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Issue 249 Nov./Dec. 2015



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Magazine

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Cover Photo

Archery and crossbow season has been successful so far this year.

Hunting in Randolph County, Case Reckart, from Elkins used a bow for this great buck. This 15 year old's buck scored 150 7/8 and will make Pope and Young.

Rember that this magazine now takes in TEXT photos. You can send your 2015 pics to 304-482-7217

Photo courtesy of Re-Creations Taxidermy Studio in Elkins.

Mast Survey And Outlook

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. - The 2015 "Mast Survey and Hunting Outlook" is available on the Division of Natural Resources' website and at DNR offices across the state, according to Paul Johansen, Chief of the Division of Natural Resources Wildlife Resources Section. Since 1971, the Wildlife Resources Section, in cooperation with volunteers from numerous other agencies, has conducted a fall mast survey to determine the abundance of mast produced by 18 species of trees and shrubs.

"The availability of fall foods has significant impacts on wildlife populations and harvests," said Johansen. "Our biologists have used the mast survey data to demon-



A nice bow buck was checked in.



strate a strong correlation between mast conditions and deer, bear and turkey harvests. In addition to the impacts on harvests, the amount of food available each year can affect the reproductive success of numerous species which will affect population sizes in following years."

Production of acorns is significantly less than in 2014 and will have noticeable effects on the 2015–2016 hunting seasons. However, hickory, walnut, and beech produced mast well above the 44-year average. Considering all 18 species of trees and shrubs surveyed, food conditions are slightly above the long-term average.

"It is very important for hunters to scout and consider the type and amount of food available in the areas that they hunt," added Johansen. Hunters can find a wealth of facts in the 'Mast Survey and Hunting Outlook' and it should provide them valuable information before heading into the field."

Copies of the 2015 Mast Survey and Hunting Outlook may be found on the DNR website at www.wvd-nr.gov under "Hunting." Information analyzing mast conditions and wildlife harvests also is available on the website.



Bobby Mitchell hooked a Stone-wall Jackson Lake musky.

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Caleb Wine hooked a 4 pound bass at Burnsville Lake.



Tree Stand Safety

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. – November is a big month for hunters, and the Division of Natural Resources (DNR) reminds hunters that safety is the most important part of a successful season. This especially applies to the use of tree stands.

Tree stands can be dangerous if they are used incorrectly or carelessly. Nationally, one in three hunting injuries involves a tree stand. Falls from tree stands can be caused by a variety of factors, including a weakness in the stand's structure and incorrect installation. Hunters also may fall asleep while on their stands. Tree stands also can be a factor in other hunting incidents, including injury from accidental firing of a loaded firearm while the hunter is climbing to the stand.

"Because tree stand incidents have

become the most common cause of hunter injuries, DNR has been emphasizing tree stand safety in the mandatory hunter education courses we schedule around the state," said Col. Jerry Jenkins, chief of the DNR Law Enforcement Section.

To help prevent accidents, DNR recommends that hunters follow these safety precautions:

Never carry equipment with you while climbing. Use a haul line to continue to the next page

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Starting on September 26, Crossbow hunting will be legal statewide in West Virginia* *Excludes Mingo, Logan, McDowell, and Wyoming Counties.

raise or lower your gear. Make sure guns are unloaded and broad heads are covered before raising or lowering firearms or bows with a haul line.

Since most accidents occur when hunters are climbing up or down a tree, always use a climbing belt. Always use a safety belt or harness when hunting from elevated tree stands. Study manufacturer's recommendations before using any equipment. Never use a rope to replace a safety belt.

Check permanent tree stands every year before hunting from them, and replace any worn or weak lumber.

Read, understand and follow the factory recommended practices and procedures when installing commercial stands. Inspect portable stands for loose nuts and bolts each time they are used.

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Jim Dunlap got a Ritchie Co. bow 8 pont. *Photo courtesy of Crossroads General Store near Newark*.





