical habitat issue.

(misc.)

**DT:** Could we continue talking about the recovery of rare species and maybe you can discuss the Brown Pelicans?

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**DB:** I guess that one of the most rewarding things I've been involved with, if not the most rewarding, has been the—the recovery of the Brown Pelican population in Texas. The—the Brown Pelican was numbered, oh, several thousand nesting pairs back around the turn of the century and then they began a slow decline and probably as a result of several factors but one of which was persecution by commercial fishermen because they thought that they were competing for fish and so they would go and destroy the nesting sites and things like that. Then we began to have problems with—from pesticides, the chlorinated hydrocarbons, DDT and related compounds which were causing eggshell thinning. And, as a result of all these factors, the population in Texas went way down and, in fact, about—in the—in the late '60's, early '70's, we think we were down to maybe as low as 35 birds in Texas. And there was no reproduction going on. One other problem that we could see was there was a lot of disturbance of the nesting sites by just sports fishermen and by sightseers and so forth. They really didn't realize that they

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were causing a problem. And so we mounted—I was still working with the Audubon Society at the time and along with some folks from the Corpus Christi Audubon Outdoor Club, particularly Emily Paine we really got involved in protecting the—the nesting sites of the pelicans, where they had nested earlier—in earlier years. And so we finally got one nest, one year and then we had there two nests and then we started working with four and nine and sixteen and things like that. And then, you know, we finally, finally over the years worked up to—to a hundred nests and we were just ecstatic when that happened. So anyway, now then, this is continued by protecting those nest sites. And then in 1972 there were stricter regulations on pesticides put into effect and this greatly helped the situation to reduce the exposure to—to pesticides. And we worked with the Corps of Engineers, we worked with sportsmen's groups, made talks to the sportsmen's groups all up and down the coast to winter Texans, all the different groups. And to get them educated about staying away from these nesting islands because whenever they would go on these islands, they would flush the birds and the hot sun would addle the eggs, it could kill the young. So it was, you know, eliminating that was one of the major factors. And so with all these things working together, the populations rebounded. Now then we're over 3000 nesting pairs in Texas and go down along the coast and—and to see those birds flying along in squadrons or diving for—for fish or just looking decorative setting on some of the posts around—it's very rewarding. I—I really feel good I've had a part in that.

**DT:** I suppose that a lot of the fortunes of these rare birds and all the common coastal birds have been linked with the habitat. Would you talk about being a warden on some of the Audubon Island sanctuaries along the coast, what that's meant for you?

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**DB:** Well one of the side duties I had when I worked for Audubon was—was working as a—  
a warden. My main assignment was a research biologist but I also worked as a—as a  
warden, served as a warden on several of our sanctuaries just protected those from  
disturbance, from like various sources from fishermen, just sightseers getting on those  
islands. But also we had to protect them by working with the Corps of Engineers to keep  
them from dumping dredge spoil on top of them when it wasn't needed or particularly  
when the birds were nested there—nesting there. We, you know, the—the key to wildlife  
management is habitat. Talk about business and they say the key to business is location,  
location, location. Well when it comes to wildlife, it's habitat, habitat, habitat. You can save  
the habitat or restore the habitat and the wildlife will come. That's sort—and, of course,  
you've got other factors that affect things. You know, you can have habitat and you can  
poison it with pesticides or things like that or you—but, in general, if you've got habitat—if  
you can provide the habitat, the wildlife has just about got their problem solved. The—the  
other things are relatively minor in comparison with that. And so that's the—the whole  
thing is trying to—to preserve what habitat we've got and hopefully restore it in areas  
where it's been lost.

**DT:** I understand that a lot of the habitat that's lost in the Rio Grande Valley where we are  
right now has been attributed to agriculture and clearing for cultivation. Could you talk  
about what you saw back in the '50's and '60's in Mexico with the Green Revolution and  
continue and talk about how you've tried to reverse that by all the acquisitions in the  
Valley?

