



PHOTO: TREVOR BALLHUS

SOUTHERN HEROES

## Ronald Kendall: The Quail Doctor

The Texan is helping bring back the bobwhite, icon of Southern game birds

By **MIKE GRUDOWSKI**

April/May 2020



"I'm hopeful and encouraged and excited by what I've seen," says Ronald Kendall, a professor of environmental toxicology and head of the [Wildlife Toxicology Laboratory](#) at Texas Tech University. This may sound like a stretch for someone as preoccupied with bobwhite quail as he is. The last fifty years have not been kind to that iconic Southern game bird, which concerned observers call "the canary of the prairie"; in that span, Kendall says, the species has endured "the collapse of most of its original native range."



A bobwhite quail at Texas Tech's Wildlife Toxicology Laboratory, in Lubbock.

Photograph by Trevor Paulhus

CRITTERS

## Can the Bobwhite Quail Be Saved?

Once widely hunted in Texas, the beloved game birds have been dwindling in recent decades. But a West Texas hunter and professor believes he's found a way to save them.



By Wes Ferguson

December 2019

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FROM THE  
DECEMBER 2019 ISSUE

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It's a late September morning and opening day for the northern bobwhite quail is still weeks away, but Ronald Kendall is already on the hunt for the once ubiquitous game bird, known to its aficionados as Gentleman Bob. With the dew still pearly on the grass, Kendall cruises around his 2,200-acre West Texas ranch in an off-road vehicle, his eyes locked on the ground. Suddenly, he mashes the brakes as two bobwhites scurry across the dirt road in front of him. "There are a lot more than those two," says his son, Ron Jr., from the back seat. "Look at the grass move." Bluestem and broomweed jerk and sway as unseen quail scoot through the knee-high weeds. When Kendall lets off the brakes and eases forward, the air explodes with sound and movement as a cluster of quail take off in a burst.

The bobwhites dart to the base of a solitary mesquite tree some thirty yards away, and Kendall climbs from his Polaris to whistle the bobwhite's distinctive call: "Poor...bobwhite! Poor...bob white!" A bird answers, but only once. "He's checking me," says Kendall, a lifelong hunter and professor of environmental toxicology at Texas Tech University. "He told me he's over there, and he wants me to come over. If he were by himself, or he was lost, he'd be talking to me constantly, but they've already got the covey together. They're smart! They counted heads real quick."

The birds quickly regroup in a tight, outward-facing circle—"coveying up," in hunter parlance. After reminding each other to watch for rattlesnakes, the Kendalls wade through the grass and prickly pear toward the lone mesquite. All is quiet—till, abruptly, it isn't. The bobwhites, flashing their intricate patterns of reddish brown and white and black, erupt from the ground again like a squadron of tiny helicopters. We ponder the staccato beat of their chest, now folded into a throat, as they scatter into a hazy landscape. Little feathers from

# GEAR GUIDE



## COSTA DEL MAR Fantail Pro

\$269

Costa Del Mar has long been a premier provider of performance fishing sunglasses, providing anglers with incredible advantages on the water. However, the innovation never stops with this legendary manufacturer and the newest frames kick things up a notch. The venerable Fantail has now been reimagined in the form of the Fantail Pro, designed specifically for hardcore anglers. Upgrades include a vented and adjustable nose pad, sweat channels and eye wire drains, as well as side shields, hooding and keeper slots so the frames stay on your face.

- ▶ 5 lens colors available
- ▶ Polarized glass

[costadelmar.com](http://costadelmar.com)

## MACKENZIE'S Fisherman Hand Scrub

\$8.95-\$19.95

Every angler knows that one of the signs of a great day of fishing is stinky hands. Fish blood, slime, bait and chum are all part of the process. Fortunately, using toothpaste and way too much hand soap is no longer necessary thanks to MacKenzie's Fisherman Hand Scrub. This unique blend of ingredients cleans and deodorizes in one shot, so you don't have to worry about carrying the smells of the day with you. Do yourself and those around you a favor and get your hands on some today.

