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Issue 239

August/September 2014

FREE



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Magazine

Volume 1 Issue 239

Publisher and Editor
Mark A. Goudy

Contributing Editors
West Virginia Division Of
Natural Resources

No Subscriptions Offered

Printed Every Six Weeks.

W.Va. Sportsman

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Cover Photo

Jim Stotts went to Stonewall Jackson Lake for this great bass. The fish weighed 8 pounds, 4 ounces and measured 25 inches. He was using a 9 inch jerkbait. Musky fishing, possibly?

Stonewall Jackson Lake now allows bass tournaments and catch-and-keep on bass, There is a limit of one over 18 inches a day.

A Stonewall Jackson bass tournament schedule is on page 28.

Photo courtesy of Old & New Sports in Ravenswood.

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Back To The Banks

By Edwin Evers

Every year about this time, I start to shift my focus from deep water to shallow water. I know that might not make a lot of sense — it's the hottest time of year and you'd think most bass would escape that by staying offshore and deep — but bass don't have to explain themselves.

In some ways I can understand why they'd move shallow. For one, there's more fishing pressure in deep water at this time of year, so the big groups of fish that held together in June and July might break up and go shallow to escape that pressure. For another, I think water quality might be better in the shallows; incoming current and wind can keep oxygen levels comfortable even when temperatures are high.

You might ask, "How shallow is 'shallow' for bass in the heat of summer?" It's a great question, and the answer depends on the lake you're fishing. I've learned that if the water is even a little bit stained

(maybe three to four feet of visibility), the bass will often hold on cover that's just knee deep. In fact, I've often been amazed at how shallow I can find bass — good bass ... big bass! — in August. The dirtier the water, the shallower you'll likely find them.

Not only is it often more fun to catch bass when they're shallow and you can sometimes see the bite, it's also a lot easier because you're generally casting to cover you can see. Boat docks, laydowns and overhanging trees are some of my favorite cover types now. And they can be productive almost anywhere on the lake — from the main body to the backs of creeks where you caught them spawning a few months ago.

In fact, the backs of creeks are often a great place to check, especially if you can find some water

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Drew Sallada caught a 7 pound, 3 oz. largemouth bass.

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coming in. It doesn't have to be a lot of water, either. Even a little bit will help by bringing in fresh oxygen. Look for shad, too. You know the old saying: find the bait, find the bass. Without current or shad, though, main lake cover and areas just off the main lake are typically best.

One of my favorite things about this pattern is that it lets me use a lot of different bait types and fishing styles. I have a reputation for being a versatile angler, and it's probably because I grew up enjoying all different lure types and methods. Some guys like to flip and pitch. Other guys like to catch 'em on top. I like it all, and believe it or not there are lots of different ways to catch these shallow August bass.

If you were to look at the deck of my boat this month, you'd find rods rigged with a big topwater bait (like



Kylee Starcher brought in 2 catfish. Photo courtesy of Crossroads General Store near Newark.

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the Megabass X Pod), a War Eagle Buzzbait, a square bill crankbait, a hollow-bodied frog and something I can flip and pitch (like the Zoom Z Hog). This is shallow water power fishing at its most basic, and the bass you'll catch are often big.

I'll generally start my day by working a topwater or buzzbait, covering a lot of water quickly and looking for reaction bites. Once the sun gets up, it tends to posi-

continue to the next page



Doody Cook went to Webster Co. for a 385 pound black bear.

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ition the fish in the cover and shade. That's when I'll go to the crankbait or Z Hog. Even with the sun high overhead, though, you can still get topwater bites — and they'll often be big fish — but you'll generally get more bites with other presentations.

The last thing I want to say about this pattern is that when you catch one on a piece of cover — especially if it's a big piece of cover that offers a lot of shade — be sure to throw back in there a few more times. A boat dock or overhanging tree could have three or four resident bass, and you just might be able to catch all of them.

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Tom McLaughlin brought in an 11" bearded gobbler from Roane Co.



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Governor Selects Head Officers

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (July 22, 2014) - Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin today named Sam England as the chief of the Parks and Recreation section and Jerry Jenkins as the chief of the Law Enforcement section of the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources. Jenkins was sworn in this afternoon, and England will assume his post Friday, July 25.

“Sam has been with the state parks system for more than 30 years and has overseen great improvements at both Stonewall Resort State Park and Chief Logan State Park. He understands the needs of modern travelers and has been instrumental in a number of advancements, including the creation of an online reservation system and wireless guest services,” Gov. Tomblin said. “I’m confident he will bring new enthusiasm to the job and successfully encourage more tourists to enjoy our beautiful state parks.”

