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Issue 252

March/April 2016



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

**Turkey
TIPS**

**B.A.S.S.
News**

**DNR
Updates**

Outdoor Photos

PRE-OWNED VEHICLE SPECIALS

VEHICLE	WAS	NOW
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Cover Photo

Mike Mace, from Elizabeth, landed a 33" walleye in the Little Kanawha River while musky fishing. He had the channel catfish record for several years.

The 2015 season was an excellent year for large racks throughout the state. Send in your 2015 TEXT pics. Send to 304-482-7217.

There have been numerous text pics sent in this year. If you are not in the last couple of issues, look in future issues for your pic.

32,000 Acres Acquired

CHARLESTON, W.V. (January 5, 2016) — Today, The Conservation Fund announced its purchase of 32,396 acres of working forestland in southern West Virginia that will eventually create the state's largest, conserved block of prime habitat for elk restoration. In partnership with the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (DNR), the Fund's historic conservation purchase will establish a vast protected landscape of sustainably managed land, supporting working forests and forestry-based jobs and increasing tourism opportunities for public hunting and other forms of wildlife-associated recreation.

"This purchase and the first-of-its-kind elk restoration program in West Virginia is an investment in

the economic development and future vitality of the state," said Joe Hankins, Vice President for The Conservation Fund. "We're proud to be a partner with the DNR in this effort to conserve an important and promising landscape, create new opportunities on land that once supported the state through its resources, and redefine conservation to provide multiple tangible economic and environmental benefits for local communities. This is a win-win proposition for all West Virginians."

The Conservation Fund purchased the property through its Working Forest Fund®, with generous support from the Richard King Mellon Foundation. Under The Conservation Fund's ownership, the proper-

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Nothing like breakfast in bed. Photo courtesy of Tyler Outdoor Supply in Middlebourne.



Phil Riley, from Glenville, used a bow for a nice 8 point buck.

ty will be sustainably managed as working forestland. Over the next few years, the Fund will convey the land to the DNR in phases, starting in the spring of 2016. These lands will provide public, wildlife-associated recreation, and they will be managed for a variety of conservation benefits, including elk restoration.

"As tourism continues to grow in West Virginia, this will be a wonderful new opportunity for outdoor recreation that both our residents and visitors can enjoy," Governor Earl Ray Tomblin said. "I appreciate the cooperative efforts of everyone who helped make this project continue to the next page

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possible.”

With this conservation effort,
West Virginia joins a multi-state
landscape level effort to restore elk
to the Appalachian region.

“We are humbled and gratified
by The Conservation Fund’s tire-
less efforts and coordination of this
legacy project,” said Bob Fala, Di-
rector of the WV Division of Natu-
ral Resources. “It represents the
largest single conservation acquisi-
tion in State history at a most op-
portune time for the local and State
economy. The bulk of this acreage
adjoins the recently acquired Tom-
blin Wildlife Management Area



Francis Isaac got a long spiked
buck. Photo courtesy of Tri Lakes in
Walkersville.

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and will be critical to the State’s
fledgling elk restoration project.”

The reclaimed mine lands asso-
ciated with this acquisition effort
are located in Lincoln, Logan and
Mingo counties. They provide
ideal grassland and forest habitat
for a variety of wildlife species,
continue to the next page



Shane Roberts got an 8 point in
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including elk, deer, wild turkey, golden winged warbler and grass-land birds. The purchase conserves more than 10,000 acres of currently leased lands at Laurel Lake Wildlife Management Area (WMA) and Big Ugly WMA, ensuring permanent public access and enhancing connectivity with other important conservation lands in the region.

West Virginia's United States Congressional Delegation strongly supports this conservation and economic effort, which will be completed in part utilizing "Pittman-Robertson" funds through the congressionally authorized Wildlife Restoration Program, a \$250,000 grant from Walmart and the Nation-



Joe Ward hunted in Nicholas Co. for this bow 8 point buck.



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al Fish and Wildlife Foundations' Acres for America program and a \$250,000 grant from the Knobloch Family Foundation.

"It is great news that The Conservation Fund has decided to invest in elk restoration in Southern West Virginia," U.S. Senator Joe Manchin said. "Our neighboring states, Pennsylvania and Kentucky, have experienced success through reintroducing elk into their wildlife, and this project will similarly benefit our Southern region by bringing substantial economic growth through tourism and new hunting and outdoor recreation opportunities. I thank all those who have been working collectively to make this program a reality in our state."