- ▶ Available in 1.5, 6 & 16 oz.
- ▶ Includes natural soap, walnut husk & lemon essential oil

[fishermanhandscrub.com](http://fishermanhandscrub.com)

## NOMAD DTX Minnow

\$19.99-\$49.99

If you love fishing artificials, Nomad has you covered with an extensive line of baitfish imitations that truly drive predators crazy. Among them, the DTX Minnow is perhaps the most versatile and effective, available in several sizes and colors with floating and sinking options. The smaller versions rigged with treble hooks are great for casting, while the larger models can be trolled up to 14 knots and entice savage strikes from a variety of predatory game fish. And, don't worry, toothy critters are no match for these durable fakes.

- ▶ 4.75" to 9"
- ▶ Floating or sinking

[nomadtackle.com](http://nomadtackle.com)

## DEEP Gunwale Boat to Bar Shorts

\$65

Summer is in full swing and nobody's immune to Florida's scorching heat. Therefore, apparel that can stand up to the rigors of sport fishing and provide comfort is in high demand. Plus, it doesn't hurt to look good either. DEEP's versatile Gunwale Boat to Bar shorts are breathable, durable and comfortable with impressive stain resistance, plenty of pockets and a sleek look. These innovative fishing shorts are just equally suited for your favorite happy hour watering hole and anything you put them through on the water.

- ▶ 4-way stretch fabric
- ▶ Antimicrobial

[shopdeep.com](http://shopdeep.com)

## STEM TO STERN

The newest gadgets and gear for all of your cruising needs. All products featured this month are made in the USA.



**MONTAGUE BIKES' M-E1**, a full-size performance e-bike that folds in seconds with a single quick release, is ideal for boaters seeking transportation and recreation after they dock. Its compact fold-and-roll design makes it easy to store on a boat. The lightweight, waterproof Shimano STEPS motor delivers true performance with powerful pedal assist while on land. The patent-pending aluminum frame features an integrated rear rack for secure cargo capacity. Schwalbe Energizer Plus tires provide durability, low rolling resistance, and superior grip. Mud guards and built-in LED front and rear lights ensure riders will be visible in all weather. MSRP \$3,599; [montaguebikes.com](http://montaguebikes.com)



**KNOWWAKE** is a **WATERWAY NAVIGATION APP** that changes the way people interact with marine charts. This social platform is commonly referred to as "Waze for the water" because of its point-to-point routing to more than 35,000 waterfront destinations across the globe with crowdsourced input from the community along with safety features, such as real-time help and route information. Users can find friends, create groups, and share their location right from their mobile devices. Download

Two "sun-sational" designs of **COSTA POLARIZED SPORT PERFORMANCE SUNGLASSES**, Ferg and WaterWoman 2, feature all-day style and versatile performance. With the Ferg's top and side shields, integrated textured Hydrolite rubber, vented adjustable nose pads, and 100 percent UV-protection polarized lens, this frame is dedicated to fun on the water. The WaterWoman 2 is a larger version of the first female-focused performance frame. Its detail and 100 percent UV-protection polarized lens are ready to make a stylish statement. MSRP from \$189; [costadelmar.com](http://costadelmar.com)



**ILIVE WATERPROOF FABRIC WIRELESS SPEAKER** is a fashionable accessory that lets you take your music with you whether your adventure is on the water or on shore. The compact yet powerful wireless speaker has an IPX5 waterproof rating. It features a travel clip to easily attach for transporting.