(misc.)

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**DB:** Well when I was working with the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department and also then as  
I was doing my graduate work which was on White Wing Doves in Northeastern Mexico, I  
got to see a lot of—lot of country between the border and South of Tampico and—and  
inland to the mountains and was on Ciudad Mante and Valles and along the coast, La Pesca,  
Soto la Marina and those areas. It was a whole different world from what is there now.  
The—most of the country had not been cleared at that time. There—particularly the  
stretch from Soto la Marina south towards Tampico was—was very—very undeveloped.  
There was wildlife of all kinds and the habitat was—was—it was dense thorn forests and  
with—and bigger forests on the—on the mountains and closer to the coast. Encountered  
people with fresh jag—jaguar skins was (tape gets fuzzy)

(misc.)

**DT:** Mr. Blankinship, maybe you can start again by describing what was the look of the  
landscape in Mexico and how it changed over recent years.

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**DB:** Well every—you know, much of the area was—was densely forested or covered with—with tropical thorn scrub, thorn forest type vegetation. We had huge nesting colonies of White Wing Doves there that would number any—2 million birds or more nesting in—in one spot. You go into those areas and you—you couldn't hardly talk for the roar of the—of the cooing birds. When you had, you know, concentrations of well over a hundred pair per acre and you're covering many, many acres at a time. I've been back down there in the last couple years and—and visited with some of the people down there that are younger, even some of the ranchers that have some of that land that they acquired or that they bought and cleared and—but most of them really have no idea of what—of what was there. They—they're—some of them were just astounded when I told them that—that, you know, this area used to be in forests and there used to be wild turkeys here and White Wing Dove nesting colonies and jaguars occurred here and—and things and they—it's all news to them. You know, the—all they've known is the plowed fields and the—and the areas that are—have been planted with grass for pasture. It's a whole new—whole new concept to them. Of course, here in the Rio Grande Valley in Texas, things have changed drastically and that was one of the things that I witnessed as I was working with the—with the state in the '50's and when I grew up here, was all these areas being cleared. Of course, most of it had been cleared by—by this time but there were still a lot of remnant tracts that were—that were being wiped out. It's been very, very rewarding to me to be able to work to reestablish, to acquire some of that land and

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reestablish the habitat here, recreate it. We—we sort of just caught things as they were hanging on by tooth and talon, sometimes I say. We were—we still have most of the organisms, most of the animals that—that were here are still here but they were just about to be wiped out. We were down to, you know, less than 5% of the habitat remaining and so now then, we're trying to establish that and tie those remnant tracts together so that wildlife can move back and forth and—and maintain itself over the—over the long haul. And being able to work on this project is to—the Lower Rio Grande Valley National Wildlife Refuge is really a—a rewarding part of my career.

**DT:** I understand that—I believe it's over 40,000 acres have been acquired. What sort of land are you looking for and how do you restore it?

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**DB:** Well actually the Lower Rio Grande Refuge is authorized right now to acquire 132,500 acres. At the present time, we have, oh, around 80,000 acres and we're acquiring more all the time. Our emphasis is to establish a wildlife corridor along the river, all the way from the coast to Falcon Dam which is a distance, straight line, about 140 miles. It's over 270 river miles. So, of course, our pri—priorities were to—to acquire the remnant brush tracts. The—the remnant pieces of native habitat. And we've done most of that. So now then we're trying to tie—try—trying to tie those together. And so we're—we're actually buying some farmland because that is the space between these brush tracts and it's sort of like putting

together a necklace. You know, a necklace won't function unless it's all connected and the same with a wildlife corridor. So those pieces of farmland are just as important as some of the brush tracts as far as making a corridor. Of course, then we have to put those pieces of farmland back in the native habitat and we have a big reforestation effort going on here at the refuge and we plant between 600 and 1000 acres per year back into native vegetation and we try to get a big diversity. We usually plant somewhere between forty and fifty species on each one of the tracts that we're revegetating. So we've got a good diversity of plants to start with. So we give a—a jump start. If it starts off and tries to revegetate naturally, you get Mesquite and Huisache and Baccharis which is a weedy species and that's about it. It takes years and years and years for those other species to—to establish themselves, if ever, so we try to get a jump start on that.