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Never put all your weight on a single branch. Keep at least one hand and one foot on a secure place when reaching for the next hold.

Climb higher than the stand and step down onto it. Climbing up onto it can dislodge it.

Wear boots with non-skid soles, because steps or platforms can be slippery in rain, sleet or snow.

Tell a dependable person where you're hunting and when you plan on returning. Map your whereabouts and leave a note at camp, at home or in your car so that you can be found.

Don't fall asleep. This is a common cause of accidents. If you get drowsy, move your arms rapidly until you feel alert.

Never wear a ring in any climbing situation. Rings can catch on tree limbs and equipment.

As a precautionary measure, remove all logs, upturned and cutoff saplings, rocks and other obstruc-

tions on the ground below the tree stand.

Use updated equipment. When used properly, newer tree stand equipment is solid, safe and secure. Older models of safety belts offer some protection, but newer safety harnesses offer more protection.

Carry a whistle to call for help continue to the next page

Advertise In The W. Va. Sportsman
Details On Page 3



Ralph Cale hooked a quality small-mouth.





and carry a first-aid kit, flashlight and cellular telephone in a fanny pack.

All persons born on or after Jan. 1, 1975, must first successfully complete a certified hunter education course before purchasing a hunting license. The course is free and takes about 12 hours to complete. Information about the course and a schedule of classes can be found at http://wvdnr.gov/lenforce/education.shtm or by calling 304-558-2784. An online version of the course also is available, although the final test must be taken in person.

(A video showing how to use tree stands safely, produced by the National Shooting Sports Foundation, is available at (www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oc-6o9GaHtY))

Reminder: Hunters should get their permanent DNR ID number before the hunting seasons at wvhunt.com, a DNR office or at any license agent, so they will be ready to check in their harvest with the new electronic game checking system



Jason Miller, from Glenville, bagged a great 12 point.

Venison - Low Fat Alternative Meat

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. - As West Virginia's hunters take to the field, they gain more than just an enjoyable day with family and friends. Many will successfully harvest a deer and fill their freezer with an ample amount of "heart-healthy" venison (deer meat).

"Venison is an excellent alternative to beef for those concerned with healthier choices in their diet," said Paul Johansen, chief of the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources Wildlife Resources Section (DNR). "Venison is a good source of protein for many West Virginia families and has fewer calories and less fat than an equivontinue to the next page

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alent serving of beef."

After the harvest, hunters can ensure their selected venison cuts will be the best quality and flavor if they take a few simple steps in caring for their game. Meat should not be exposed to excessive dirt or moisture and should be cooled as quickly as possible to avoid spoilage.

Hunters are not the only West Virginians who benefit from deer harvested in the state. Over the past two decades, the DNR has sponsored the Hunters Helping the Hungry (HHH) program. Since its inception in 1992, generous hunters and financial contributors have enabled the processing of this highly nutritious meat which has provided more than 1.1 million meals for needy West Virginia families. Visit www.wvdnr.gov/Hunting/HHH. shtm for information about Hunters Helping the Hungry.

For more information about the HHH program or West Virginia's various deer hunting seasons and regulations, consult the 2015-2016

West Virginia Hunting and Trapping Regulations Summary available at all DNR offices and license agents or visit the DNR website at www.wvdnr.gov.

Reminder: Hunters should get their permanent DNR ID number prior to the hunting seasons at wvhunt.com, a DNR office or at any license agent, so they will be ready



Jayden Sandifer hooked a nice bass at Big Ditch Lake. *Photo courtesy of Trapper's Den in Cowen*.

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to check in their animal with the new electronic game checking system.



Caleb Nuzum got a huge bear. *Photo courtesy of Middle Mountain Sporting Goods in Elkins*.

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To This Magazine.
Info On page 38.