Just connect the speaker to your Bluetooth device to get amazing sound quality. The battery should last two-and-a-half hours at 100 percent volume (longer at lower volumes), and it has a built-in rechargeable battery. Choose from four colors: black, blue, gray, and teal. MSRP \$17.99; [iliveelectronics.com](http://iliveelectronics.com)



### DEEP APPAREL'S ECO SERIES DOCKTALES LONG-SLEEVE PERFORMANCE SHIRT

will take you from the boat to the bar in style. Each shirt in the Eco Series is made from approximately 16 recycled bottles removed from the environment. Its 100 percent Repreve polyester fabric is antimicrobial, quick-drying, and offers UPF 50 sun protection. With each purchase of this shirt and all other Eco Series products, 15 percent of the proceeds go to No Shoes Reefs and their partners, The Reef Ball Foundation. MSRP \$48; [shopdeep.com](http://shopdeep.com)

## 19. **Deep Apparel Eco Series Men's Marlin Sunshirt (\$48)**

**The promise:** This shirt protects you and Mother Earth.

**The deets:** This layer may have started as 16 plastic bottles, but we think it's current form—a quick-drying, antimicrobial polyester long-sleeved shirt with UPF 50 sun protection—is a major improvement.

## 20. Mammut Aenergy Windbreaker (\$159)

**The promise:** Weaving two layers into one creates a comfortable microclimate.

**The deets:** This lightweight jacket repels wind and water with its outer Pertex Equilibrium nylon fabric layer, while the inner layer uses finer yarns to create a denier gradient that mechanically moves moisture away from the body. Thanks to elasticized fabric inserts on the fore-arms, a cinchable hem, and a helmet-compatible hood, the fit is optimal.

## 21. Opinel No. 12 Explore Tick Remover (\$49)

**The promise:** This knife is made for tick territory.



DEEP Eco Series Docktales Courtesy DEEP Apparel

### DEEP Eco Series Docktales

DEEP Apparel created its Eco Series Docktales long-sleeve performance shirt to go from boat to bar, with a conscience. Each polyester shirt is made from recycled bottles removed from the environment. With each purchase of a shirt, 15 percent of the proceeds goes to No Shoes Reefs and its partners The Reef Ball Foundation. Available in unisex sizes S through XXL and in royal blue, Docktales cost \$48.

## GEAR

## Father's Day Gift Guide

21 great fishing gear and gift ideas for Dad.

By Chris Woodward | May 14, 2021

Forget the tie or the golf balls, here are 21 fishing gift ideas that are guaranteed to elicit any angling Dad's gushing praise. Father's Day falls on June 20!

### Deep Apparel



Deep's Boat To Bar board shorts feature four-way antimicrobial and quick-dry water-wicking stretch fabric with springiness for the boat and a sleek fit and style so you don't have to change when heading out for an evening on the town following a day on the water. Plenty of pocket space to stash the wallet and phone on one side and reach for the pliers on the other. The Deep Eco-Series short- and long-sleeve performance shirts incorporate Repreve material made of recycled plastic bottles in the tri-blend fabric. Each shirt is made from about 16 recycled bottles removed from the environment. Material is quick-dry, anti-microbial, provides SPF 50 UV protection and is soft and supple for a sustainable shirt. Deep's Boat to Bar concept is just that, clothing with functions designed for performance and comfort while fishing or other on-the-water activities and with styles to seamlessly transition to dinner or a night on the town. The shirts are available along with additional shirts, jackets and hoodies. The company is also giving back with 15% of sales proceeds from its Eco Series and No Shoes Reef line earmarked for the deployment of artificial reefs. Their Freedom Series proceeds go to Beyond The Battle, supporting veterans with outdoor excursions.