"Working forests and forestry-based workers in Southern West Virginia will benefit greatly from today's Conservation Fund announcement," said U.S. Senator Shelley Moore Capito. "The completion of this historic conservation project will allow our state's natural beauty to fuel economic growth through tourism and other recre-

ational opportunities."

"This important project will allow for the reintroduction of elk to Logan, Lincoln and Mingo counties. By protecting their habitat, we can ensure that elk can be successfully reintroduced to this area," said U.S. Representative Evan Jenkins. "Tourism, hunting and logging are all important parts of our state's economy, and these protected acres

continue to the next page



Another nice Liggett buck was brought in. Photo courtesy of Anderson Outdoors in Buckhannon.

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will provide opportunities for all of these revenue-generating activities. I will continue to support grants that improve the quality of life for West Virginians.”

The Conservation Fund’s Working Forest Fund uses conservation-focused forest management strategies to enhance forest health and productivity, wildlife habitat and water quality, while supporting the economic well being of surrounding communities. With more than half of America’s 751 million acres of forests vulnerable to fragmentation and conversion to other uses, the Working Forest Fund is a dedicated source of conservation capital and timberland expertise designed to quickly acquire threatened forests with high conservation value. Over the last three decades, The Conservation Fund has protected more than two million acres of for-

estland nationwide.

About The Conservation Fund

At The Conservation Fund, we make conservation work for America. By creating solutions that make environmental and economic sense, we are redefining conservation to demonstrate its essential role in our future prosperity. Top-ranked for efficiency and effectiveness, we have worked in all 50 states since 1985 to protect more than 7.5 million acres of land, including more than 69,000 acres of important natural resources, wildlife habitat and recreational lands in West Virginia at iconic places like Cheat Canyon and Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge, which supports local economies and businesses. www.conservationfund.org

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Braxton Huffman reeled in a large walleye.

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38 Eagles Spotted In Southern WV Spring Survey

PIPESTEM, W.Va. – Sixty-one people gathered and were scattered to 11 survey sites for the 9th annual Spring Eagle Survey, held March 5 in the Pipestem area of southern West Virginia. During the four hours of the survey, they spotted 38 bald and golden eagles soaring the skies.

“The volunteers all have a common interest – birds – and on this particular day, eagles,” said Julie McQuade, naturalist at Pipestem State Park. McQuade and other volunteers assist former Pipestem naturalist Jim Phillips with this annual event.

The survey sites included Mouth of Indian Creek; Bertha; Pits; Bluestone State Park; Bluestone Turnpike Trail; Falls Mills, Virginia; Rt. 20 Overlook; Camp Brookside; Brooks; Barger Springs; and Rt. 122. The temperature ranged from

34-53 degrees with a 50-100 percent cloud cover and wind speed of 0-3 mph. There was no precipitation and the water was open.

Thirty-three bald eagles were recorded (11 adults, 8 first years, 9 second years, 1 third year and 4 fourth years). Golden eagles sighted were three adults and one imma-

ture. There were four unidentified eagles at nine of the 11 sites. Three nests were reported as having eggs or suspected of have an egg.

Annual eagle surveys are conducted in January and March with the announcements posted to www.pipestemresort.com, “Events.” The 2017 surveys will occur Jan. 7



Clarence Shrewsberry got a Wyoming Co 8 point with his bow.



Barry Stover landed a 7 pound, 4 oz. largemouth in November.

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John Matherly landed a nice New River smallmouth.



Terry Taylor shot a nice buck.



Caleb Smith, from Logan, loves trapping coyotes.

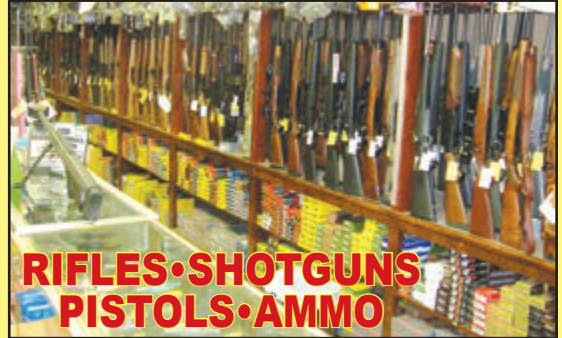
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Tim Wade hooked this Stonewall bass at the end of December..



Harold Wassoner landed a golden trout at Mountwood Lake. *Photo courtesy of Crossroads General Store near Newark.*



Lloyd Clark got a 12 point in Kanawha County.



Seth Conley reeled in a 24" golden trout.




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Bedding Bass Tips

Surrounded by humid and competitive-rich air prior to blastoff, Jacob Powroznik sat calmly cleaning his polarized sunglasses in the pre-dawn darkness of 6:30 a.m. on Northeast Florida's St. Johns River.