“With nearly 40 years of experience as a natural resources police

officer, Jerry truly understands the state’s natural resources laws and brings great expertise to this position,” Gov. Tomblin said. “He is a consummate professional, and I’m confident he will serve the Division of Natural Resources well as the new colonel.”

“Sam and Jerry are both outstanding public servants,” said Commerce Secretary Keith Burdette. “Both men have the talent, skills and are motivated to move the Division of Natural Resources to the

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Bryant Smith hooked a 5 1/2 pound largemouth bass. *Photo courtesy of PC Bait & Tackle in Hinton.*

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next level. We're lucky to have these two seasoned professionals who can hit the ground running in these important positions."

England and Jenkins fill the positions left by the recent retirements of State Parks Chief Ken Caplinger and Col. David Murphy.

England started working for West Virginia State Parks as a recreation programs coordinator at North Bend State Park in 1984. Since then he has served as park superintendent at Moncove Lake State Park, assistant superintendent at Greenbrier State Forest and superintendent at Stonewall Resort State Park. Since Stonewall Resort became operated by private contract in 2002, his responsibilities were extended to a statewide basis, and he became one of the leaders in bringing electronic reservations, updated computer systems and wireless customer

technology to state parks' lodges. He holds a wildlife biology degree and a MBA, both from West Virginia University.

Col. Jenkins joined DNR's Law Enforcement Section in 1976 as a conservation officer (now known as natural resources police officer). He was promoted to the ranks of sergeant in 1989, lieutenant in 2000, captain in 2004, major in 2006 and has served as lieutenant colonel since 2007. During his career, he has been chosen district Conservation Officer of the Year three times and State Conservation Officer of the Year in 1989. He also has been named a Distinguished West Virginian and was awarded a Certificate of Honor for Heroism for his efforts during the 1985 flood. Jenkins holds an associate degree in Forestry from Potomac State College

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Levi Corrothers shot a nice 8 point buck. Photo courtesy of RRHAMCO in Grafton.

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Hunting & Trapping Summary Available

SOUTH CHARLESTON, West Virginia – The 2014-2015 West Virginia Hunting and Trapping Regulations Summary brochure is available at West Virginia hunting and fishing license agents, Division of Natural Resources district offices, and the DNR Elkins and South Charleston offices. This regulations summary is also available online at the Division of Natural Resources' website: www.wvdnr.gov.

DNR officials urge sportsmen and women to carefully review these regulations, as there are several changes in place this fall and next spring.

The archery boar season will open two weeks earlier on September 27, 2014, and run through December 31, 2014.

The statewide archery deer season will open on September 27, 2014, and run through December 31, 2014.

Black bear firearms hunting seasons have been modified, mainly requiring permits for hunting on public lands in addition to private lands in 17 counties.

The fall wild turkey hunting season will be more restrictive this year with fewer counties open for a two-week season.

Trappers checking in beavers beginning April 1, 2015, and hunters checking in turkeys during the 2015 spring gobbler seasons must follow the new rules for electronic checking of game. This will be accomplished by either going online to www.wvhunt.com, stopping at any license agent, or by calling 1-844-824-3251 (1-844-UCheck1). Voters in five counties (Braxton, Calhoun, Nicholas, Webster and Wirt) approved Sunday hunting on

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private land. Visit the DNR website for a current list of all counties

open to Sunday hunting on private land.



Clarence Kendrick reeled in a nice blue catfish.



Joe Bietz, from Beckley, hooked a 20 3/4" smallmouth bass.



Colt Corder had success with a nice smallmouth bass. Photo courtesy of Old & New Sports in Ravenswood.

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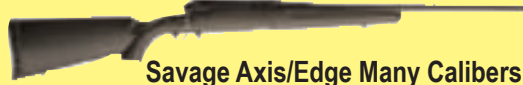
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Steven Deem bagged a nice 21 pound gobbler. *Photo courtesy of Crossroads General Store near Newark.*

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Jackson England went to Florida for a nice red snapper.



Kolten Hobert caught his first golden trout.

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Hot Weather Catfishing

Have you ever gone catfish fishing in the summer? If so, then you probably discovered that they are not as easy to catch when the weather is hot as they are during other seasons. Before you can start reeling them in, you have to find them first. This can be a little difficult at times. There are several factors that will determine where the catfish will be located in the summer so, you have to work a little harder to locate

them.