[ShopDeep.com](https://shopdeep.com)



# Introducing Rover by BOTE



August 05, 2017

By Florida Sportsman Editor



*The new Rover was featured in the ICAST 2017 New Product Showcase where it won Best Boats & Watercraft and Best of Show Overall.*



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## This \$1,700 stand-up paddle board and fishing skiff hybrid is my new dream boat for stealthy fly fishing — here's why it's worth the cost

By Owen Burke Jul 19, 2019



# uncrate®



GEAR STYLE CARS TECH SHELTER VICES BODY ETC

MAGAZINE IPHONE APP ANDROID APP MOST WANTED BLACK LIST STASH



GEAR / TRANSPORTATION

## BOTE ROVER AERO PADDLEBOARD

It fits in a bag, yet supports up to 500 lbs. The Bote Rover Aero does a lot of surprising things. Its inflatable body is made from military-grade PVC with Drop Stitch technology so it's incredibly sturdy once inflated with the included rechargeable pump. Navigating calm waters is easy with the collapsible paddle, or



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# The New Fishing Vessel of Choice? Stand-Up Paddleboards

By ditching waders and climbing onto special stand-up paddle boards, anglers are accessing new waterways and fresh fish. So what's the catch?

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KEEPING IT REEL Gray Drummond casts his line in Homosassa, Fla.  
PHOTO: SEAN MURPHY

By [John Clarke](#)

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USB TO MICRO CONNEC... \$4.95

AAA RECHARGEABLE B... \$9.95

FLIP CHARGING DOCK \$9.95

LIGHTHOUSE 600 LANT... \$69.95

FLIP 36 POWER BANK - ... \$25.95



and Movies Coming to Netflix in December

Jack of All Trades: Why Pumpkin Is a Great Nutritional Option All Year Round

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The Best Ways to Pack a Carryon to Maximize Space



30-Second Cocktails: Bourbon Milk Punch



I Tried Ryan Reynolds' Insane 'Deadpool 2' Workout —and Now I Know Why He's Shredded



Courtesy image

8 / 15

## Maho Shades sunglasses

When it comes to sunglasses, I keep it simple. But, that can get old. So instead of experimenting with funky frame shapes, I played with color, which is why I like the Galapagos Crystal Slate (\$125; shown) from Maho Shades. The polished zyl acetate frames have a clear and smoky color to them in a shape that is just unusual enough for everyday wear. But the bright polarized gold mirror lenses is what sets them apart. The build is lightweight, despite having heavy-duty 316L stainless steel hardware that will withstand life on the water, and comfortable to wear all day. Not into the gold? The more traditional, and less expensive Uluwatu Charcoal (\$95) has a blue tinted lens in a black frame that is closer to that wayfarer look. —  
*Sal Vaglica, Senior Editor*

[\[mahoshades.com\]](http://mahoshades.com)



### More Videos



You Won't Find Matthew McConaughey in the Gym. Here Are His Favorite Ways to Train Outdoors



9 Bad Aging Habits That Are Killing Your Looks



How to Throw the Perfect Jab



Courtesy Image  
Maho Charleston 2 Bengal

### Best All-Purpose: Maho Charleston 2 Bengal

This do-it-all pair combines timeless style with superior performance, which makes them ideal for any active guy. Zuma fit grips on the nose pads and earsocks minimize bounce, and Ultramarine Trivex lenses enhance color while keeping your eyes protected.

[\$150, [mahoshades.com](http://mahoshades.com)]

[GET IT](#)

Help your room take shape with curved furniture. **\$3,645**



# yes!

Your Essential Shopper™

Sunday, March 3, 2019

Go for comfort and style in these kitten heels. **\$148**



## great finds 11 more terrific shopping discoveries on page 2

### men

**Fenta fabric sneakers**  
**\$59.95** | Steve Madden  
stevemadden.com

- Lace-up shoe with man-made sole.
- Features a textile lining.
- Available in three colors.



### drinks

**Unsweetened blackberry sparkling water**  
**\$5.99** | Spindrift | target.com

- Made with real blackberries and lemon.
- Gluten-free with no added sugar or sweeteners.
- Pack includes eight cans.



### beauty

**Runway Ready foot treatment**  
**\$15-\$25** | Dermelect  
dermelect.com

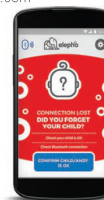
- Includes argan oil, shea butter and keratin protein peptide.
- Exfoliates and conditions skin.
- Available in two sizes.