A brand new Bassmaster Elite Series Season was about to begin, and even dogs, women and children who lined the dock, seemed to know the day ahead would be centered on spawning bass.

"It's no secret a lot of us are about to run 35 minutes and crowd into that famous spawning flat on Lake George. And while we all have great equipment, the guys that will catch 'em the best are the ones that can slow down and stay mentally focused," says Powroznik.

"Proof of what I'm saying is in the

results of guys like Dean Rojas and Alton Jones – they seem to catch them every time we come to Florida, because they know that even though they maybe surrounded by a crowd of other great anglers, if they put their mental blinders on, keep their heads down, and keep lookin' for five good catchable bass – eventually they'll catch what they need. And that's just it – you only need five – and you have all day to get 'em," explains Powroznik.

Rojas and Jones are for sure among the best spawning bass anglers in the game, but Powroznik has also proven himself as one of the very best at the visually oriented technique too – and he proved it with his 2014 Bassmaster Elite Series victory on Toledo Bend that centered on bedding fish.

The good-hearted Virginia pro offers these tips for anglers interested in improving their sight fishing skills.

What to look for: "On lakes with lots of vegetation, you're looking
continue to the next page



Cameron Riffle used a bow in Gilmer County for this buck.

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for holes in the thick grass – and then light spots on the bottom of the lake below those holes in the grass,” says Powroznik. “In Florida, where the water is so dark or tannic colored, like tea-colored, the beds on the bottom look sort of gold or orange.”

Quality sunglasses and the right colored lenses: “Buy quality sunglasses, and if you can possibly afford it, buy two pair – one with green mirror lenses for bright sunny days – and on cloudy days, I wear a lens color that Costa makes called “sunrise” – that particular lens is a game changer to seeing bedding fish on cloudy days or under low light really early in the morning,” says Powroznik.

Supersticks and Power-Poles: “Hydraulic Power-Poles are shallow water anchors that you see on the back of every pro’s boat – and they have absolutely revolutionized

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the way we're able to fish for bedding bass by allowing us to keep the boat positioned exactly where we want in relation to the bass," says Powroznik. "And by using a Superstick push pole to move along a shallow area, I can avoid using the trolling motor, which will spook a lot of bass."

Tackle for Bedding Fish: "I use spinning tackle if bass are super

finicky and I need to cast lighter lures, but around thick cover, and for the most part, I'll pitch Texas-rigged plastics on a 7-foot, 6-inch Smoke rod, with 65-pound Hi Seas braid spooled on a really fast 8.1:1 Quantum Smoke reel. You need all the speed you can get in the fraction of a second you have to close the deal when a bedding fish finally commits to eat your lure."

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David Shrewsberry got a dandy 11 point with a bow in Wyoming Co.

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Use Orange Colors For More Spring Bass

March is mostly affiliated with St. Patty's green, but among serious bass anglers, orange is the color that should never be overlooked in spring's chilly and rain-stained pre-spawn waters. In fact, a fast glance at the 2016 Bassmaster Classic competitors' lure choices revealed orange to be hugely popular.

Like many of his competitors,

Team Toyota's Mike Iaconelli leaned on an orange crawdad colored Rapala Shad Rap at the 2016 Classic, and too many Classic anglers to mention cranked orange/red shallow squarebills.

Last year's winner Casey Ashley leaned on a jig with orange strands in the skirt, and this year's \$300,000 winner Edwin Evers in-

cluded a spinnerbait with the once secretive orange/red front kicker blade in his three-day arsenal.

The goodness of orange is certainly not limited to Grand Lake O' the Cherokees. Any time water surface temps are in the 50s, and stained to muddy, orange will likely be the most productive color you

continue to the next page

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can tie on, and the variety of lures containing the beacon hue is a vast one.

Rapala Shad Rap – Some choose the #5 size – others choose the #7, but few leave the dock without this orange/brown bait in early spring. Consider upgrading the hook size to make this light as a tater chip lure cast easier, and suspend a little better in the face of lethargic bass.

Orange Soft Plastic Pinchers – There are virtually dozens of different crawfish species throughout the United States, and most feature orange pinchers. If you're going to tip a bulky jig with a soft plastic craw – utilizing one with highly visible orange pinchers in off-colored water simply makes sense.

Storm Wiggle Wart – Arguably the best pre-spawn, wide-wobbling, commotion causing crankbait in history has deep roots to the color orange.