The catfish is considered a game fish and they have incredible strength that will certainly keep on your toes. This makes them a fun and exciting species that many anglers want to seek out all year long. Still, they're not as easy to catch in the summer so, here are five tactics for catching summer catfish that can help you catch more of them during this time of year.

Five tactics for catching catfish in the summer:

Drift fishing is a great tactic to use

when catfish fishing in the summer. It's one of the best ways to locate and catch catfish in the heat of the day. Just sit back, relax and let the current drift your bait over the areas where the catfish are located. Just don't get too relaxed or you might be caught off guard when they strike your line.

Using electronics to help you locate the fish easier is a great tactic for summer catfish fishing. You need to know the water temperature because in the summer, you

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Anna Adkins, from Summersville, caught a largemouth bass..

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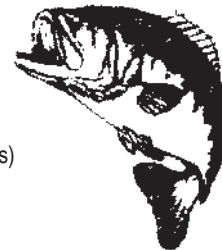
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need to find the right temperature with plenty of oxygen that the fish need in order to survive.

The deeper the water the colder it will be and the lower oxygen content it'll have. Therefore, hot and cold water is not suitable for the catfish to survive in so, you'll need to find the depth that has cool water and plenty of oxygen and you'll find more catfish.

Lake fishing can yield some catfish in the summer months if you know where to search for them. Look for areas with plenty of cover, vegetation and where the water temperature stays the coolest. It's a good idea to get a topographic map to help you look for the best places to find the cats.

It's not a good idea to go fishing for the catfish during the day when the sun is at its hottest. This is the hardest time to find them but if you're persistent, you may have some luck and run across a few. They will avoid the areas where the water is the hottest so you need to look for cool areas with shade. They will also move out to deeper waters during this time.

However, you don't want to go too deep when looking for them because the catfish won't venture out to the deepest parts of the water. Normally, they will be in depths of 20 feet or less.



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Go fishing at night for the best results. From late evening throughout early morning the cats will be more active and the easiest to find because the water temperature will be cooler. They will be found in the shallow waters making this the best time to go catfishing in the summer.

These tips can help you to reel in more catfish in the summer than ever before. Many anglers chum for cats during the night to draw them to their area faster. Go fishing up and down the shoreline and all through the shallow waters when night fishing for catfish in the summer. Keep in mind that the channel catfish are usually active in warm-waters.

Some of the most common mistakes made in the summer would be going fishing in the direct heat of the day, this is the worse time to

try and reel in the cat.

The second biggest mistake is going out too deep. The cats are not going to be found out in the

continue to the next page



The big catfish are biting at this popular pay lake. Photo courtesy of Catfish Paradise near Marietta..



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deepest parts of the water because the water is too cold to have the amount of oxygen for them to thrive.

When fishing for catfish in the summer, many times you'll discover that getting back to the basics and keeping it simple works the best. This is especially true where your baits are concerned. During the summer is not a good time to use stink baits or cut baits because the heat intensifies them too much.

Some of the basic and best baits to use for catfish fishing in the sum-

mer are listed below:

- Earthworms
- Night Crawlers
- Shad
- Bluegill
- Dough Baits
- Shiners
- Chicken Livers
- Crankbaits

These will yield some excellent results because the catfish are hungry and looking for a tasty meal. Most anglers never think about fishing for catfish with some type of artificial lure. However, if you

ask any bass fishermen, they will most likely tell you about hooking a few catfish during the summer months on fast moving crankbaits while trying to reel in the bass.

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Details On Page 3

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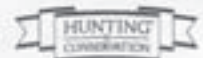
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Limited Deer Permit Areas Open

SOUTH CHARLESTON, West Virginia – Applications for the 2014 Antlerless Deer Season are available at West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (DNR) district offices and the DNR Elkins and South Charleston offices. These applications also may be downloaded from the DNR's Web page at www.wvdnr.gov.

“These limited permit areas provide antlerless deer hunting opportunities in counties or areas of the state where wildlife biologists have determined that limited numbers of antlerless deer permits are necessary to meet management objectives,” said Curtis I. Taylor, Chief of the DNR Wildlife Resources Section.