### electronics

**eClip Baby Reminder device**  
**\$49.95** | Elepho | elepho.com

- Device attaches to child's car seat and connects to smartphone app.
- Receive alerts on your phone if your child is left in car seat.
- Alerts also sent if temperature is too hot or too cold.



# Jet set

USA TODAY NETWORK

Escape the end of winter and head to the tropics to soak up some sun and relaxation. You'll be on island time soon enough with these essentials.

■ Sport tropical colors at the beach with this Lenny Niemeyer Pomme one-piece swimsuit. **\$190** at anthropologie.com.

■ Stash toiletries with ease with the Bonjour Getaway toiletries bag. **\$20** at dormify.com.

■ Step out onto the beach in style with The Bikini Lab's Pastel Paradise romper coverup. **\$27.99** at 6pm.com.

■ Pair this fun graphic tee with a pair of shorts and sunnies for a cute travel outfit. **\$38** at bando.com.

■ Wear these Anna high-waist shorts by A Mere Co. over your bathing suit. **\$309** at bloomingdales.com.

■ You'll be breezy and comfortable in this striped wide-leg crop jumpsuit. **\$79.50** at loft.com.

■ Slip on these pineapple white strap flip flops by Samba Sol when you head to the beach or pool. **\$36** at amazon.com.

■ Be sun smart and stylish with this straw hat. **\$7.99** at H&M.

**Everything you need for your getaway**

## Stunner shades

USA TODAY NETWORK

Ask in the sun's glow and protect your eyes in style. These must-have sunglasses are sure to please.

■ Polarspex's retro-style shades are unisex. **\$12.95** at amazon.com.

■ Gucci's glamorous oversized square sunglasses for women are available in three colors. **\$550** at bloomingdales.com.

■ These Elli by Capelli rainbow cat-eye glasses for girls come with a carrying case. **\$16** at kohls.com.

■ Maho's Hilton Head Kingfisher sunglasses have cool sky-blue polarized lenses. **\$125** at mahoshades.com.

■ Oakley's Flak 2.0 shades have fully customizable frames and lenses. Starting at **\$168** at oakley.com.



## Throwing Shade

Don't let glare get between you and your next outdoor adventure

BY KRISTEN A. SCHMITT



The Sunski Foothills sunglasses are lightweight and perfect for travel. One-piece 100 percent recycled plastic construction means you won't lose nose or ear pads while on the go, and the tight hinge ensures zero slippage. Polarized, blocks 100 percent UVA/UVB. \$58, [sunski.com](http://sunski.com) (men's)



Tifosi Bronx sunglasses are made for land or sea, particularly if you're after a stylish pair of tactical sport optics. Decentered lenses prevent distortion and create optical clarity. Flexible frames allow for some give, but they still stay snug on your face thanks to rubber ear and nose grips. Meets Z97.1 tactical safety standards. Polycarbonate polarized lenses. \$79.95, [tifosioptics.com](http://tifosioptics.com) (men's)



With special ChromaPop technology, colors are crisp and vibrant when wearing Smith's Cape R polarized sunglasses, making it easier to see what might be swimming beneath the surface during your next fishing trip. The eco-friendly vintage-style frames come in three colors, fit slender faces and are comfortable for all-day wear. \$169, [smithoptics.com](http://smithoptics.com) (women's)



Costa's Harpoon sunglasses let you easily transition between wrangling in a rainbow trout and spending the day hiking with family. The substantial frame has rubberized nose and ear tips; polarized lenses provide 100 percent UV protection. Lenses available with 580G lightweight glass or 580P polycarbonate. \$239, [costadelmar.com](http://costadelmar.com) (women's)



The Cape Town Bengal sunglasses by Malo are lightweight and travel-friendly. One-piece plastic construction with polarized aqua blue mirror lenses makes these frames perfect for the beach or backcountry. D-Style tortoiseshell frames work well for medium or larger faces. \$125, [maloshades.com](http://maloshades.com) (women's)