**DT:** Can you see how the replantings that you were associated with at Longoria(?) have come along since the 1950's?

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**DB:** Some areas that we did revegetation work on early on, back in the '50's, like the—the Longoria(?) area there North of Santa Rosa, have come along well. The—the brush is—is—is doing well. It's got populations of—good population of nesting birds in them. The thing was that some of those early efforts we did were—we only were using a few species. So the species diversity of plants was—was low and it's been just now that the other species are becoming more and more established there and it's becoming better actual wildlife habitat. Whereas the new areas that we're planting, where we've got this wide diversity, actually have wildlife moving into them even faster than those old plantings. So we've actually got, in some cases, more wildlife use of our new plantings than we do of some of those old ones, just because of the diversity of plants.

(misc.)

**DT:** We've been talking about the acquisition of tens of thousands of acres and the restoration of many species of plants, could you talk about the constituents that make up the political and financial support for Fish & Wildlife and for Audubon Society non-profit groups that argue for conservation of this habitat?

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**DB:** Well the Lower Rio Grande Valley National Wildlife Refuge has had a—enjoyed a very unusual amount of support from the local people. So many parts of the country, any kind of a project like this to acquire land and particularly farmland and so forth, would meet with very strong opposition. We've had a lot of support both from the—the local cities and as people become more and more aware of the importance of ecotourism to this—to this region, as well as the ecological significance and ecological uniqueness of—of this southern tip of Texas, we've had a lot of local people here that have banded together and to work to support the refuge and help us get funding. One of the groups was the Frontera Audubon Society, the Chapter, and then a spin-off from that which was the Wildlife Corridor Task

Force and this group of folks that really worked, a lot of them lobbied for funding for the project. Some of them actually traveled to Washington, met with congressman and did all this at their own expense to help us get funding to—to carry on the building of the—of the refuge here. It's been, you know, remarkable. And then there's, oh especially in the last few years, as the ecotourism has really taken off and—and grown, more and more of the cities in—in the area here are—are getting behind it and, you know, they're putting on nature festivals and birding festivals and butterfly festivals and so forth. And so maybe they're beginning to realize that the true economic value as well as the—as the ecological value of preserving habitat, having these areas available for—for the public use.

**DT:** I'm sure it's not all been a rosy path. Could you talk about some of the obstacles to trying to acquire and manage habitat?

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**DB:** Well I—I think one of the problems that I see cropping up that—that—that's an obstacle in the Fish & Wildlife Service or it—it also developed in—in—in Audubon, that's where I really became aware of it. When I first went to work for National Audubon Society, really I felt like that, you know, the resource, that is, the—the—the wildlife, the plants, the habitat was the number one concern of the—of the organization. And there was a—a feeling of camaraderie. You know, people all had a common cause and everybody jumped in and—and did whatever they could do for the good of the—of the resource. And then as it—as the organization grew, they brought in more folks that—from the outside who really were brought in with the idea that they were going to help the—the—the organization be more efficient because they had a better knowledge of business or they had a better knowledge of public relations and so forth but they didn't have a background in—in the resource, in—in—in—in ecology, biology and so forth. And we got into the same situation that you do in business and throughout the—the country and a lot of the bureaucracies, you have people that were more interested in—in their own interests, in building their own power structure, sort of building their own kingdom, as it were, and so that their—their interest was in more what they accomplished for themselves or for their program than in what was best for the resource. And, unfortunately, we see that in—in the bureaucracies like the Fish & Wildlife Services and other bureaucracies. We see that—that we've got folks that are in power and certainly I'm not saying all of them but we have some people in power who have more interest in their—in promoting their programs or their own interests than they do in what happens to the resource. And so that's a real obstacle and it's something that we all have to work to—to work around or to overcome.