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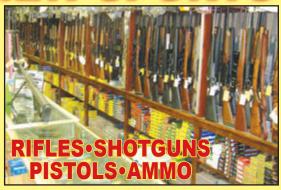
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Zach Arbogast, from Elkins, has a nice buck. *Photo courtesy of Re-Creations Taxidermy Studio in Elkins*



Stephanie & Bow Lemasters used a crossbow. *Photo courtesy of Old & New Sports in Ravenswood.*

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Skye Smith, from Hurricane, harvested a nice black bear in Fayette County.

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Jessi Jones used a bow for a nice buck. Photo courtesy of Crooked Creek Archery in Williamstown.



Chris Newell got a great 11 point. Photo courtesy of Reesse's Country Store in Deerwalk.





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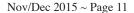
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Electronic Game Checking System

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. -Hunters have harvested almost 900 black bears and more than 5.000 white-tailed deer during the early archery and crossbow seasons that began Sept. 26 and will end Nov. 21, according to Chris Ryan, supervisor of game management services for the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (DNR). These numbers are available this early in the season thanks to DNR's new electronic game checking system that went into effect this year. In the past, game tags had to be collected at the end of the hunting season

and counted by hand, a lengthy and labor-intensive process. With electronic game checking that information is available almost instantly.

Beginning this year, hunters are required to get a permanent DNR identification number which allows them to check in their game from their phones, computers or at one of more than 170 official license agent/checking stations across the state.

"We are very pleased with how hunters are using the system," Ryan said. "The one thing we continue to remind hunters is to get their DNR ID number before they go hunting. This includes youth below the age of 15 who don't need a license. With the youth antlerless deer seasons coming up Oct. 17 and Dec. 26 and 28, all youth hunters must have their own DNR ID number before checking the animal."

To check game electronically before using the phone option, hunters will have to know their unique DNR ID number, which is valid for their lifetime. That number will be printed on the top of the license for those who buy a license each year. Lifetime license holders should call a DNR district office or Elkins or South Charleston office between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. to obtain

continue to the next page



Cody Griffin went to Ohio for this 189 P&Y buck. Photo courtesy of Crooked Creek Archery in Williamstown.



Dakota Jefferson used a crossbow for this Marion Co. 8 point.

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obtain their DNR ID number, which has already been assigned to them.

Landowners and those who don't need a license (such as residents under the age of 15, resident hunters who turned 65 before Jan. 1, 2012, and former prisoners of war) can log on to the system and obtain their number. They also can call or visit a license agent or DNR district office to obtain their number.



Jackson Herron used a crossbow for his Upshur County buck.

"Although hunters no longer have to bring the animal in with them to be checked, what doesn't change is that hunters and trappers still have to follow the time, field tagging and transportation restrictions as listed in the regulations," according to Ryan.

Information about the electronic game checking system and about how to obtain an official DNR ID number can be found in the 2015-2016 West Virginia Hunting and Trapping Regulations Summary available at and DNR office, license agent or by visiting www. wvhunt.com.

www.wvasportsman.net



A nice archery deer was harvested. Photo courtesy of Middle Mountain Sporting Goods in Elkins.







Trappers Must Use Electronic Game Checking

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. - The 2015-2016 trapping season opens Saturday, Nov. 7, 2015. Trappers harvesting beaver, bobcat, fisher and otter are required to obtain their West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (DNR) identification number and use the new electronic game checking system to record their catches within 30 days after the close of the respective season. DNR ID numbers can be obtained from DNR district offices or a hunting and trapping li-

cense agent.

When trappers check in their game using the new system, they will be given a 13-digit game check confirmation number for each animal. That number shall be recorded on a field tag or sheet of paper along with the trapper's name and address, and shall remain attached to each pelt or whole animal until sold, tanned or processed into commercial fur or mounted.

Information provided by hunters and trappers when checking game

is used to monitor harvests and to assist in the future management of these different species in West Virginia. Decisions regarding season length, opening and closing dates, and bag limits rely on accurate data obtained from the electronic game checking system.

Otter trapping season begins Nov. 7. Trappers are again being asked to deliver skinned carcasses to DNR offices. Biological samples collected will assist biologists in

continue to the next page

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wvasport@gmail.com Text - 304-482-7217 making decisions regarding future trapping seasons.

