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Issue 237

May/June 2014



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Magazine

Volume 1 Issue 237

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

A new record blue catfish was caught by Austin Hoffman of Milton, West Virginia. Hoffman caught the 47.75-inch, 52.95-pound fish using cut bait from the Ohio River below R.C. Byrd Dam April 26, 2014.

Hoffman's catch establishes a new West Virginia record for length and weight. The previous record was a 43.9-inch, 44.5-pound blue catfish caught by Mark A. Foster.

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Don't Feed The Bears

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. – The Division of Natural Resources reminds all West Virginia residents that feeding black bears is a violation of state law as well as a misguided disservice to our state animal, according to Colin Carpenter, black bear project leader for the DNR Wildlife Resources Section.

“It is understandable that some people will illegally set out food

so they can get a closer look at this often-secretive animal,” Carpenter said. “However, these actions often lead to the destruction of the bear. Bear movements are tied to food sources. Bears that roam in and around residential areas in search of food are less likely to stay if they do not find anything to eat. The key to avoiding human-bear conflicts is to remove or secure food attractants before a bear finds them.”

Capturing and moving bears that have become accustomed to humans is a costly and often ineffective way of addressing the problem, especially when faced with the possibility of merely moving a problem bear from one area to another. That is why wildlife agencies around the country tell people that a “fed bear is a dead bear.”

Bear populations have increased in both number and distribution in the past 20 years. Bears are now continue to the next page



Robert Workman went to Braxton Co. for a 13 point gun buck.

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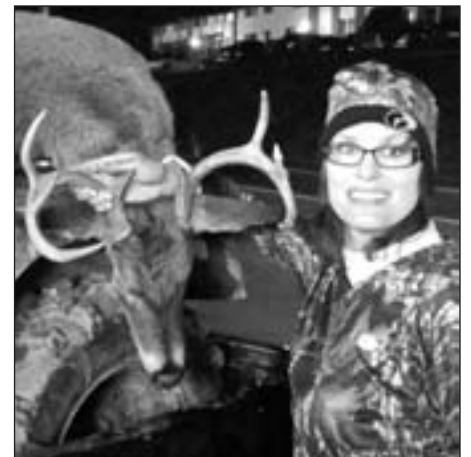
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found in areas where they have been absent for decades and have been reported in all 55 counties. Multiple reports of sows with cubs have been received from the northern and western portions of the state. "There is simply nowhere to move bears that have become a problem," Carpenter said.

Human-bear interactions increase during the spring and summer for several reasons. Natural food sources are at their lowest point when bears leave their dens in the spring. Bears often spend several weeks feeding on green vegetation while continuing to lose weight. High-energy foods such as serviceberries, blackberries, raspberries and blueberries do not become available until later in the summer. In addition, the bear breeding season, which peaks from late June through July, puts many bears on the move. During the breeding season, males will cover large areas searching for females. This is also the time of year when adult female bears will chase off their yearlings so that they may breed again.

Human-related food sources are higher in calories and easier to obtain than natural foods. All bears, but especially yearlings that are on their own for the first time, will take



Jason Fraley bagged a gobbler on the youth hunt. *Photo courtesy of Wabash Trading Post in West Union.*

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advantage of easy food sources. Bears will continue on their way if they do not find easy food sources.

Bears quickly become habituated to handouts in the form of trash, bird seed, pet food and feed placed out for other animals, causing them to lose their fear of humans. These bears resort to raiding garbage, outdoor freezers, storage sheds, vehicles and other structures associated with people. Unfortunately, when

continue to the next page



Brian Hudkins hooked a rainbow trout.

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these activities are repeated, DNR personnel are forced to humanely destroy the offending animal for safety reasons.

“The unintentional feeding of black bears is something that can be prevented,” Carpenter said. “Garbage should be secured in a bear-proof facility and placed out for collection on the morning of pickup, not the night before. Food scraps that produce large amounts of odor should be sealed in a plastic bag before being placed in the trash. Food scraps should not be placed in a compost pile during the summer months. Residents should remove all outside pet food at night and bird feeders should be taken down, cleaned, and stored until late fall to further discourage bears from feeding around human habitation. If you do not remove food attractants until after a bear has become a nuisance, you may have caused the death of that animal.”

Feeding of any wildlife should be avoided for numerous reasons, including, but not limited to, disease transmission, increased predation, habitat destruction around the feeding site, ethical concerns, and the animal’s overall health.