**DT:** What are some of the missed opportunities that you regret over the years of working in conservation?

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**DB:** Well I guess, just being able to get started earlier and—and being able to prevent some of these—some of the losses of habitat the—the clearing of—of tracts of the native



vegetation here in South Texas that could have been—if people had just been more—more aware of the value of those—of those properties. You know, we could have had plenty of wildlife habitat, plenty of wildlife, and still had plenty of agriculture and still had plenty of urban development and so forth. It just was a lack of planning. And that's a, you know, there was—there was plenty for everybody and plenty for all—for the animals and so forth as well as for the people. But just through lack of planning and—we got into a situation where we just about lost the—the natural part of our—of our environment. And so now then we're having to work very difficult—with a lot of difficulty and at great expense to try to restore that.

(misc.)

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**DB:** As far as challenges for the future, of course, here in the Rio Grande Valley I—besides preserving and—and restoring the habitat which I think is a number one concern, we've—water is going to be a—a bigger and bigger issue here in the Valley. Of course, it's a—it's a—it's a challenge for habitat because of the—the use of water for—for irrigation and increased use for urban development and so forth. Water's, you know, there's just not much available for—for wildlife. The—the building of Falcon Dam back in the '50's was a great boon for agriculture and provided water for that and for urban development here in the Valley but it was an ecological disaster or a very serious blow as far as wildlife habitat was concerned because most of the—or much of the Valley used to flood on a fairly regular basis and this is what watered the habitat and allowed it to develop and to, you know, its characteristics and maintain—maintain itself. And so now then with the elimination of almost all floods, with the dam there, our—our habitat is tending to shift to a more xeric or a more dry type habitat. Here where we see a lot of cactus and—and mesquite trees and so forth. We also used to have lots of large cedar elms, ash trees, hackberries, things like that—that grow in a—in a wetter situation. And now we still have some of that but they're only right along the river bank and right along the banks of our old resacas, that is oxbow lakes and so forth. And it's been pretty much eliminated for much of the—of the—of the areas. So that's a big change that we've seen. So—but the increase in population, the increase of business here in the Valley causes a pressure on habitat. That—the—the push to build more international bridges. Each one of those bridges that goes in creates a break in the wildlife corridor. So we have to plan ways of either going under those bridges or around those bridges, under the roads,

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whatever. And whatever connection we make, it's not as effective or as efficient as it was before that bridge was there. So—but we still have to try to make the best of the situation. But the population and—and growth is, I guess, an—and its impact on water and habitat is one of the major challenges down here in this area.

**DT:** What could you say to encourage the future generation to become involved in conservation work?

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**DB:** Well I think that—that the—the emphasis on conservation in the schools has been tremendous. We see a—a—a greater awareness in people of—of environmental issues, of the—the value of—of natural systems and I think that an emphasis on education is really important. That's hard to get—because we also, by the same token, we get a lot of folks that come in here that haven't got a clue about what's going on. You know, when people drive from Kingsville to the Valley through the King Ranch and they get out and they say, gee, I was—sure was glad to get through driving through all that wasteland. You know, that's—in the eye—that's the perception, in the eye of the beholder. To some people, that's wasteland. To other people that's some of the most productive land on the face of the earth. Species-wise, wildlife-wise, you know, and in—and it's all in your—the way you see things. That's the—there's such a difference of—of opinion and viewpoints, you know, some of the things that have been done in—in the name of conservation or what—like I—I think about some government agencies have been involved, for example, in—in the introduction of many exotic organisms, particularly exotic grasses in the name of progress and creating better forage for livestock and things like that but, by the same token, many of those species have now become very, very major pests and they're actually wiping out the—the native species because they can out-compete them in one way or another. So what one person may think is a great accomplishment, another sees as a disaster. It's, you know, we—we get into extremes no matter what we're talking about but when you talk about conservationists and you talk about people that want to develop things and so forth, once again, you've got the extremes. You've got—you've got some people who think that setting aside land for wildlife is a complete waste of time, that the Fish & Wildlife Service, other conservation