The DNR advises trappers to obtain a CITES seal for each bobcat and otter pelt from animals harvested in West Virginia. The plastic seal is necessary only if the pelts will be shipped out of the state. Federal law requires the seal on all bobcat and otter pelts if they will eventually be shipped to international markets such as those in Canada. The seals must be obtained from the state where the animals were harvested.

CITES stands for the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species. Bobcats and river otters are not endangered species but may be confused with similar-looking species that may be found on the international market. These seals may be obtained from the Elkins Operations Center and any DNR district office. Calling ahead is advised to ensure that personnel authorized to seal pelts will be available.

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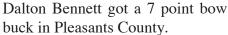


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Andrew D'Angelo got an 8 point bow deer in Barbour County.



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Report Game Violations

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. – It's easy to report hunting or fishing law violations in West Virginia, and those reports are helpful in protecting the state's wildlife.

"Anyone who witnesses or is aware of hunting and fishing law violations can call the closest DNR district office, 911 or provide information on the DNR website," said



John Rush, from Wheeling, got a bow bear in Tyler County.

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Col Jerry Jenkins, chief of the DNR Law Enforcement Section. "We are doing this to ensure a quicker response to the violations reported by the public."

For non-emergency calls or questions, or to report questionable hunting or fishing activity, telephone calls should be made directly to the closest of six DNR district offices during working hours. Violations also may be reported on the DNR website at www.wvdnr.gov/LEnforce/Poachers.shtm.

For emergencies or to report game law violations in progress, calls should go to local 911 centers.

When calling, please provide the following information, if known, to a West Virginia Natural Resources Police Officer: the nature of the violation; the location of the violation; the name and/or description of the violator; a description of any vehicle and license number or boat involved in the violation; any other important information which will assist in apprehending the violator. Reminder: Hunters should get their permanent DNR ID number

continue to the next page

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Donny Martin got a nice Ritchie Co. buck. *Photo courtesy of Crooked Creek Archery in Williamstown*.

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District 2 – Romney 304-822-3551 (Berkeley, Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Jefferson, Mineral, Morgan and Pendleton counties)

District 3 – French Creek 304-924-6211 (Braxton, Clay, Lewis, Nicholas, Pocahontas, Randolph, Upshur and Webster counties)

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(Fayette, Greenbrier, McDowell, Mercer, Monroe, Raleigh, Summers and Wyoming counties)

District 5 – Nitro 304-759-0703 (Boone, Cabell, Kanawha, Lincoln, Logan, Mason, Mingo, Putnam and Wayne counties)

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John Bird used a crossbow for a nice buck. *Photo courtesy of Trapper's Den in Cowen*.



Starlin Cooper used dogs in Raleigh Co. to get this black bear.



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Ron Packer, from Parkersburg, caught a 22 1/2" largemouth bass.



Gary Wendell, from Charleston, caught a 45" Burnsville musky.



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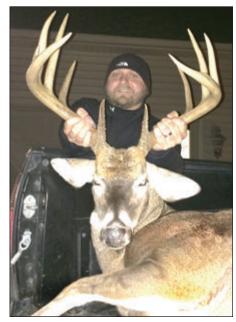
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Mitch Liggett went to Africa for an impala. Photo courtesy of Anderson's Outdoors in Buckhannon.



Josh Perry landed a 5 lb. 15 oz. smallmouth bass on the Kanawha.



Scott Frymier, from Glenville, got an 11 point (157 2/8). Photo courtesy of Mr. Clean in Glenville.



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TEXT Outdoor Fish & Game Pics 304-482-7217



Cody Hicks caught & released a 52" Stonewall Jackson Lakea musky.

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GAME CHECKING



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Hunters in West Virginia are currently experiencing an excellent season so far in 2015. Make no mistake, this is largely because of the very low harvest of 2014. Gun season 2014 opened up with winds of over fifty m.p.h. and a forest with a blanket of acorns. Deer didn't need to move all fall and the harvest plummeted.