Eleven wildlife management areas (WMAs) (Beaver Dam, Big Ugly, Blackwater, Calvin Price State Forest, Elk River, Greenbrier State Forest, Kumbrabow State Forest, Little Canaan, Little River, Potomac and Wallback) and eight counties or portions thereof (Boone, Clay, Fayette, Mercer, Nicholas, Pendleton, Pocahontas and Raleigh) will have a limited number of Class N licenses for resident and Class NN licenses for nonresident antlerless deer hunting Oct. 23-25 on private land only,

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and Nov. 24 through Dec. 6, Dec. 18-20 and Dec. 29-31 on private and public land. Applications must be received by the DNR before the close of business Aug. 15, 2014.

For complete information on antlerless deer season dates and bag limits, consult the 2014-2015 Hunting and Trapping Regulations Summary, which is available at West Virginia hunting and fishing license agents, DNR offices and online at www.wvdnr.gov.

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Ben Queen and son Ben reeled in a 40 pound flathead catfish.

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Limited Bear Permits

SOUTH CHARLESTON, West Virginia - Applications are now available for permits for the limited bear firearms season this fall in West Virginia.

Hunters are reminded that, concurrent with the traditional buck-gun season, a bear season without dogs will occur Nov. 24-Dec. 6, 2014, on public and private land in 17 counties, by permit only. Barbour, Braxton, Clay, Grant, Greenbrier, Hardy, Lewis, Mercer, Monroe, Pendleton, Pocahontas, Randolph, Summers, Taylor, Tucker, Upshur, and Webster counties will be open for concurrent bear hunting with permits. Resident landowners, their resident children or resident

tenants who live on the land are not required to apply for a limited bear firearms season permit or purchase a class DS bear hunting stamp to bear hunt on their own land.

"Counties that will be open for bear hunting during the buck-gun season are above their management objective and need additional bears harvested to achieve their goal," said Colin Carpenter, black bear project leader for the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources. "Timing is critical when setting bear hunting seasons, and the limited bear firearms season will occur when the maximum number of hunters are in the woods. This is the second time that hunters in the majority of these counties will have the opportunity to harvest a black bear during the buck-gun season, and we hope they will take advantage of it."

Each hunter must fill out a sep-

continue to the next page



This big bass was caught in a tournament at Salt Fork Lake in Ohio.

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Mark Malone, from Vienna, caught and released a good musky.

Aug./Sept. 2014 ~ Page 17

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arate application that must be signed, dated, legible, complete, and received by the DNR Application Section by Aug. 18, 2014. Successful applicants will be sent an "Eligibility Card" (permit) in the mail. This permit will indicate the county in which the applicant



Glen Wells, from Moundsville, bagged a 21 pound gobbler.



Glen Wells, from Moundsville, bagged a 21 pound gobbler.

may hunt and provide instructions for obtaining a class DS stamp. Neither the permit nor the class DS stamp is transferrable, and the county of hunt cannot be changed.

Applications are currently available online at www.wvdnr.gov. Printed applications will be available in late July at hunting license agents, DNR district offices, DNR Elkins Operations Center

and the DNR main office in South Charleston.

Completed applications must be mailed to the Application Section, West Virginia Division of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 67, Elkins, WV 26241-0067, by Aug. 18, 2014. Details concerning bear hunting seasons can be found on pages 36-39 of the 2014-2015 Hunting and Trapping Regulations Summary.

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Jim Trasher, from Fairmont, caught a live timber rattler.

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Dan Proctor, from Calvin, hooked a 44" musky at Birnsville Lake.



Wanda Silman, from French Creek, caught a 17" crappie..



David Taylor, from Vienna, reeled in a 10 pound class largemouth.



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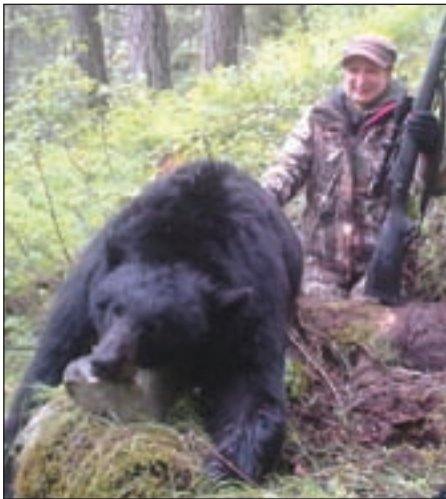
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Chad Wallbrown landed the big bass (4-1) at the last Full Moon tournament at Summersville.



Bonita Soos went to Idaho for a big black bear.



