

Community

Let's Talk Turkey



Photos by Martelle Luedecke/Luedecke Photography
Inks Lake State Park held a presentation on turkeys Nov. 26 led by Bob Linder, part of their diverse educational programs offered throughout the year.



Many gathered at Inks Lake State Park to hear Bob Linder speak on turkeys Nov. 26.



Lori Greco, president of Friends of Inks Lake State Park carried Titan the turkey, a prop for the educational program on turkeys held Nov. 26.

**By Martelle Luedecke
Contributing Writer**

Turkeys are often under-appreciated, yet they possess remarkable abilities that make them truly fascinating creatures. From their sensitive hearing to their elaborate courtship displays, turkeys deserve more attention and respect.

One of their most notable traits is their exceptional hearing. Turkeys have highly sensitive ears, allowing them to detect sounds that are inaudible to humans, a skill that helps them spot predators and locate food.

Their visual abilities are equally impressive.

With a 270-degree field of vision, turkeys can see more than humans, and they can even perceive ultraviolet light, aiding them in finding food and identifying other turkeys. However, their vision becomes nearly useless in low-light conditions, leaving them almost blind at night. To compensate, turkeys employ a fascinating survival strategy: they sleep with one eye open.

This behavior, known as unihemispheric slow-wave sleep (USWS), allows turkeys to rest one half of their brain while keeping the other half alert.

By doing so, they remain vigilant to potential threats, like predators, even while they are asleep. When roosting in trees, turkeys keep one eye open, with the active half of their brain corresponding to the open eye.

This enables them to monitor their surroundings while still getting much-needed rest – an impressive adaptation for staying safe.

Socially, turkeys thrive in flocks, typically composed of females (hens) and their young, while males (toms) often form bachelor groups



Nov. 26 at Inks Lake State Park, sisters Ruth and Jane Simmons were enthralled to be so close to a turkey.

during the breeding season. These birds are highly vocal, using a range of sounds – gobbles, chirps, and whistles – to communicate with each other.

Their reproductive habits are just as intriguing; hens generally lay their eggs in the spring, following the breeding season. However, when faced with adverse environmental conditions like drought or high predator presence, hens can delay egg-laying until the situation improves, a vital strategy for the survival of their young.

As omnivores, turkeys have a varied diet that includes insects, seeds, fruits, and small animals. Their digestive systems are specially adapted to break down plant material and extract the necessary nutrients. Turkeys are also fast flyers, reaching speeds of up to 55 miles per hour, and they can run at up to 25 miles per hour.

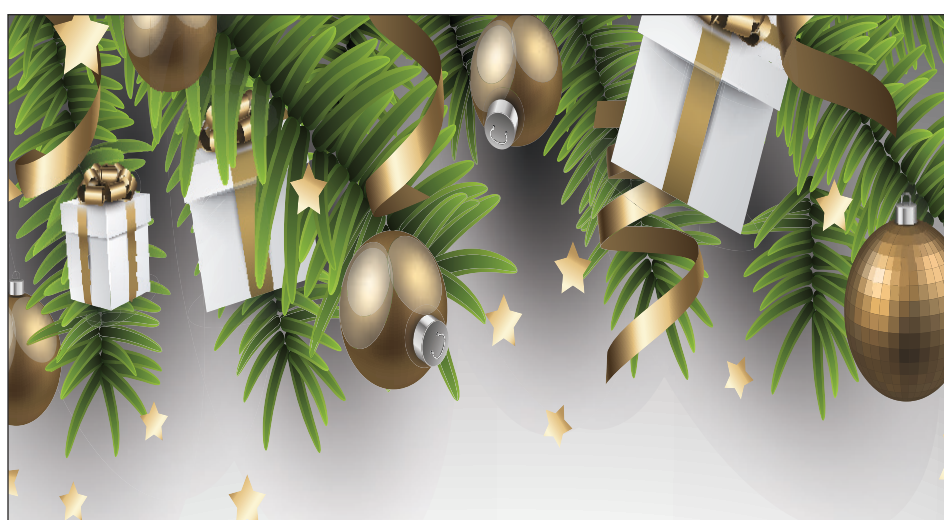
Male turkeys are particularly showy during courtship, spreading their tails, puffing out their chests, and performing a



Reese Eckermann sat next to Titan, a turkey mount, for a photo before the turkey talk educational program held at Inks Lake State Park Nov. 26.

“strut” or “dance” to attract females.

Turkeys are not only fascinating because of their complex social behaviors and unique physical traits, but their courtship rituals and survival strategies also make them a bird worth admiring.



You can find the perfect gift for Everyone on your list!

From Crystals, Jewelry, Shoes, Great Stocking Stuffers and so much more!

FREE GIFT WRAPPING



Mon – Fri 8 AM–6 PM
Saturday 9 AM–2 PM
Holiday Hours might differ

701 3rd St. Marble Falls TX
830-693-2972
www.atkinspharmacy.com



Now Open
mulberry drive

come shop at our NEW curated gift and apparel boutique at 414 Main St., Marble Falls

Upcoming Events:
11/22 Merry and Pink
11/29 Black Friday

Happy Holidays!

Come in now and enjoy our delicious menu for the Holidays!

7203 Park Rd 4 W, Burnet, TX 78611
(512) 715-9574
Right across from Perrisos Vineyard and Winery