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agencies, you know, are practically communist plots or socialist plots to—to take away all individual rights and they're going to starve people to death because they're going to turn all the farmland into wildlife refuges or whatever. And then at the other pole, you've got the extreme conservationists or as people like to call them, environmentalists, and some of them are extreme. That think if you don't, you know, turn everything back into nature and cut down on our consumption and save all the trees and so forth that the whole—the earth is just going to fall apart and come to an end. I guess maybe we need both of these extremes because when—between the extremes is where we usually wind up and maybe that's where we need to be anyway, is sort of in the middle. It might be hard—to get to that point if it wasn't for these folks that kind of carried things to—to extremes.

(misc.)

**DT:** What sort of place do you enjoy visiting that has some natural qualities?

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**DB:** Well, of course, I enjoy a lot of the places here in the Rio Grande Valley. There's a lot of brush tracts that I find very attractive and some of my favorite places. But I guess my favorite spot—spots are always - tend to be closer to the coast. The—the parts of the refuge that are close to the coast and—and my work on the coast has been some of my favorite times. The Aransas National Wildlife Refuge and the areas around there and Aransas Bay and San Antonio Bay and Mesquite Bay and the Texas coast, by boat, so that you're out in the water, actually out in the water. I think that's some of my—my favorite spots. There you've got large populations of birds. You've—you've got marine mammals. The—the—the barrel-nosed dolphins. The—the—the sunsets on the water or sunrises on the water and—and the—when I was working there, the presence of the Whooping Crane, I guess, was really made it an unforgettable experience. It was something that I really noticed in the—in the spring when the Whooping Cranes would migrate, when they would leave, that—the marsh there just - it seemed empty. It's an observation that Aldo Leopold made also when he was writing about marshes and the Sandhill Cranes that—when they were no longer there, there was a sadness. And that was—the marshes there—you felt like you had a tooth missing when the—when the whoopers left. But it was still a beautiful place. And I think that that—that is my favorite areas. But anywhere along the Texas coast really and particularly the south coast because it's less developed. Fewer people and you can still get out there and have a little bit of solitude and really—really—and soak it in, so to speak. And even sometimes catch a fish.

**DT:** You mentioned Aldo Leopold. Could you talk about Leopold's influence on your thinking or maybe Rachel Carson's or other people who have written about conservation?

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**DB:** I guess if any author had much influence on me, it would have been Aldo Leopold. I mentioned Bill Keel that I worked for when I first started to work with Texas Parks & Wildlife as a student and one of the things shortly after I went to work with him, he gave me, as a gift, a copy of Sand County Almanac by Leopold. And I read that and reread it and reread it and I even take it down and read it sometimes now. Matter of fact, I—I read it today. And just incidentally while I'm thinking about this interview but anyway, he, you know, he—he really had a clarity of thought and—and—but he stimulates you to think about just ordinary things particularly his—his account of—of sawing up an oak tree in his essay, The Good Oak, and all the events that had—had happened as—as he was cutting through the history that—that those growth rings represented. And you look at these trees that we're driving by here and you think of the things that they witnessed and all the—the—the history that's gone on right here, you know, that we're just a—a drop in the bucket to—to what's gone on and what hopefully is going to continue on and if we can just keep from tearing things up too much and—we'll still have wildlife and natural places to enjoy and—and generations to come will also.

**DT:** Well thank you very much for your efforts to make sure this does continue.

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**DB:** Well thank you.

(misc.)

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End of interview with David Blankinship