“Following these practical and common sense recommendations will reduce human-bear conflicts and assure that more of the state’s animals remain wild,” Carpenter said.



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Spring Gobbler Season

Charleston, W.Va. - Spring gobbler season opened Monday, April 28 and runs through Saturday, May 24, according to Curtis I. Taylor, Chief of the Division of Natural Resources Wildlife Resources Section. While hunters may kill only one bearded turkey per day, they are allowed two per season.

A one-day youth season will be held on Saturday, April 26. A turkey harvested that day counts towards the season bag limit of two gobblers.

“Turkeys that are more vocal and

prone to come to calls are obviously taken during the first week of the season, but good to excellent hunting can still be had through the end of the season,” said Taylor. “Some of the best hunts take place in the last week, if not the last days, of the season as gobblers that are interested in breeding easily come to calls.”

continue to the next page



Tyler Brock hooked a nice musky at Wheeling Lake.



Cainan Cales enjoyed a turkey hunt. *Photo courtesy of PC Bait & Tackle in Hinton.*

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Since the typical gobbler harvested is usually a two-year-old bird, the DNR routinely uses the brood reports from two years prior to estimate harvest trends. On a state-wide level, the brood reports from



Sam Southall called in a quality spring gobbler.

2012 were lower than the five-year average, indicating that the state-wide harvest may be lower in 2014. There were regional variations in the data. Hunters in the southern region may not see a decline. Hunters in the mountain and western regions, however, will likely notice fewer birds.

Taylor wants to remind sportsmen and women that hunting turkeys over bait is both illegal and unethical in West Virginia. This activity disrespects the great sport of spring gobbler hunting. He encourages turkey hunters to report any such activity to their local Natural Resources Police Officer. The West Virginia Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation pays a reward of \$100 for information that leads to the arrest and conviction of persons attempting to kill wild turkeys through the use of bait.

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Vestor Walton brought in a nice gobbler. *Photo courtesy of Crossroads General Store near Newark.*

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Turkey Survey

Charleston, W.Va. -- West Virginia Division of Natural Resources personnel began a statewide survey of spring gobbler hunters in 1983, according to Curtis I. Taylor, Chief of the DNR Wildlife Resources Section. This useful survey has the hunter record items of interest by day, such as the number of gobblers heard, called in, missed and harvested. Biologists are also interested in the number of other wildlife seen by hunters, and their most memorable experiences during the season.

“Data from the survey are then tabulated and compared against previous years in a report that is mailed back to all cooperators the next year,” noted Taylor. “It’s a great way to track wild turkey and other wildlife populations. In addition, it provides a great forum for hunters to express their opinions directly to wildlife biologists.”

Hunters wishing to help the Spring Gobbler Committee by completing the survey should go online to www.wvdnr.gov, select the Hunting Main Page and look for the Spring Gobbler Survey form and print it out. You may also contact: Tammie Thompson, WVDNR, P.O. Box 67, Elkins, WV 26241, or phone 304-637-0245. Complete your daily observations and the survey questions, mail it back to the DNR, and you could be included in next year’s publication.

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Colt Corder, from Ravenswood, hooked a nice flathead catfish. Photo courtesy of Old & New Sports in Ravenswood.

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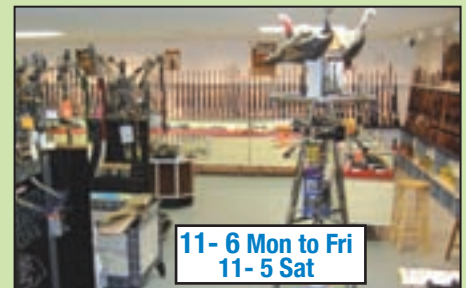
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Chase Booth got his first gobbler on youth day. Photo courtesy of Crossroads General Store near Newark.

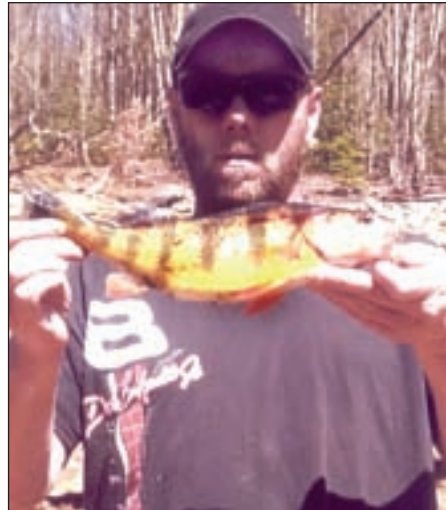
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Scott Hoover, from Nettie, caught a 1 pound, 2 oz. yellow perch.