Butch Webb hooked a 4 pound 3 oz. smallmouth. Photo courtesy of PC Bait & Tackle in Hinton.

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Mitch Liggett used a bow for a citation carp. *Photo courtesy of Anderson Outdoors in Buckhannon.*



John Burnside reeled in a big rainbow trout. *Photo courtesy of Anderson Outdoors in Buckhannon.*



Randy Liggett hooked a quality largemouth bass. *Photo courtesy of Anderson Outdoors in Buckhannon.*



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Basics On Bluegills

Bluegills are one of the most common game fish found.. Although primarily thought of as a pond and small lake fish, they are also abundant in natural lakes, large border rivers, and reservoirs. Bluegills are closely related to largemouth bass, and as you might expect, anywhere there are bass there is an excellent chance bluegills will be present.

Angler opinion polls conducted by the Department in the last decade have shown bluegills are one of the more popular fish in Iowa, especially in the southern part of the state. Not only is it a favorite, but its popularity has been steadily increasing until it currently ranks third in preference. Bluegills are moving towards the top of popularity charts for several reasons. They are quite easily caught, take great varieties of baits, are not particularly wary, are forgiving of a less than perfect fishing technique, fight very well for their size are exceptionally fine eating, and are extremely abundant in many ponds and lakes. In addition, bluegill can be caught with just about any tackle, from a simple cane pole to a sophisticated and expensive graphite flyrod. Fi-

continue to the next page

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Matt Paynter and Adam Miller won the second Full Moon Team night tournament on Summersville Lake with a 6 fish 13 pound, 14 oz. bag.

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ally, and most importantly, bluegill are just plain fun to catch.

Locating a Fishing Spot

Catching bluegills is easy, but consistent catches of larger fish are more difficult. Large fish are not found in every body of water; therefore, it is important to locate ponds and lakes that contain bigger fish. You can find water with keeper bluegills by asking other anglers, conservation officers, area fisheries biologists, state and county park rangers, pond owners, or for that matter anyone that is familiar with the body of water in ques-

tion. Don't be shy in asking for information; most anglers like to add a little spice to their reputation.

After finding waters that are known to harbor keepers, consistent catches will depend on your knowledge of the location and seasonal habits of the fish. Bluegill are not randomly distributed in a lake, but rather they concentrate into specific habitats, depending upon the season. To be success-

ful you must learn to locate these concentrations of fish. The fact you caught fish in one area in the spring does not mean you will catch them in that location in mid-summer. In fact, the opposite is probably true; it would be surprising to find bluegill in the same location during two different seasons.

Spring and Early Summer Fishing
Spring and summer is by far the
continue to the next page



Dan Cedrone hooked a 40" New River musky..



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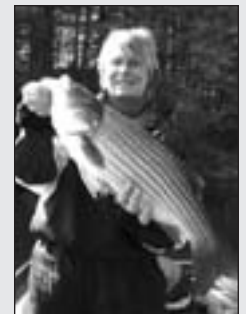
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best period to catch bluegills because they congregate in the shallows to spawn, become very aggressive, and are particularly easy to catch. The best method of determining this period of bluegill spawning activity is water temperature. Spawning activity peaks when the water temperature is 75 degrees F. This period usually corresponds closely with Memorial Day in Iowa. Fish a week or two before and after this holiday, and you will center the major spawning activity. It is often easy to spot the saucer-shaped depressions because bluegill build their nests in shallow water very close to shore. Carefully search water from 2 to 6 feet deep and locate a spawning bed. Male bluegills guarding nests are woefully easy to catch.

Although the same factors govern the spawning habits of bluegill, there may be great differences depending on habitat. In large rivers,

like the Mississippi, the fish prefer to spawn among stumps and dead bottom-hugging trees and other quiet areas; commonly these are backwaters and sloughs. Here they find habitats where the constant current will not disturb the nest. Current is not a major factor in natural lakes, ponds, and reservoirs, where males build their nests in shallow bays or along protected shorelines. In these habitats bluegill spawn among sticks, stumps, or thinly-spaced vegetation. A shallow flat adjacent to a flooded creek channel is also a good place to find spawning bluegill. Nearly all species of sunfish, which include bluegill, prefer a sand or gravel bottom for nest building, but lacking this

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habitat the nests will be fanned out of silty muddy bottom. Beds may be as small as 3 or 4 feet long and 4 feet across or as large as 25 feet across and 50 feet long, and a single bed may contain only a few nests or several hundred. By and large, spawning locations in large rivers are considerably smaller than those found in lakes and pond.