## MAHO SHADES

Maho Shades debuts optical and sunwear styles from its eyewear collection. Every pair is designed on the Gulf Coast for life on the water, inspired by travel and architecture, and is handmade in family-run factories. These handmade zyl acetate frames are Rxable, hypoallergenic and feature Italian barrel hinges. Maho Shade's proprietary ultramarine lenses utilize premium Trivex, making them durable, scratch resistant, liquid repellent and polarized. Lenses also offer a clear and vibrant view with color enhancement qualities. Optical style Stockholm is inspired by the classic Nordic style and architecture of Stockholm, Sweden and is a modern take on a traditional horn-templed round frame. Featuring a D-frame shape, sunwear style Capetown features a handmade zyl acetate polished finish and ultramarine polarized aqua blue mirror lenses. —*Jillian Urceley*

Pricing: \$5 to \$\$\$

(844) MAHO-SUN/mahoshades.com



MAHO SHADES  
Stockholm



MAHO SHADES  
Santa Barbara



MAHO SHADES  
Capetown



Family Travel, Featured

# Explore New Heights: Women-Only Travel Groups

Chantal Lemieux | June 30, 2021



## Explore New Heights. Women-Only Travel Groups: Meet a Female-Run Company Leading the Way

As we come out of a year of full or partial lockdown due to Covid-19, many of us are keen on traveling again, whether within our country or we are planning to venture out to international destinations. Spa getaways, road trips and gambling meccas have always been top choices for women travelers, but organized adventure trips for women-only are on the rise. If you're planning your next trip either solo, with a group of friends or with family members, let your imagination fly high with a female-run company that is leading the way in exploration.

Between fishing in Big Bear and hiking in Joshua Tree, we were lucky to get the opportunity to speak with Nikki Bruckman, CEO and Founder Explorer of Chick Adventure Co.

### What is your story? How is it inspiring? and who specifically needs to hear it?

My story is one of reinvention and courage. In 2014, I had a very traditional life with a husband, a home, and a 9-5 career, until I didn't. I had done everything that I was "supposed" to do, but I found myself unhappy, unfulfilled, and uninspired. The first to break that year was my marriage and with that my world blew open. My future became a blank canvas that was limited only by my imagination and wit. I had been



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BECOME A MEMBER

# 20 Charlotte Meet-Up Groups Exploring the Outdoors

Ready to get your hands dirty? Several clubs in Charlotte are looking for new members. Here's a sampling, broken down by interest:

May 19, 2021 / [Andy Smith](#)



Yasira Castro, communications director for the nonprofit Outdoor Afro, hikes along Catawba Falls. Courtesy Damian Ortiz.

## General Outdoor Interests

### The Charlotte Outdoor Parents

This group holds family-friendly meetups, with slower walks and hikes for those bringing kids along. It's one of several in the area that use Meetup to connect to potential members.

[meetup.com/CLTParents](https://www.meetup.com/CLTParents)

### Exercise and Excursion with Blue Blaze Brewing

This brewery-sponsored group hosts regular yoga sessions, hikes, backpacking workshops, and guest speakers. Oh, and they drink beer, too. [blueblazebrewing.com](https://www.blueblazebrewing.com)

### Explorer Chicks of Charlotte

Explorer Chick Adventure Co. is a national adventure travel company focused on empowering women. The Charlotte group connects locals to day trips, small group adventures, workshops, and more. [explorerchick.com](https://www.explorerchick.com)

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All photos courtesy Galveston CVB.



## WEEKEND GETAWAYS

# What to Do in Galveston

Festivals, fine dining, and 30 miles of sugary beaches are only a four-hour drive from Austin.