Clyde Pruitt landed a citation white crappie at R.D. Bailey Lake.

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Is this a piebald turkey? Jeff Probst bagged this unusual gobbler. *Photo courtesy of Anderson Outdoors in Buckhannon.*



Josh Bolar hooked a 5.8 pound largemouth at Bluestone Lake. *Photo courtesy of PC Bait & Tackle in Hinton.*



Fishing for musky for his first time, Jack Fox, landed this nice one on his third cast. *Photo courtesy of Outback Jack's in Coolville, Ohio.*



Wendell Walker shot a great 13 point whitetail.

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Archery In The Schools Training

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources Wildlife Resources Section (DNR) will hold its next

instructor training for the Archery in the Schools (AIS) Program July 8 and 9, 2014, at Pipestem Resort State Park, according to Krista Snodgrass, program coordinator.

The AIS Program has become DNR’s largest-growing educational program. Since its inception in 2004, nearly 90,000 students have been introduced to archery as part of their physical education (PE) classes in more than 300 West Virginia schools. The program teaches Olympic-style target archery in both public and private schools, grades 4 through 12.

“We are very excited to be holding our next training at Pipestem Resort State Park,” said Snodgrass. “When possible, we like to provide trainings at our state parks and Pipestem is a perfect venue for PE teachers, coaches, and others wanting to get their schools involved in the AIS Program.”

“In order for schools to participate in the AIS Program, they must continue to the next page



Spring fishing has been successful on the Niagara River. *Photo courtesy of Sparky's Charters in NY..*

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first have a certified instructor, preferably a PE instructor or coach who will introduce as many kids as possible to the joys of target archery," said Snodgrass. "DNR has about four trainings a year and, because class size is limited to 25, training slots fill quickly. As an added incentive, teachers taking this training may be eligible to receive Continuing Education Hours (CEHs), provided they submit their paperwork to their principal before the end of the school year."

To ensure a training slot, anyone interested in getting a school involved in the program is encouraged to apply as soon as possible, before the July 1 deadline. The training costs \$25 for school employees and \$50 for non-school employees. This fee will be paid to WVDNR " Archery in the Schools Program (via check, money order or exact currency only) during the first morning of the training.

Registration for the AIS training at Pipestem Resort State Park is available online at <http://naspbai.org/ClassSearch.aspx?country=US&state=WV>. For information on the AIS Program, please call Krista Snodgrass at 304-558-2771; email Krista.R.Snodgrass@wv.gov or visit the DNR's AIS website at www.wvdnr.gov/archery.

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It's Topwater Time For Bass

By Edwin Evers

Now that the spawn is mostly over in the Deep South (yes, I know there are still some spawning bass out there), it's a great time to pull out your favorite topwater baits and enjoy some fantastic fishing.

One of my favorite patterns at this time of year is to throw topwater baits around boat docks. Bluegill and spawning shad gather around docks at this time of year, and the topwater fishing can be amazing for a few weeks!

My favorite topwater baits are the Megabass X Pod (a walking-type bait), X-Plose (a prop bait), and Pop X (a popper), the Zoom Horny Toad and a conventional buzzbait. What I throw depends on the conditions and cover I encounter, but it's common for me to have all five tied on at the same time — maybe even some additional variations in different colors and sizes.

The best colors can vary from

fishery to fishery, but you'll be in the ballpark with shad and bluegill patterns. Just put these baits around boat dock posts, next to the foam floats, inside the slips and up along the walkways and nudge them to life. You can cover a lot of water with the Horny Toad and buzzbait and work them through cover without too many hang ups.

Growing up on Lake Texoma, I learned a lot about fishing topwaters at this time of year that still serves me well. When the bite was on, my buddies and I used to say that the bass were "foaming at the mouth." It meant that they were feeding around the foam floats that

continue to the next page



Greg Riddle shot a 161 class buck. Photo courtesy of Holbert's Store in Big Bend.

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Jason Gordon landed a 5.88 pound rainbow trout.

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Swim jigs and spinnerbaits will catch these bass, too, and I recommend you have those baits ready to go just in case the bass won't eat topwaters, but you'll have more fun if you can catch them on top.

One of the best things about this pattern is that it usually works all day long — not just at dawn and dusk.

