

station's facilities are available to groups meeting there.

For most people, Texoma is just a lot of water in a convenient package—a good place to land some striper, exercise a sailboat, lie in the sun like vacationing lizards. The people at the field station seem almost a separate species—learning about the lake and its shoreline, not skimming over its surface. You might almost call them “fishers of fact.”

“It’s a real challenge,” Terri Bran-deberry says. “If you want a laid-back summer, this is not the place to come. But if you are willing to work, you can really accomplish something.”

*Linda Shalaway lives in Stilwell. Victor Rivas, an OU graduate, is a free-lance photographer based in Norman.*

### Getting There



*The University of Oklahoma Biological Station is on the Buncombe Creek arm of Lake Texoma, about 17 miles south of Madill. Its 1985 summer session starts the first week in June, and registration is June 1.*

*All courses run eight weeks and are open to anyone—pre-college, undergraduates, graduates and teachers. Tuition is the same as for the Norman campus: \$22.60 per semester hour for lower-division undergraduate classes, \$25.90 for upper-division undergraduate classes and \$30.60 for graduate-level classes.*

*At the station, students live, work, eat and sleep biology. Room and board runs \$195 for eight weeks in the dorm; apartments are \$230 for the same period (meals included). Scholarships of \$400 are available.*

*To learn more about registration and scholarships, write the University of Oklahoma Biological Station, 730 Van Vleet Oval, Norman, OK 73019, or call (405) 325-5391.*

## The Bass Fisherman's Friend: Loren Hill

**L**oren G. Hill. You may not recognize the name. But chances are, you have used his inventions, seen him on television, read about him in fishing magazines or heard him speak at seminars and fishing institutes nationwide.

To the students and faculty of the University of Oklahoma Biological Station, Dr. Hill is their director and a prominent fish biologist. But to millions of anglers across the country, this soft-spoken, darkly tanned man is an avid and skilled fisherman who has invented new lures and methods to help them land bass.

Take, for example, the Snatrix. Ten years ago fishing for bass was drastically altered by Dr. Hill's invention of a plastic lure that looks for all the world like a small water snake.

“I first got the idea for the Snatrix when I caught a four-pound bass with a nine-inch water snake in its mouth,” Hill says. Later, one idle afternoon down by the lake as he watched his son swimming, Dr. Hill scooped up some clay and made a mold of the lure he envisioned. He promptly forgot about the mold, then rediscovered it two days later, baked hard by the sun. He used this mold to cast five plastic “snakes.” When he tested the lures and lost all five to fish, he knew he was on to a good thing.

The lure is now manufactured commercially by Bill Norman Lures, with annual sales of \$8 to \$9 million.

Another Hill invention is the pH method of fishing. In earlier research, Dr. Hill discovered that water pH (acidity or alkalinity) directed the movement of fish. Based on this finding and many years of studying bass, he developed a simple, portable pH meter that can be used by fishermen. The unit, mounted on a boat, is attached by a long cord to a probe that can be dropped into the water to measure pH. An angler who knows what pH bass prefer can predict when



STEVE SISNEY

and where the fish will be.

The pH meter has been tested by the pros, who “can’t believe how accurate it is,” says Dr. Hill. He has been issued two U.S. patents, and more than 60,000 anglers are currently using his invention.

And there’s more to come, Hill promises. An ichthyologist by training, inventor by nature, he continues to put technical knowledge to practical use by developing new aids for fishermen.

Hill’s creative energies have also been applied to the administration of the Biological Station. Under his direction for the past 16 years, the station has become a major education and research center. He has expanded the summer session from the five courses originally taught to nine. And over the years he’s been successful at

angling for funding from the National Science Foundation.

The Biological Station’s research program under his direction operates with federal funding of close to \$1 million. Hill has hired three biologists—fishery ecologist, zooplankton ecologist and phytoplankton ecologist—to study reservoir environment. He hopes to add a fourth researcher soon.

In September 1984, Dr. Hill began his own \$300,000 study of the competitive interactions of black bass and striped bass in Lake Texoma and at Toledo Bend (on the Texas-Louisiana border). The study is funded by the Bass Research Foundation. This year, Dr. Hill is sharing his knowledge and experience with others as a staff member of the American Bass Fishing Institute, which holds seminars in cities all over the country.

Until the fall of 1984, Dr. Hill was also chairman of the University of Oklahoma’s Zoology Department. He resigned from that position to become director of the Biological Station and spend more time on the shores of Lake Texoma.

—Linda Shalaway