“Gary, Bill and Dick Storm actually talked to Missouri Department of Conservation biologists in the late 1960s to research crawfish colors,” remembers Jim Morton, a former B.A.S.S. pro who worked closely with Storm for 31 years. “They learned there were 26 different species of crawfish in the White River drainage basin around Table Rock, Beaver, Norfolk and Bull Shoals and most of them had orange on their pinchers, and else-

where on their bodies.”

“That’s why the earliest and most popular V62 and V63 green crawfish and brown crawfish-colored Wiggle Warts were painted with orange paint on the diving bill,” explains Morton. “The Storm brothers also learned that instead of leaving the belly of the lure white, that adding orange to the bellies triggered far more bass to bite.”

Lipless Crankbaits – When aquatic vegetation is present, few lures catch more pre-spawn bass than orange/red shades of lipless crankbaits. The key is to ‘tick’ the tops of

continue to the next page

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Corey Stover bagged a nice 12 point buck in Raleigh.

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the submerged vegetation with the lure, to trigger strikes. Fish it too slow, and you'll bog down in the salad, fish it too fast and you won't get as many bites. Use a rod with plenty of backbone to help you jerk the lure free when it does bog down, yet with a soft enough tip to keep these easily shaken lures hooked as well as possible. Quantum's TKVDC6106F is a great 6-foot, 10-inch stick for lipless cranks. Spinnerbaits – Replacing the traditional sliver or gold front blade of a spinnerbait with an orange/red kicker blade was largely a secret among anglers in Oklahoma, Arkansas and Missouri, until the success of top regional spinnerbait assaultants like Ron Shaw became hard to hide.

"It was pretty much a secret when I started throwing it in the early 90s, and then I shared it with Ken Cook, and eventually it became a big part of the product line that Hart Tackle Company offered back then," remembers Shaw.

"Ken always said it was an all or nothing lure – either they'd hardly

hit the orange/red kicker blade – or you'd wear 'em out on it. And I agree with him – but when the water temps are in the low 50s, I lean on it hard. It's always a go-to bait for me in stained to dirty water in early Spring," says Shaw, a retired Moore, Okla., firefighter that now represents Skeeter Boats.

Certainly, the uniquely colored blade is no longer a secret. Nearly 25 years after Hart Tackle Company made limited numbers of them, several 2016 Bassmaster Classic competitors used one made by various brands, including winner Edwin Evers.

Squarebill Crankbaits – Perhaps the most popular lure of all at the 2016 Bassmaster Classic, because cold water, rocky banks and orange craw colored crankbaits make for a hard-to-rival early Spring equation for success.

Brady Winans, a Toyota Trucks Bonus Bucks pro staffer, whose name is often at the top of the standings in Texas events, admits he has a bit of a crankbait obsession – especially orange ones in early spring.

"When the water temps range from 50 to 55 degrees you can crush 'em on a new bait called the Movement 80X from 6th Sense Lures, in a color called Wild Lava Crush," says an enthusiastic Winans. "That bait hunts hard, and vibrates like a #7 Colorado blade on a spinnerbait."

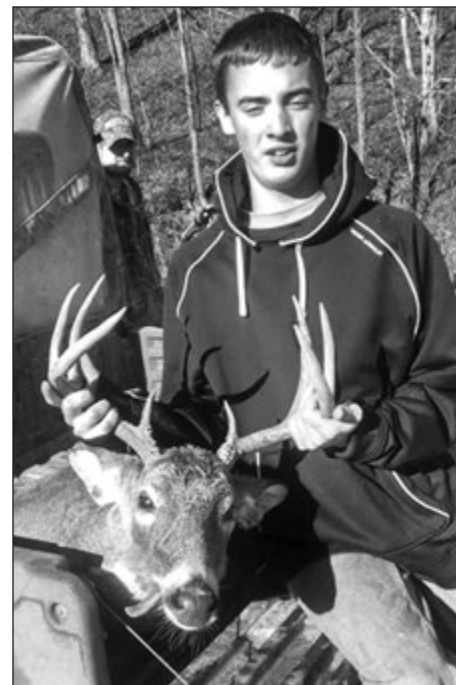
"Now, once the water temps hit

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60, they favor shad patterns, but in the lower 50s they crush those orange colors like Wild Lava Craw and Lava Treuse," concludes Winans.



Logan Kerns brought in a nice 8 point buck.

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Hunters Helping The Hungry

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin, members of the Governor’s One Shot Committee and several state senators and delegates recently presented a check to the Mountaineer Food Bank, representing \$50,000 raised during the ninth annual Governor’s One Shot Deer Hunt, held Oct. 23-25, 2015, at Stonewall Resort State Park. Brig. Gen. Chuck Yeager, USAF, Ret., was the featured guest at the event.