When I'm casting topwaters around boat docks for postspawn bass, I'm usually using a 7-foot medium action Bass Pro Shops Johnny Morris CarbonLite Trigger rod. It has great tip action for making accurate casts, and it's forgiving enough that I hook just about all of the bass that hit my baits.

My reel is the Bass Pro Shops Pro Qualifier or Johnny Morris Signature Series baitcaster with a 7.1:1 gear ratio. The fast reel helps me keep up with bass that head straight for the boat and to hurry the bait in for another cast.

The line I use depends on the bait I'm throwing. For the X Pod, Horny Toad and buzzbait, I like Bass Pro Shops XPS 8 in 30- or 50-pound test. You can easily get away with the heavy line because you're working these baits a little faster and the line is not laying on the water, where the bass could get a good look at it.

continue to the next page

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Ken Gibson, from Wharton, bagged a 10 point in Boone Co..



Daniel Gibson went to Boone Co. for a nice 11 point buck.

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For the X-Plose, I like braid, too, but tie on a short length of 17-pound test Bass Pro Shops Signature Series Monofilament that connects directly to the prop bait. If you don't use the mono leader, the bait can run over your braid and tangle in the prop blades.

For the Pop X, I use Signature Series mono in 12- or 14-pound test. It's one of the few techniques where I still use regular monofilament. You need the mono here because it floats (unlike fluorocarbon) and it's almost invisible (unlike braid).

Setting the hook on these baits is easy. I use a side sweep to drive the hooks home and recommend you do the same. The trick with topwaters is to avoid setting the hook too soon and pulling the bait away from the bass. A medium action (rather than heavy or medium heavy) rod will help, but so does training yourself to hesitate for just a moment before you sweep.

And don't get in a hurry trying to put the fish in the boat. That'll cost you a lot of topwater bass. With tre-

bles, you don't get the same hook penetration you have with single-hook baits. Take it easy fighting the fish you hook on trebles and you'll land a lot more of them.

A lot of my favorite bass fishing memories came from this topwater boat dock pattern. Back on Texoma when I was a teenager, a buddy and I were working our way through a bunch of big marina slips casting topwaters and catching bass in almost every one of them.

We pulled up to a giant yacht in a slip — probably 50 feet long — and I must have gotten distracted thinking about that boat because my cast missed pretty badly and hit the hull of the boat ... hard!



Laird Ruble, from Williamstown, went to New Zealand for this huge red stag

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I was winding in to make another cast when the yacht owner stuck his head out and started to yell at me. He had just gotten started when he recognized me — and I recognized him. It was my boss!

Back then I was a clerk at a convenience store he owned. Luckily, I was one of his more conscientious employees, so he stopped yelling and said, "Oh ... Edwin. How's the fishing?"

I had no idea it was his boat.

There sure were a lot of fish around it!

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DNR Seeks Help Locating Whip-Poor-Wills

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. – The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources needs help in locating whip-poor-wills, according to Curtis I. Taylor, chief of the DNR Wildlife Resources Section.

“If you see or hear whip-poor-wills in West Virginia between the dates of May 10 and July 31, 2014, please email DNR Wildlife Resources Section biologist Rich Bailey at richard.s.bailey@wv.gov,” Taylor said. “Include the date and location, being very specific; where you saw or heard the bird; your name and phone number; and whether you saw or heard the bird.”

The whip-poor-will is a gray, black and brown bird with a black throat. It is well-camouflaged and is easier to hear than to see. Its namesake song is a loud, rhythmic “whip-poor-will,” which it sings repeatedly at night.

“Recent Breeding Bird Survey data indicate significant population

declines of this bird in nearby states and your observations will enable us to get a better sense of their population status in West Virginia,” Bailey said.

The Wildlife Resources Section is also interested in discovering locations of barn owls and bald eagle

nest. Anyone who sees or hears either of these species is asked to email Bailey with the same information as for the whip-poor-will. Barn owls have a distinctive white, heart-shaped face and a variety of unique calls, including clicks, hisses, grunts and screams.

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Long time angler, John Oesterle, had his line stretched for around 15 minutes by a 36" flathead. The Parkersburg native was using a spinnerbait.



Ralph Cale landed a 7 pound, 6 oz. largemouth in a pond.



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Danny Warden caught a 9 pound bass at Stonewall Jackson Lake.



Rebekah West, from Weston, hooked an 8 1/2 pound largemouth at Stonewall Jackson last fall.



