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DOUG BIRD ANNOUNCED TO BE THE SALTWATER LEGEND SERIES™ HALL OF FAME'S 3RD HONOREE OF 2017

**THE PIONEER FISHING GUIDE TO BE HONORED AT CAPTAIN'S
MEETING OF 3RD STOP AT MARKER 37 MARINA, MARCH 24TH, 2017**

Corpus Christi, TX - High profile fishing guide & entrepreneur **Doug Bird** will be honored as the 3rd recipient of 2017 during the Saltwater Legend Series™ Hall of Fame Enshrinement ceremony on Friday, March 24th. Friday's event will be held 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Marker 37 Marina (open to the general public).

Bird, 75, and his wife of 55 years, the former Jean Ann Clark of Corpus Christi, moved to the edge of the Texas Hill Country about three years ago to be near their son Clark. Conveniently, there is a Veterans Affairs hospital in Temple. The Canada-born Bird is a disabled American vet.

Bird's big break came one summer, when he took Houston Chronicle Outdoor Editor Bob Brister to Baffin Bay. It was a successful two-day hunt for big trout. They threw a topwater plug called a Jumping Minnow and a teakwood Florida plug from Trader Bay. Brister was impressed, which came across in his 1986 column, sparking an avalanche of guide bookings for Bird, not to mention a fair amount of attention from other outdoor writers outdoor writers.

"We caught the heck out of 5- to 9-pound trout," Bird recalled. "We just slaughtered them. And that was the last I worried about being booked."

During the early years, Bird worked as an offshore captain in summer and a Laguna/Baffin Bay guide during the other seasons, eventually adding duck-hunting trips out of his cast-and-blast

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barge and cabin near the mouth of the land cut. He employed a cook at the cabin and had a crew of guides on the payroll.

Bird helped many guides along the way as he earned a reputation as a lure-only chaser of big trout. His favorite lures included the Cordell Broken Back, a soft plastic under a Mansfield Mauler and the Venezuela-made Jumping Minnow.

A fish-killing freeze in 1983, forced Bird to fish the surf or offer bass trips at Coletto Creek Reservoir. But the good old days returned in 1987 only to be knocked down again in 1989 by another bitter winter.

Millions of Laguna Madre-Baffin Bay fish died in that freeze, followed by an insidious brown tide bloom that lasted for about seven to eight years. This was no fun for lure anglers and guides. Bird went south to the lower coast and returned to bass fishing for part of the year.

By the mid-1990s, Ron Behnke, one of Bird's contemporaries, had a better idea. He convinced Bird to begin teaching at fishing seminars together with him. Bird was skeptical but flattered that Behnke considered his name and reputation marketable.

About 40 eager anglers attended the first course at Gulf Coast Marine on Port Avenue. They had a hit and took their show on the road, eventually involving the best guides from Rockport, Port O'Connor and Galveston. The lineup included Jay Watkins, Ron Elkins, Mickey Eastman and Blaien Frierhood. Bird later opened a tackle shop in Flour Bluff and then hosted a Saturday morning fishing show on KKTU radio for a while.

The veteran fishing guide's health was deteriorating, forcing him to retire from the business around 2008. After relocating to Temple, Bird joined the Centex Bass Hunters to learn from the locals. He now competes in area club tournaments and occasionally he wins one or places high in the field. Club standings have him ranked in the top 10, based on tournament points. Bird sometimes fishes for fun with Bruce Shuler, another familiar coastal personality and former owner of the Get-A-Way Adventures Lodge in Port Mansfield. Read the full article at:

Sikes, David (2007, May 07). Doug Bird's life and legacy. *The Caller Times*. Retrieved from <http://archive.caller.com/sports/outdoors/-doug-birds-life-and-legacy-31f2ed3b-4185-1090-e053-0100007f620a-378539845.html>

Saturday, March. 25th the live weigh-in event will be held from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at Marker 37 Marina. Saturday's event welcomes the general public to a fun-filled day with vendors, music, weigh-in, awards ceremony and much more.

All admission to the events on both days is free of charge. Food & beverage will be available at

the Hall of Fame Ceremony on Friday night. Meal tickets can be purchased at the event for \$12. Parking for the Hall of Fame ceremony & weigh-in will be limited, so please plan accordingly.

The Saltwater Legend Series™ is an organization whose sole purpose is to:

Honor the heroes of the sport of Saltwater fishing, preserve the history of the sport & its anglers, promote its values & celebrate excellence everywhere. For more information and details regarding each event for the 2017 series, please visit www.saltwaterlegendseries.com or [@SWLegendseries](https://twitter.com/SWLegendseries) on Twitter & Facebook.