Fast forward to this season and we have a herd where many of the bucks are a year older. Many one and a half year old, four and six points lived another year and now carry eight or more points. In one year of a lower harvest, we have transformed our herd into something much better. Their is a noticable increase in better bucks in the



Brandon Wamsley went to the Tygart River for this musky.

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By Cory Booth herd. This upcoming season could be the best in recent history for the hunters of West Virginia.

Now is an excellent time to take it upon yourself to let smaller bucks go. Please don't shoot the four point because you feel as if you don't that your neighbor will do so. It is a fact that if you kill that four point it is has a ZERO percent chance of living to the next hunting season. If you pass on it, the opportunity is still there.

If you have never killed a buck and that four point makes you happy, by all means enjoy the harvest. However, don't be the adult that has hunted for twenty years with a collection of dusty antlers in the garage that has to kill the four point so the neighbor cannot do so.

If you truly love deer meat, a tasty adult doe provides as much meat as a yearling buck. Let that young buck grow while filling the freezer with meat from antlerless deer. If more hunters do this, all of a sudden everyone has more opportunities at larger buck deer. The rut will be more visible with more fighting, chasing, rubs, and even scrapes. It continue to the next page

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Lance Woodford bagged a god buck in Gilmer Co. Photo courtesy of Mr. Clean in Glenville.

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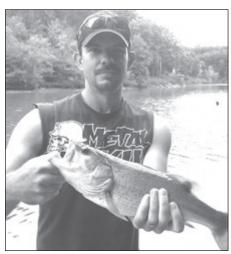
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will help create a better buck to doe ratio and everyone will benefit. No longer will the hunter feel the need to kill a yearling buck because that is all they expect to see. They will have a reasonable chance at seeing bucks of varying ages and sizes.



Young Cole Owens got a buck.



Logan Selvage hooked a big O'Brien Lake largemouth bass.





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Special Antlerless Seasons

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. - The fall three-day special antlerless deer season for youth, persons with disabilities (Class O/OO permit), and senior citizens (holding a Class XS license) is about to get underway, according to the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (DNR). The first segment of this season is one day, Oct. 17, 2015, and the second segment is two days, Dec. 26 and 28, 2015. This season is open on private and public lands in counties having a firearms deer hunting season.

Youth hunters ages 8-17 may participate in this special antlerless deer season. Hunters ages 8-14 must be accompanied by a licensed adult who may not hunt or possess implements for the taking of wildlife. Hunters age 15-17 must comply with all licensing requirements. Senior citizens, 65 years and older, who have purchased their lifetime senior citizen hunting/trapping/ fishing license (Class XS) may also participate in this special antlerless deer season. Hunters participating in this season must wear at least 400 square inches of blaze orange.

The daily bag limit during this special season is one antlerless deer per day for a total of three antlerless deer for the season. These harvested deer do not count toward the hunter's annual deer season bag limit and Class N/NN stamps are not required for this antlerless deer

All harvested deer must be electronically checked within 24 hours of the close of each segment of continue to the next page



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this special split season and before hunting an additional deer during the second segment of this season. Deer can be checked in either electronically at www.wvhunt.com, by calling 1-844-WVCHECK (1-844-982-4325), or by going to a license agent.

"Youth seasons provide parents and mentoring adults the chance to get young hunters out in the field with all the attention being on improving their hunting skills and developing safe habits," said DNR Director Bob Fala. "This special antlerless season allows youth hunters and other eligible hunters the opportunity to avoid some of the competition and pressure that

Jim Carpenter caught an assortment of fish.

may occur during the regular deer seasons."

Refer to the 2015 - 2016 West Virginia Hunting and Trapping Regulations Summary for details on the special split antlerless deer season for Youth, Class Q/QQ and Class XS hunters. Hunters may also contact any DNR district office with questions.