Deb Foreman shot her 1st turkey this year. Photo courtesy of Wabash Trading Post in West Union.

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Bill Buckhammer, from Weston, landed a 27" rainbow trout.



Joshua Bolar, from Jumping Branch, hooked a large bass.



Jimmy Walton, from Mt. Nebo, caught a large golden trout.

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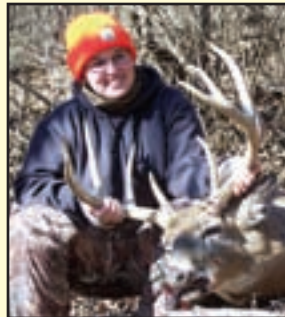
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Mark Davis: Chasing History

With five straight Bassmaster Elite Series finishes in the top four, Mark Davis is on a streak of historic proportion. Though two other anglers have racked up longer stretches of Top 12 finishes (Skeet Reese and Aaron Martens), no one has put together anything quite so impressive ... at least not recently. You have to go back a ways to find a run like this.

Here are some of the best tournament streaks in B.A.S.S. history. Not surprisingly, they were accomplished by some of the greatest an-



Adam Rollyson, from Sutton, hooked a 4.05 pound brook trout.

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glers the sport has ever seen. You don't put together streaks like this through luck.

Kevin VanDam

KVD's career has been full of impressive streaks — back-to-back Bassmaster Classic wins, four straight Toyota Bassmaster Angler



Shawn Ramey caught a nice musky. Photo courtesy of Jarrett's Bait in Elizabeth.

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of the Year titles, 29 consecutive in-the-money finishes, 57 straight competition days with limits. I could go on, but you get the idea.

In 2010 and '11, KVD posted a run of six straight Elite events where he never finished lower than sixth, including a Classic win. But this stretch includes two "postseason" events where the field was just a dozen anglers. So, that's very strong, but maybe not as strong as

VanDam's best Elite-only run came in 2008 (on the way to the first of four straight AOY titles). That year he posted four straight events where he was never worse than eighth. It ended with a win on Kentucky Lake.

In 2006, he put together four events (three Elites and a "Major") where he was never worse than

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ninth.

For me, the greatest tournament streak of KVD's career came in 2005-06. That's when he rattled off 10 straight tournaments where he was never worse than 10th. It included a couple of Classics (47



David Plumley got a 21 pound gobbler in Wyoming County.

and 51 anglers, respectively), a Busch Shootout (13) and four Elite 50s (50 each). That's a lot of small fields, but they were star-studded. This was also the stretch where he notched three straight B.A.S.S. wins (two Elite 50s and the 2005 Classic).

He did about the same thing in 2004-05 — seven events where he was never worse than 12th, including four Elite 50s, a Busch Shoot-

out and a Classic. Impressive, but almost exclusively against small fields.

If you want to look at larger field sizes, VanDam's best string might be in 1999 and 2000 when he posted four straight tournaments where he was never worse than fifth. Those included a couple of Top 150s (a precursor to the Elite Series) with fields of 156 each and two Invita-

continue to the next page



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tionals (what B.A.S.S. used to call the Opens) with fields of over 300. In fact, he won the New York Invitational on the St. Lawrence River against one of the biggest fields in B.A.S.S. history — 330 anglers.

Bill Dance

As bass fishing's first star, Bill Dance certainly had more than his share of epic accomplishments. In fact, right out of the gate he gave some performances that looked like they might never be equaled. In his first seven tournaments, he was never worse than seventh, and he won three of them and was runner-up in two.

From 1970 into '72 he put together seven more events where he was never worse than eighth, including three more wins. Then, in 1976-77, he had six more where he ranged

from second to ninth. Who knows what he might have done without the distractions of his television show, which he eventually chose over his career on the Tournament Trail.

Roland Martin

Martin was another guy who started strong, though he came along a couple of years after Dance. In his first three B.A.S.S. events, Martin won once and finished second twice ... but he was just getting warmed up.

Still in his rookie season (1970), Martin went on a tear that will almost certainly never be matched in professional bass fishing. In 20 tournaments, he never finished worse than 14th — and that was in

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the '72 Classic. If you take Classics out of the mix (and that's what we have to do to give Mark Davis his five great consecutive events since he was 43rd in this year's Classic), Martin finished in the top eight in 18 straight events.

B.A.S.S.

The don't call him the Great American Fisherman for nothing!