Fishing for bluegill that are guarding the nest is exciting. One of the best techniques is to wade or boat within easy casting distance of the nests and use a small lure or bait just below a small bobber. Cast a piece of worm, jig, or other bait
continue to the next page



Luke Corley, from Fairmont, hooked a 47" Stonecoal musky.

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beyond the bed and slowly retrieve it through the nesting area. Depth of the nests determines how deep to set the float. Fish close to the bottom, keep both lure and float as small as possible, and set the hook quickly, or the aggressive males will swallow the bait.

A bed of spawning bluegills can be a flyrod fisherman's dream. If the water is shallow enough, they will usually rise to hit poppers, especially in the evening. Otherwise

wet flies or ultra-lite leadheads will take them from deeper beds.

Of the fish caught from nests, 95 percent will be males. The male fish is more vulnerable to catching because he builds the nest within a well-defined territory and aggressively protects the eggs against all intruders. Females are more often caught on casts into the adjacent, deep water. Many times they hang just off the spawning beds prior to inshore movement.

Late Summer Fishing

As the season progresses, small bluegill hatch and move away to feed. The adult male then aban-

dons the nest to travel to deeper water for the summer. Many bluegill will spawn only once each season, but in waters not limited by overcrowding, some fish move back into the shallows in the late summer to spawn a second time. It often is rewarding to check spawn sites again during the summer for these multi-spawners.

Large river bluegill spend their summer in deeper water and congregate along undercut banks often favoring old, fallen trees. High water in spring-time and currents scour holes near the bank, often

continue to page 33



Gary Wendell, from Charleston, hooked a 5 1/2 pound smallmouth.

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Bill Hall, from Wallace, caught a 45" musky at Stonecoal Lake.



Beth Mynes, from Mt. Nebo, hooked a 21 3/4" largemouth.



John Rominger & Steve Furbee won the last Ohio River Team bass tournament. These 2 3 pound plus smallmouth bass were their 2 biggest of 6. The next tournament is August 24th at Powhatan Point. Look for a schedule on pg. 13.

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Hagen Mosser caught a 25 1/2" channel cat. *Photo courtesy of Old & New Sports in Ravenswood.*



Willy Lilly, from Daniels, caught a 4 pound, 4 oz. brown trout.

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Ryan Efow hooked a real large 50.7 pound flathead catfish at this popular pay lake. *Photo courtesy of Catfish Paradise near Marietta, Ohio.*



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This fellow hooked a nice catfish. Photo courtesy of Bel Meadows Fishing Preserve in Lost Creek.



Jacob Mason, from Moundsville, caught a nice largemouth bass.



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Another nice catfish was brought in. Photo courtesy of Bel Meadows Fishing Preserve in Lost Creek.

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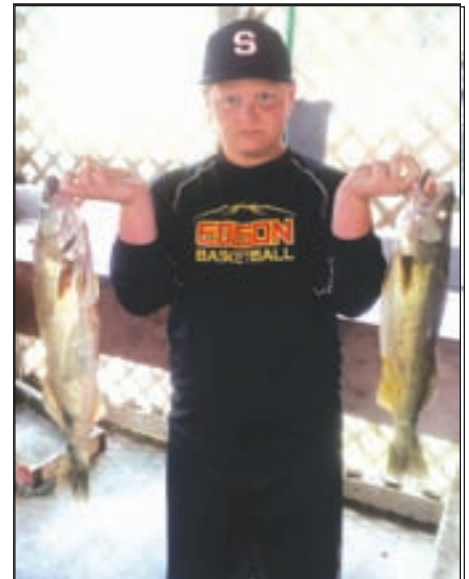
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Jake Brown hooked 2 nice walleyes at Lake Erie.

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exposing a tangle of roots and other snags. The edge of lilly pads or other aquatic vegetation can also produce good catches of fiesty bluegills.

Bluegill living in lakes, reservoirs, and ponds also move to deeper water during the hot days of summer. They can be found along the edges of weeds or in deep coves. Many times they are on humps or areas that break into flooded creek channels or other deep water. Summer-time bluegill, especially the bigger ones, are usually found at depths ranging from 10 to 12 feet. There they suspend just above the thermocline. Man-made underwater objects also attract bluegill during the summer. Many lakes and reservoirs contain stake beds, brush shelters, tire reefs, and other fish attractors that have been placed in the water. These objects, in addi-



A large smallmouth was brought in.. Photo courtesy of Three Rivers Edge in Hinton.