BY Becca Hensley

Published: July 21, 2021

Thanks to the pandemic, most of us have felt like school kids craving recess. What better place to gambol, cavort and get the COVID kinks out than at “the Playground of the South” (aka Galveston Island), as nicknamed by the pleasure-loving Victorians. Just 45 minutes south of Houston, this historic, tropical resort area boasts 30 miles of shoreline, a glamorous, palm tree-fringed Sea Wall, a vibrant entertainment district known as The Strand, funky bars, romantic mansions, fascinating museums and parks, and stellar seafood restaurants—not to mention the plethora of activities aimed at outdoor enthusiasts. Less rustic than most Texas beach towns, Galveston rolls out its red carpet for couples, families, and lone travelers alike.

### Where to Play

Many visit Galveston and never leave the comfort of their beach towel or pool lounger. However, those who venture out get the best rewards. Learn to surf with female-empowering [Explorer Chick](#), who offers women-only surf lessons. Join conservation-

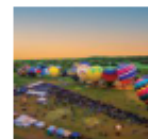
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An Oral History of MTV's 'Austin'



## WOMEN, WIND AND WAVES: SURFING FOR ADVENTURE

By: **Pam LeBlanc**

August, 2021



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Brian Jarvis leads a beginner's surfing class for women in Galveston. Pam LeBlanc photo

I haven't come to Galveston expecting to glide through a barrel-shaped wave or slice down the front of a 20-foot ocean swell. But since [Explorer Chick Adventure Company](#) offers two-hour surfing lessons just four hours away in Galveston, I've made the quick trip to the beach.

**RELATED: 2021 Texas Beach Guide**

Our group ranges in age from about 30 to 65. We are all shapes and sizes, and all of us have come in search of adventure. An all-female class, I'm hoping, will mean lots of support and zero concern about disheveled hair or smudged mascara.

Brian Jarvis, a 72-year-old former fisherman and boat captain who started [C Sick Surfing Company](#) in 1998, is our instructor, and although the bandana tied over his head makes him look like he belongs on

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# The 5 Best Trekking Poles to Up-Level Your Hikes

By [Lauren Bedosky](#) • Updated July 13, 2021



Trekking poles help you stabilize when climbing uphill and prevent falls in rocky terrain.  
Image Credit: LIVESTRONG.com

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"The water-bottle holder is gunslinger style so you can easily reach back for your water on a hot hike — no partner or setting down of a heavy pack required," says Nicki Bruckmann, who guides women on outdoor adventures through her company [Explorer Chick](#).

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"I swear by anything made by Leki," says [Kimberly Brookshire](#), professional backpacking guide with [Explorer Chick](#), an adventure travel guide company for women.

Fitness > General Fitness > Sports Clothing and Gear

# The 14 Best Backpacking Backpacks, According to Outdoor Gear Experts

By [Sarah Kuta](#) · April 2, 2021

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 



Your ideal backpacking backpack fits your body, has all of the storage you need and matches your terrain's climbing conditions.  
 Image Credit: nd3000/iStock/GettyImages

When it comes to summitting mountains or spending a weekend camping under the stars, a fun, successful trip hinges on having the right [hiking gear](#). Arguably, the most

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"The water-bottle holder is gunslinger style so you can easily reach back for your water on a hot hike — no partner or setting down of a heavy pack required," says Nicki Bruckmann, who guides women on outdoor adventures through her company [Explorer Chick](#).

Fitness > General Fitness > Sports Clothing and Gear

# The 7 Best Puffer Jackets, According to Outdoor Gear Experts

By [Lauren Bedosky](#) · December 9, 2021

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When looking for your best puffer jacket, consider insulation type, weight and features like pockets.  
Image Credit: LIVESTRONG.com

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"It's my go-to for backpacking and the real world," says Kirstie Mullikin, a guide with [Explorer Chick](#), an outdoor adventure travel guide company for women. Simply pull it on when temps drop and then stow it in its own pocket when not in use. Attach it to your [hiking backpack](#) with the internal carabiner clip loop so it's always on hand when you need it.