Here's how those 18 shook out:

- 1st place - 6
- 2nd place - 6
- 3rd place - 1
- 4th place - 2
- 5th place - 2

So, 17 of the 18 were top five finishes — continue to the next page



Rachel Ruble, from Williamstown, caught a nice Ohio River catfish.

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ishes and two thirds of them were top two. I'm not going out on much of a limb here to say that will never ... never ... never be matched.

But did Martin ever put together five straight events without finishing lower than fourth — like Davis has just done?

The answer, not surprisingly, is yes. After all, Martin dominated the sport like no one before or since. Within that stretch of 18 great tournaments, he put together a stretch of five straight in the top four (just like Davis), including three wins.

But the streak that should knock your socks off is this eight tournament stretch (nine, if you count the Bassmaster Classic)

Even if you throw out the Classic and its small field (24), that's an incredible run and the most dominant in B.A.S.S. history. To put it in perspective, Mark Davis is having a fantastic run, and he's just over halfway to what Martin did.

Of course, Martin's most celebrated run was his three straight B.A.S.S. wins in 1980 and '81. They came against fields of 264 or more and followed his second place finish in the '80 Classic. The Man of the Moment

By the way, I checked all the other usual suspects that you might think of when considering great tournament runs — Rick Clunn, Larry Nixon, Jimmy Houston, Hank

Parker and plenty of others — but none had stretches to compare with what Davis is doing now.

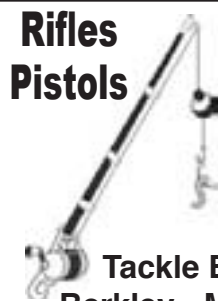
Davis has already accomplished almost all there is to do as a professional. He has three AOY titles and a Bassmaster Classic win. He's won well over \$1 million in B.A.S.S. prize money, caught more than 100 pounds in a tournament and generally put his stamp on the sport.

What he hasn't done — what no one has ever done, in fact — is win an AOY title after the age of 50. Davis will be nearly 51 when the season ends, and that's a good deal

older than Roland Martin was in 1985 when he took AOY at 45.



Greg Copenhaver, from Hedgesville, caught a 33' carp.



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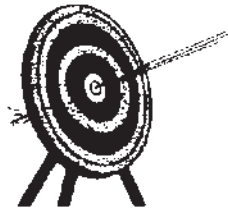


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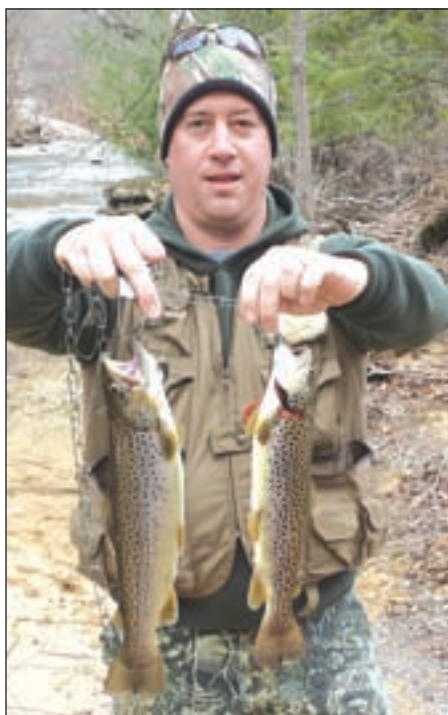


Brian Skidmore went to Stonewall Jackson Lake for a large musky.



Sheila Perry, from Buckhannon, hooked 2 good brown trout.

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Roger Perry, from Buckhannon, landed 2 nice brown trout.

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Jacob Clark, from VA, hooked a 9 pound rainbow trout.

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A 4.2 pound golden trout was caught. *Photo courtesy of Middle Mountain Sporting Goods in Elkins.*