The first event in 2007 raised \$17,000, the second in 2008 raised \$35,000, the third in 2009 raised \$50,000, the fourth in 2010 raised \$75,000, the fifth in 2011 raised \$75,000; the sixth in 2012 raised \$70,000, the seventh in 2013 raised \$65,000, and the eighth in 2014 raised \$65,000. Donations received at the 2015 event brought the total amount raised to more than half-a-million dollars over the life of the event.

The money will go toward expenses associated with the Hunters Helping the Hungry Program (HHH), administered by the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources, to distribute venison to needy families across the state through the Mountaineer Food Bank. The check was presented Jan. 21, 2016, during a ceremony at the State Capitol in Charleston.

The Governor’s One Shot event is sponsored by WVDNR and the Governor’s One Shot Committee, which organizes the event each year. Official with the Mountaineer Food Bank, accepted the check with thanks to everyone who contributed to the Governor’s One Shot.

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Private individuals and businesses donate money for the opportunity to participate in guided antlerless deer hunts on private property near Stonewall Resort State Park. The event wraps up with an auction and an award banquet. All venison from the hunt, along with profits from the sponsorships, goes to the Mountaineer Food Bank.

The HHH program allows hunters to donate legally harvested deer to certified processors so the meat can be distributed to a network of more than 550 local soup kitchens, food pantries, shelters, senior centers, missions, churches and community centers around the state.

The HHH program has been highly successful since it began in

1992, providing more than a million family style meals to the neediest of West Virginians. However, the program also requires cash donations to pay for processing and distribution costs to benefit these needy individuals. More information about the HHH program is available at wvdnr.gov/Hunting/HHH.shtm.

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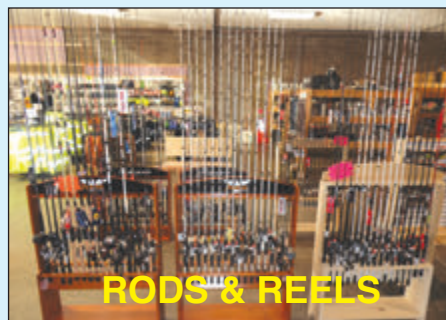
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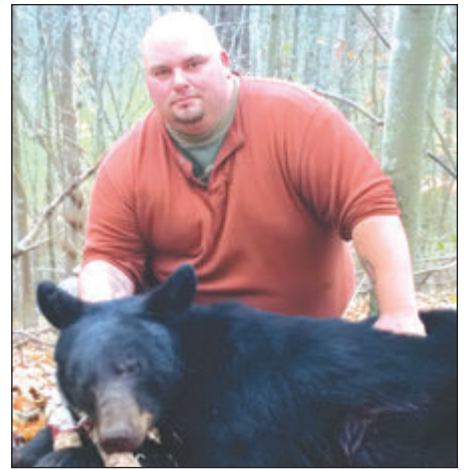
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Adam Maltemple used a bow for this great drop tine buck.



Shawn Ramme hooked a very nice rainbow trout.



Joshua Hornbeck hooked a 30 1/2" walleye. Photo courtesy of Crossroads General Store near Newark.

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10 Great Turkey Tips

1. Although turkeys can't smell humans, their eyesight is very keen. You must be in head to toe camo and use a face mask. Setup in the shade if possible. A camouflaged shotgun is a good idea.

2. Setup with your back against a large tree for safety and concealment. If you are right handed, position yourself at about a 90 degree angle to an approaching turkey. Your left shoulder should point at the turkey rather than sitting face on to the turkey. This gives you the most versatility to shoot.

3. If possible, locate Toms in the evening. You will hear them "cackle" and fly up to roost right before

dark.

4. Turkeys will "shock gobble" at everything from a coyote howl or crow call to a horn honking! Use a "locator call" to locate toms in the evenings prior to fly up or in the mid morning. Then, go to your turkey calls once you are setup and ready.

5. In the morning, sneak in under cover of darkness, and setup as close as you can to the "roost tree" without spooking the turkeys (75 to 150 yards if possible). As daylight starts to break, give some light hen yelps ("tree yelps"). Once the gobbler answers you, call according to his response. You don't want to

jump all over him, but you can also be too timid. If he is liking your continue to the next page



Preston Ross, from Alum Bridge, used an arrow for this 10 point.

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A large trout was caught at this lake. Photo courtesy of Sure Catch Fish Farm in Elkins.

jump all over him, but you can also be too timid. If he is liking your calls, keep him fired up.