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GAME CHECKING

tion to boat docks or boats tied at one spot for several days, are productive hangouts for bluegill.

To catch mid-summer bluegill, fish your favorite bait or lure in areas you think might concentrate the fish. On the Mississippi try the 10-foot water along undercut banks or near aquatic vegetation that crowds backwaters and near sunken trees. Working undercuts during summer is best accomplished from downstream. Cast upstream and allow the current to move your bait or lure through target habitat. Allowing the bait to move naturally is the key. It's best to use natural bait, even when fishing jigs, because the line often goes slack because of the current. The tasty natural bait makes the fish hold on until the slack is eliminated and you can feel the fish on the line.

In lakes, reservoirs, and ponds try live bait or small lures near the edges of weed beds, submerged extensions of shoreline points, humps or flats dropping into creek channels. Fish often suspend over deep

continue to the next page

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water where they can be taken by drift fishing. Drift your boat with the wind allowing the bait or lure to be suspended at 10 to 15 feet. Repeat drifts over areas that are productive.

Fall Fishing

Sometime around late September, large bluegill abandon their summer haunts as they prepare for fall and winter. They move from deep water to locations with mid-depths, often near their spawning sites.

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Here, as with selection of other habitats, structure is important. Shoreline points that extend far out into the lake and drop off sharply often concentrate bluegill. Another "hot spot" is an underwater ridge, saddle, or hogsback in 8 to 10 feet of water. The presence of brush or rock will enhance the fish-holding capability of these locations.

Fall bluegill fishing is similar to summer fishing, except the fish are generally shallower. Mid-summer techniques and baits should be used during this period.

Winter Fishing

As autumn turns to winter and water cools, bluegill move into deeper water to spend the cold months. Here they often locate over shoreline points and ridges or near brush and aquatic vegetation

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in 15 to 20 feet of water. Frequently schools of similar-sized fish will move onto flats 10 to 12 feet deep to feed before moving back to deep water.

As we have seen so far, big bluegills change their habits with the changing seasons. Failure to take advantage of this knowledge will leave a bluegill angler with an empty stringer or with only small fish to show for their efforts. Big bluegill tend to gather in small groups, while the small bait stealers many people are so familiar with are found in large schools.

General Guidelines for Bluegill Fishing

There are several basic bluegill fishing principles which should be adhered to if consistent success is to be had. Foremost, fish where the fish are living. This may seem obvious, but it is surprising how many anglers simply walk down the shoreline, cast out, and never give a thought to the seasonal habits of the fish they're after. Make use of your knowledge of seasonal changes in bluegill habits and your success will improve. Take note of the locations that produce catches

because these places will be good from year to year.

Tackle

It definitely pays to use light line and tackle when bluegill fishing. Not only do you catch more fish, but also you have more fun with light tackle. Many serious bluegill fishermen use ultra-lite graphite spinning rods and tiny reels loaded with 2 or 4 pound-test monofilament line to pursue their quarry. Bluegill feed mainly on aquatic insects, which are slow-moving creatures. Rarely will a bluegill chase food items; therefore, it's important to fish very slowly. Then go to the next spot.



P.M. Carter went to Canada for a nice Northern pike.

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Summertime River Bass Fishing

How should those key hot spots be fished?

Well, as we all know, rivers have swift moving waters and curvy bends throughout their systems. And as bass fishermen know, it can be a little difficult sometims to maintain boat position in fast moving currents, let alone getting bass to strike.

But actually, fish like to hang out in most rivers, and the bass tend to feed a bit more aggresively in higher oxygenated waters. Therefore, getting to the best spots and using the right tackle and presentations, your chances for successfully catching more largemouth bass should greatly increase.

Top 5 River Bass Fishing Summer Hot Spots

We've put together the top five fishing spots to locate largemouth bass in rivers during the summer, along with helpful tips and tactics to use. Good luck freshwater fishing.

1) Weed Beds and Grassy Vegetation In Rivers

About Weed Beds In Rivers
Depending on the river, some riv-

ers have tons of weeds and grassy structure, while other river systems have a scarce amount of foliage.

For instance, much of the rivers running throughout the country have tons of weed beds continously scattered everywhere. However, some rivers across the globe may only contain just a handful.

Just like most types of plant life, the vegetation sprouts up in the spring. However, in the faster moving currents of water, the new growth tends to get uprooted and carried away down stream.