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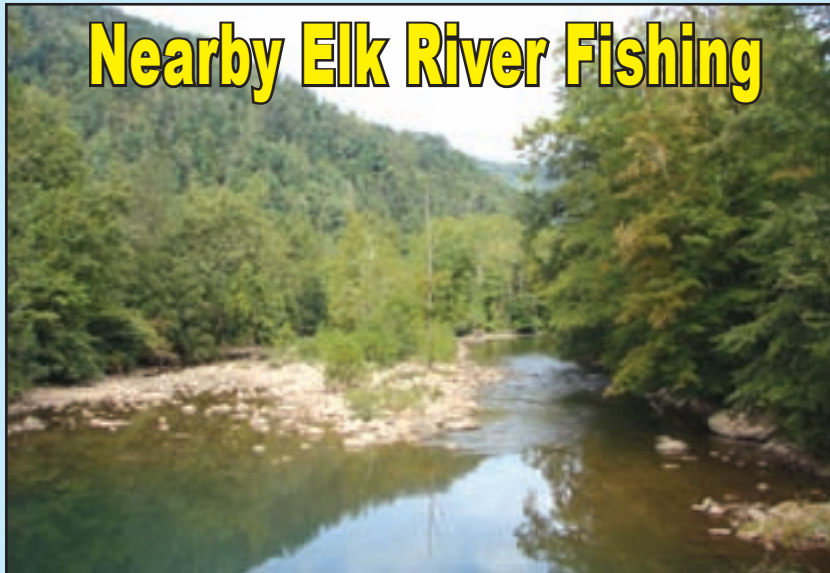
A 5.88 pound rainbow trout was brought in. *Photo courtesy of Middle Mountain Sporting Goods in Elkins.*



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Jacob Alkire landed a 52 pound catfish. Photo courtesy of Catfish Paradise near Marietta, Ohio.



Kenny Short hooked a big bass. Photo courtesy of Anderson Outdoors in Buckhannon.



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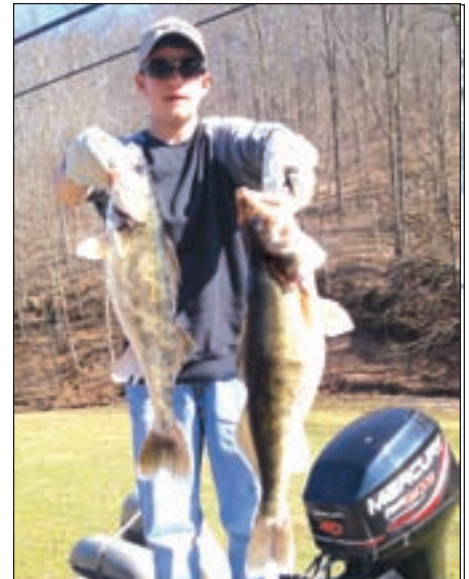
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Jarette Allender, from Pennsboro, hooked 2 nice walleye.

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Hank Parker Spinnerbait Tips

It's no secret I love to fish a spinnerbait. I'm convinced it's second only to the worm in terms of versatility and productivity.

Not everyone agrees. People tell me they never catch fish on a spinnerbait, even though they've tried slow rolling it along drop-offs and crashing it through brush tops. For those with a similar story, perhaps you're using the wrong spinnerbait design or not fishing it where bass are. Here are 10 tips guaranteed to help make you be more successful.

1. Keep it simple. Rig a baitcasting outfit with 17-pound-test line, tie on a 3/4-ounce spinnerbait and cast around the thickest cover. The chances of snagging a lure are greater, but so are the chances of catching fish.

Never let the spinnerbait sink



James Burchett, from Huntington, hooked a 6 1/2 pound walleye.

out of sight. Jimmy Houston, one of the best spinnerbait fishermen I know, keeps his lure in sight 99 percent of the time. This will help you see strikes and learn to catch bass on a spinnerbait. Also, avoid setting the hook when you see the fish strike. Bass will hold a spinnerbait for a long time, so don't jerk until the fish is felt.

2. Blade selection. Indiana blades offer a good compromise between willow-leaf and Colorado designs. The Colorado creates a lot of vibration, while the willow-leaf produces a lot of flash. The Indiana has some of both without overdoing it. There are times, however, when a lure needs more vibration and flash – in dirty water or over thick vegetation. The Colorado will attract stubborn fish to the lure, while the willow-leaf retrieves better through grass.

3. Tandem vs. single spin. A single spin may produce more vibration, but the tandem helps ensure at least one blade spins continuously when banging brush. If a single-spin
continue to the next page

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Eric Files, from Martinsburg, caught a 5.53 pound largemouth.

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blade stops spinning, the lure lays on its side and hangs up. To keep it relatively snag-free, the spinner-bait must be running upright so the wire arm protects the hook. The tandem not only produces more flash, it also can be retrieved more slowly because the two blades provide more lift.

Opt for a single blade when the lure needs to fall. For example, if I want to drop the lure along stumps, docks or pilings, I prefer a single, Colorado blade; it rotates seductively when fished on the fall.