6. Decoys can work great to distract turkeys coming to the call. You can use just hens, a hen with a jake, or we've also found a gobbler decoy (B-Mobile) to be very effective. Position the decoys where you will have a good open shot when the tom gets to them.

7. Learn to use a slate call, box call, and mouth calls if possible. Some turkeys will prefer one sound while others will like something else. This will make you more versatile and more successful.

8. Once hens get bred and start going to sit on their nests in the morning use this to your advantage. Gobblers will be out looking – this is when hunting mid-morning all

the way through afternoon can pay off big.

9. Never wear or carry anything red, white, or blue when turkey hunting since these are the colors of a gobbler's head.

10. When carrying decoys or a turkey out of the woods, drape them with fluorescent orange for safety. Have fun and enjoy your time in the woods!

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Noah Childers bagged a quality buck. Photo courtesy of Tyler Outdoor Supply in Middlebourne.



Tyler Parker, from Alum Bridge, used a bow for his 9 point buck.

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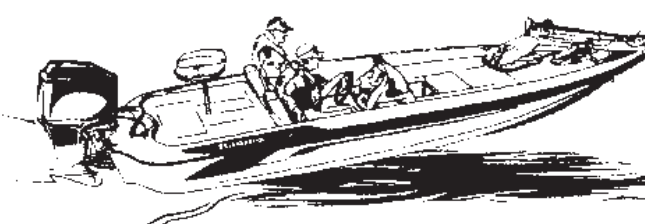
Foundation Donates Equipment

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. - The Trooper Eric Workman Foundation has donated several research items to the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources totaling approximately \$2,700 from a "wish list" created by Palestine State Fish Hatchery manager Rodney Null. The equipment donation will enable hatchery staff to optimize their muskellunge efforts, while allowing funds which would normally be used for these purchases to go for other DNR projects, according to Bret Preston, WVDNR assistant chief for warmwater fisheries.

The Trooper Eric Workman Foundation is also planning to donate minnows in 2016 to help feed grow-

continue to the next page

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ing muskellunge before they are stocked into state waters. A similar donation was made in 2015.

“DNR greatly appreciates the contributions of the Trooper Eric Workman Foundation, as should all anglers of West Virginia,” Preston said.

The Trooper Eric Workman Foundation (eworkman.org) was established to honor West Virginia State Trooper Workman and Cpl. Marshall Bailey, who tragically were lost in the line of duty in 2012. Trooper Workman was an avid and accomplished angler and the Foundation works to support fishing and fisheries management work in the state. The Foundation also promotes drug-free awareness and supports local educational scholarships.

Items donated include:

Six MacDonald hatching jars, which are industry standard jars used to uniformly rotate fertilized muskellunge/fish eggs during the incubation stage. Once hatched, fry can be gathered and moved to troughs and ultimately to grow-out ponds.

Two pH meters, which will be used to optimize hatching rates by allowing staff to check and maintain proper pH levels for egg, milt and buffering solutions.

Two Conical hatching jars for brine shrimp (think sea monkeys), which are an optimal feed to start young muskellunge fry on after they absorb their yolk sac. These jars will help keep a steady supply available for young muskellunge before being transferred to grow-out ponds where they will then be fed a diet of minnows.

One Kasco aerator to be used to aerate hatchery ponds with high occupancy especially during summer months.

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Additionally, two PIT (passive

integrated transponder) tag readers were delivered that were purchased last year by the Foundation. A number of ongoing research projects use PIT tags to tag muskellunge for future recognition/recapture.



Another nice trout was reeled in. Photo courtesy of Sure Catch Fish Farm in Elkins.

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Spring Crappie Fishing

The spawn is on at many lakes across the southern US. The water temperatures have risen and if you can catch the conditions just right, you should be able to land a few slabs.

The #1 bait for catching Spring Crappie is without a doubt a live minnow. It has been estimated that over 50% of all Crappie are caught on live minnows. I am not totally sure of the accuracy of that quote, but I happen to believe it. The problem is that sometimes the local bait shops will run out of minnows if the fish are really biting.

Other effective live baits you can use are crickets and grub worms. Earthworms may work, but my experience has been that they are bet-

ter suited for catfish, sunfish, and an occasional bass. You can also try a cast net to catch some live bait.

Try fishing in the shallow water with a live minnow tied about 18 inches to 2 feet below the unweighted cork. Something you may try if cork fishing is to buy the plastic corks, and drill a small hole



Larry Lunsford, from Alum Bridge, landed a 7 pound rainbow trout.