When you do come across those patches of weed beds, stop and attack it.

During the summer months, bait fish will usually be concentrated there. And rest assure, where there's bait fish, there should often be bigger predator fish lurking around.

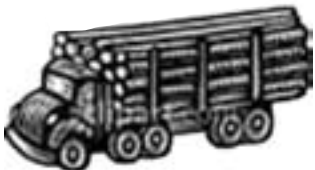
It's like an all you can eat buffet for bass, which is one reason why weed beds rank number one for river bass fishing summer time hot spots.

Bass Fishing Tackle For Vegetaion
A heavy monofilament fishing line can be matched up for tossing

poppers and spoons. And about a 30 pound test braided fishing line
continue to the next page



A nice New River smallmouth was reeled in.

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do the trick for topwater frogs.

For lily pads and thick matted grassy vegetation, try a 1/4 ounce bullet weight rigged weedless Texas rig style with a 7 inch Power Worm, or other plastic creature baits such as lizards, brush hogs, woolly beavers or crayfish replicas. How To Fish The Grassy Structure

During dusk, dawn, or overcast skies of low light conditions, work your topwater lures such as pencil poppers, walking plugs and weedless frogs.

When the sun is up, begin tossing, flipping and pitching your favorite soft plastic baits across the top of the weedy cover.

2) Creek Mouth Bass Fishing In Rivers

Coming in at number 2 for river bass fishing hot spots are creek mouths, along the ledges of the points.

About Creek Mouths Leading Into Rivers

When water temperatures begin to increase and become "too hot to trot" for the fish to remain comfortable, the largemouth bass move

to shallower water. These shallow spots will often be just off the first ledge at the mouth of creeks, along the flats of the extended points leading into the main river system. Bass Fishing Tackle For Creeks

A vertical diving type of crankbait, such as the Rapala DT (Dives-To) series lures, should be a great choice. A lipless crankbait like Rat-L-Traps may also be decent consideration.

Tie your favorite crankbait onto 10-12 pound test flourocarbon fishing line to achieve the desired results.

How To Fish Creek Mouths

Keep in mind that those largemouth bass in rivers tend to hug along the bottom near structure. And just as predatory fish like these bucktmouths do, they face upstream waiting to ambush and feed on bait fish and other resources of food flowing downstream.

Toss your crankbaits out in front of the fish and crank the lures toward them. Be sure that your crankbait is continuously in contact along the bottom, rather than fishing it above

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GAME CHECKING



their heads.

3) Dock Fishing For Bass In Rivers

About Docks Along The River

Rated number 3 for river bass fishing, docks are among every bass anglers favorite spots.

Boat docks and walking piers are sweet hot spots for holding fish. They provide shade and a significant amount of cover for bass.

You'll usually find plenty of bass hanging around docks, but they

continue to the next page



Eloise McLaughlin, over 80, got her first turkey in Roane County..

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can sometimes play hard to get. And they may not always be big mama bucketmouths, unless the scenerio is right. The more structure like brush piles, laydowns or rocks around those docks, the more likely that the bigger bass will be there too.

Bass Fishing Tackle For Docks

Topwater plugs like poppers and walking baits for low light conditions, and soft plastics and jigs for any other situation.

You may want to go a little heavier for the fishing line in order to muster out those feisty fish from around the structure.

Topwater lures: Try 15 pound test monofilament fishing line.

Subsurface Lures: Try 17 pound test flourocarbon fishing line.

As always, the lighter the better. But the more structure and the more likely to get hung up or snagged, then the heavier you might want to go, especially fishing for large-mouth bass in rivers where there may be faster moving currents of water flow.



Philip Quillen reeled in a 46" musky.



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R	W	E	X	O	A	F	T	L	E	E	L	L	E	R	G	F	A	E	I
E	O	E	F	I	S	H	O	E	G	I	O	G	R	R	R	K	E	S	L
E	B	R	V	O	S	N	L	A	N	E	A	R	T	P	E	E	D	T	E
W	N	G	R	A	O	E	O	T	A	B	T	E	F	F	B	K	O	H	V
O	I	A	L	I	W	Y	W	O	R	I	W	B	T	C	I	E	N	G	A
L	A	P	M	O	N	U	E	H	J	F	O	I	N	I	F	R	O	I	J
T	S	T	I	N	G	R	A	Y	P	N	O	F	I	R	T	U	D	L	R

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