4. Lure color. I prefer white in clear water during sunny days; chartreuse and white for dirty water and sunny days; blue and/or chartreuse for clear water on overcast days; chartreuse in dirty water on overcast days and bright colors in muddy water regardless of sky conditions.

5. Vibration. Bigger blades produce more vibration, which is good in some situations. If wind or current has stirred the water, increase the vibration and flash. If it's calm, try smaller blades with less flash. It's easy to spook fish in shallow water by throwing big, noisy lures. However, when fishing brush tops
continue to the next page

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in 10 to 15 feet of water, big flashy baits are best.

6. Dressings. I always use a 3-inch plastic trailer. Pork rind will work, but it can discolor whereas plastic trailers remain the same all day. Skirts can make a difference, too. I prefer split-rubber skirts over living-rubber. Always put the skirt on backward; it gives the lure more lift.

I avoid trailer hooks because they prohibit working thick brush – where the fish are. The extra hook simply causes the lure to snag more often.

7. Big baits. A 1-ounce spinnerbait is my favorite for slowly winding the lure over the top of deep



Dallas Pigott caught a musky. Photo courtesy of Jarrett's Bait in Elizabeth.

vegetation, down river ledges or along large logs in deep water.

8. Wire arm. My spinnerbaits are built with 32nd-grade wire, a small wire that creates more vibration. Also, the flexibility of small wire reduces the number of fish lost.

9. Weather conditions. Low-light days are good spinnerbait days, but the opposite can be true, too. Sunny days push bass under logs and into thick cover, where a spinnerbait will call them out.

Wind can make a difference, too. If you're catching bass on worms and the wind picks up, switch to a spinnerbait. Chances are you'll not only catch fish, but bigger ones, too.

10. Location. Cover is the key when selecting a location for this lure. In shallow water swim it through brush, or best of all, along laying logs that angle into deep water. Retrieve the lure slowly through deeper branches turning the handle just fast enough to keep the line tight. Keep the lure near structure.

The spinnerbait will catch fish in most waters and under any condition, providing the angler is consistent and selects the right lure for a

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Joseph Murphy caught a 21 1/4" drum. Photo courtesy of Crossroads General Store near Newark.

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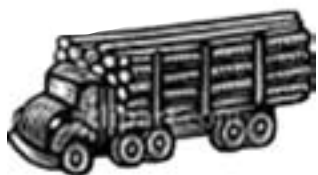
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Citations For Trout Violations

FARMINGTON, W.Va. - Two residents of Marion County were charged with and have pleaded guilty to violations of the state's trout fishing laws. A months-long investigation by officers of the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Section resulted March 19, 2014, in the

discovery of 321 trout at the residence of Michael Earl Fetty, age 70, and Tammy K. Fetty, age 46 of Margaret Road, Wallace, W.Va. The investigation determined that the Fettys would, on nearly a daily basis, fish Curtisville Lake and Huey Run Lake, both located in Marion County, where they would catch and keep varying amounts of trout.

The Fettys would transport their catch back to their residence where they would clean and wrap the trout and then place them in a freezer. Seventy-five trout from the winter/spring of 2012 were discovered along with 90 trout from the winter/spring of 2013 and 156 trout from 2014, including 12 trout the Fettys had in their possession when approached by a Natural Resources Police Officer at Curtisville Lake March 19, 2014.

Both Fettys were issued citations (summons) for Exceeding Possession Limit of Trout and Conspiracy to violate Chapter 20 of the West

Virginia State Code (wildlife law) for a total of two charges each.

On April 2, 2014, the Fettys appeared in the Harrison County Magistrate Court and entered guilty pleas to all charges. For each individual the presiding magistrate charged \$160.25 in court costs on

continue to the next page



Matthew Richmond bagged a nice gobbler. Photo courtesy of PC Bait & Tackle in Hinton.



Larry Curry, from Franklin, hooked an 8 1/2 pound rainbow trout.

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on each citation for a total of \$320.50; a fine of \$20 on each citation for a total of \$40; and \$300 in replacement costs. In summary, the total amount imposed in court costs, fines and replacement fees was \$660.50 for each of the Fetys.

Fishermen are reminded that the daily Creel Limit for trout (total number of trout that can be caught and kept per day) is six and the possession limit for trout (total number of trout that can be possessed by one individual) is 12.



Wendall Walker caught a big musky.



Ralph Huffman brought in a turkey.
Photo courtesy of PC Bait in Hinton.



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