This hunter got a great buck. Photo courtesy of Middle Mountain Sporting Goods in Elkins.

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and put in a few very small split shot weights. Try casting your line out, and every now and then giving it a twitch. Spring Crappie will be curious about the rattling sound and come to check it out.

Jig fishing can also be effective for Spring Crappie, but jigs can be a bit harder in the very shallow water
continue to the next page

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ter, unless you are dropping the jig into heavy cover. If you are against the boat dock, or on a ledge, there is no cover to hide you away from the fish. Once the spawn is over and the Crappie begin to move off shore a bit, jigging can be very effective.

Crappie are not a very aggressive fish. The males will be a bit more aggressive than the females during the spawn, but still nowhere near as aggressive as a bass would be. So it is very important to fish slow. If you cast a jig out, reel back slowly, and pause around branches and other cover to allow the bait to drop in the zone.

Spring Crappie fishing can be a blast if you catch the conditions just right. It can also be very frustrating when a front is approaching or has just passed through. Just experiment with different fishing holes and different depths to find your Spring Crappie.



Danny Mathess had deer success this year..

Trapping Season Ends

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. – The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (DNR) reminds that various trapping and small game seasons are ending soon. The hunting and trapping seasons for red and gray fox, bobcat, and raccoon will end Feb. 29, 2016. The trapping seasons for coyote, otter, mink and muskrat also will end Feb. 29, 2016. Trapping season for beaver continues until March 31, 2016. Beaver trappers are reminded that it is illegal to set traps during the month of March for beaver unless those traps are in water. Trappers should be aware that it is illegal to set traps or leave traps set after noon on the last day of the respective season.

All beaver, bobcat, otter and fisher pelts are required to be checked in within 30 days of the close of their respective season. Hunters and trappers can check game one of the following three ways:

1) Internet - www.wvhunt.com

com

2) Stopping at any license agent (You will not have to bring the animal with you.)

3) Telephone - Call 1-844-WVCHECK (1-844-982-4325)

Trappers, hunters and fur dealers are reminded that furs shipped out of West Virginia must have a fur shipping tag, which is available at DNR district offices. Also, anyone who plans to sell an otter or bobcat pelt outside of the state of West Virginia should obtain a Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) seal for each pelt. All otter and bobcat pelts, usually exported from the United States by licensed fur buyers, must have a CITES seal from the state where the animal was harvested.

The public is reminded that now, before the trapping season ends, would be a good time to deal with nuisance furbearer problems. Trappers may be more likely to assist landowners with problems now.

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Gary Lunsford, from Alum Bridge, brought in a nice 8 point buck.



Tim Starks caught a 26 3/4" rainbow trout at Mountwood Lake. Photo courtesy of Catfish Paradise in Marietta.

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Tom Massey used a crossbow in Jackson County for this nice 8 point buck.

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A large rainbow trout was landed. Photo courtesy of Middle Mountain Sporting Goods.



Robin Hardbarger used a bow for a massive 12 point. Photo courtesy of Crossroads General Store near Newark.

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Jimmy Linger bagged a large 8 point buck. Photo courtesy of Tri Lakes in Walkersville.

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A 10.33 pound rainbow trout was reeled in. Photo courtesy of Middle Mountain Sporting Goods in Elkins.

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Tactics For Turkey Hunting

It was one of the toughest turkey hunts I've ever had and it was about to come to an abrupt end. A gobbler sporting an eight inch beard strutted up the logging road with love on his mind. My single hen decoy appeared to be just what the doctor ordered for this guy. But unbeknownst to him, today's pre-

scription was a screaming hot load of #5's. At five yards from the decoy, he decided something wasn't right. But it was too late for him. The safety was off and with a tap of the trigger, it was lights out for this last minute gobbler. I validated the tag two hours before the close of my season. Some hunts

are just more difficult than others, but learning from the experience is what makes us better hunters. Here are a handful of some of my hard learned lessons.

Changing Calls

There is a small group of veteran callers who possess the talent to make a wide variety of calls with a diaphragm call. Most of us are rel-

continue to the next page

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Alex Nutter, from Cowen, hooked a big largemouth.



A big bow buck was brought in. Photo courtesy of Uncle Tom's Loans in Oceanna.

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egated to two or three good turkey sounds with the mouth call. For that reason, switching calls is the way to go. Changing calls also makes you sound like more than one hen. Try making your probing calls with a box or slate calls. Most hunters can easily learn several different calling techniques with boxes and especially slates. When you know a gobbler is close, put down those calls and go to your diaphragm. This will mix up the sounds and provide hands free calling while preparing for the shot.

Fair Weather Hunting

Sure, you can hunt turkeys in the rain. Some hunters prefer it. Hunting sunny days is far more productive for me for a number of reasons. Of course, it's just more comfortable and enjoyable to be out on sunny days. As far as turkeys are concerned, they are more likely to be in open areas when the sun is

shining brightly. The heat warms their body during the cool days of spring and I believe they know their feathers are more dynamic in the sunshine, thus increasing their chances for a breeding opportunity. An open country tendency makes finding birds a lot easier while scouting or running & gunning. Using the sun to your advantage is also a great idea. If you are trying to sneak in close to birds in the afternoon, a western approach is beneficial. Turkeys have to look into the sun to see your movement which is pretty tough with the glare.

Call Downhill

I have shot turkeys that have run down a hill toward my decoys, but on those days pretty much anything would have worked. In most cases, turkeys like to cross flat terrain or

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move uphill to decoys. It's easier for gobblers to see danger when walking pastures or going uphill. One of my favorite tactics for hunting turkeys in a valley is to place a few decoys at the top of a ridge
continue to the next page



David Rose went to Barboursville Lake for this nice brown trout.

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Young Koltyn Starcher used a crossbow for this Roane Co. buck.

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so that their silhouettes are easily spotted from below. Then I'll try to set up twenty yards downhill from the decoys. As gobblers make their way up the hill, I'll be in perfect position if they stop short.

Turkey Time

Turkeys don't carry cell phones or pocket watches. They literally have all day. Their only concern is survival. They are not worried about being home by noon to watch a baseball game or to paint the house. Trying to rush a turkey into doing what we want it to do is a big mistake. Some hunters will amp up the calling after a half hour of conversation because they get too impatient. If a gobbler is still talking to you, he's interested. Don't ruin the

hunt by getting too aggressive due to impatience. Let him do what he wants to do in the time he wants to take. Just be ready when the moment arrives.

Turkey hunting is not easy. Statistically, turkeys one of the most difficult game animals to harvest. But turkey hunting isn't rocket science. Spending time in the turkey woods and learning from your failures is the best way to improve skills and start filling tags.

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Rates are on page 3



Jeremy McCloy caught a nice Ohio River walleye.



Brad Berga hooked a February bass at Lake Guntersville.

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Types Of Turkey Calls

Box Calls

Box calls create turkey sounds with the friction created by sliding the lid across the surface of the box. These calls are very convenient and capable of producing more volume than any other call.

Friction Calls

Friction calls, also known as “peg and pot” type calls, are easy to use and create lifelike turkey sounds. Friction calls usually feature a round surface, and the hunter creates sound by drawing a peg or striker across the surface. Friction call surfaces can be slate, aluminum, glass or a variety of other materials.

Wingbone Calls

Wingbone calls originally were

made from the wingbones of a turkey, and some still are. These are a suction-type calls. Sounds are made with quick, forceful sucking motions, much like kissing the end of the call. Good wingbone calls make a hollow sounding yelp. Several variations of the wingbone call have been made from materials such as cane, bone, horn and other hollow, slender materials.

Diaphragm Calls

Diaphragm calls use thin latex rubber as reed material. The reed material is held inside a horseshoe-shaped frame. The call is placed in your mouth with rounded side to the back and is pressed to the

roof of the mouth with the tongue. Forcefully breathing across the reed causes the reed to vibrate and create sound, making the call sound. The calls require practice to learn to use correctly.

Tube Calls

Tube calls are similar to diaphragm calls. The reed material is

continue to the next page



Craig Coplin bagged a bobcat that weighed 31 pounds. *Photo courtesy of Holbert's Store in Big Bend.*




McKinley Bennett, from French Creek got a nice 9 point buck.

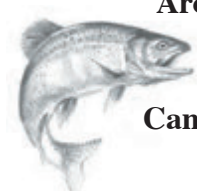
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fixed across top of a hollow barrel, instead of held in the mouth. Calls are typically made from plastic or wood, with latex stretched across the top half and held in place with a rubber band. The call is held against the lower lip and blown across to produce a wide range of calls.

Push/Pull Calls

.A wooden or plastic box incorporates a lid that rides on a rod positioned through both sides of the box. A spring or rubber-band is used to give the paddle proper tension to run over a peg inside. Pushing and/or pulling the rod causes the paddle to scrape over the internal peg, which vibrates to make turkey-like sounds.



David Smith, from VA, caught a huge trout at Smoke Hole.



A huge bow buck was brought in. Photo courtesy of Uncle Tom's Loans in Oceanna.



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