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Squirrel Hunting Tips

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An experienced hunter of any type of animal will, over a period of time, attain a level of proficiency that enables him to be highly successful in the pursuit of his chosen prey; those that track the squirrel are certainly no exception. There are many squirrel hunting techniques which can be passed onto fellow hunters by the seasoned experts, little individual methods that regularly succeed and can make all the difference.

Essentially, there are two basic ways of hunting the squirrels, either sitting around and waiting for them to give away their location, or stalking them, actually identify-



Austin McFee bagged a 12 point in Wood County.

ing a target and following it until it offers a clear shot. In both cases a large amount of patience needs to be displayed. One of the more obvious tips on squirrel hunting is to distinguish the environment in which they are likely to inhabit, which very often will be oak, walnut, or mulberry trees.

Squirrel Hunting Tips

A squirrel can sit motionless for



Ben Leedom caught some trout at Capacon Park.

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hours at a time, so it can be a frustrating time, but perseverance is the key. Look out for chewed nut or pine shells which will be a clear indication of their presence in the vicinity. Listen for their distinctive continue to the next page

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chattering, especially during the seasons when the trees and woodland areas that they frequent are heavily in foliage. During these times it can be practically impossible to see the creatures high up amongst the branches, so it requires a sharp eye to spot the movement of the leaves and a good ear to recognize the snapping of twigs.

Movement through the forest or wood should be done very slowly, maybe only taking three or four steps at a time, before stopping and listening intensely before continuing. It can be a painstaking procedure, but a worthwhile one in the



David Post, from Mineralwells, caught a large brown trout in Arkansas.



Daniel Green caught a 7 pound largemouth on a fly rod.

long run. Learning the squirrel's feeding pattern is crucial, as naturally this gives the hunter the best opportunities. They tend to be very early rises, so daybreak is undoubtedly one of the best periods in which to catch them, together with late afternoon and early evening, when they venture out again.

A hunter should never hurry his shot and should always refrain from attempting to aim at a moving target. They dart about so quickly that it is almost impossible to be accurate. Wait for the moment they allow themselves to be seen stationary, which may only be fleeting, hence the need for patience. Another of the favorite squirrel hunting tricks is to hunt in pairs and try and deceive the animal. One person can circle the tree, noisily disturbing the branches this will cause the hiding squirrel to flee to the other side of the tree, or even jump to a corresponding one. Many inexperienced hunters make some basic mistakes over and over again, often through restlessness,



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which can lead to a lot of frustration. By adopting techniques which have been tried and tested by the more knowledgeable and practiced hunters, you will not only find that you can become more successful, but also that you derive more enjoyment from the pursuit.

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Kelsey Burgess checked in a 325 pound black bear. Photo courtesy of *Middle Mountain Sporting Goods in Elkins*.



Ann See brought in her 2nd black bear of the season. Photo courtesy of *Middle Mountain Sporting Goods in Elkins*.



Brenda Lee got a bow bear. *Photo courtesy of Trapper's Den in Cowen.*



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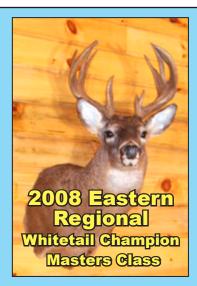
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Brad Liggett went to Africa for a Kudu. *Photo courtesy of Andreson Outdoors in Buckhannon*.



Jim Duckworth, from Waverly, went to Ohio for a 241 lb. 9 point.



Tessie Wells got some squirrels in Wood County.





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Cody Davis caught a 20" golden trout.



Cody Isner went to a preserve in Ohio for this monster. Photo courtesy of Crooked Crreek Archery in Williamstown.

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Spinnerbaits Work

You know, they say that quality never goes out of style, but neither does a dependable bait. It seems like as the number of different types of baits increases, the spinnerbait has seen some decline in popularity. But let me tell you that there is no lack in effectiveness.

Back in the day, you had a crankbait, a spinnerbait a jig and some kind of worm. Now, we have a lot of baits that give you a lot more choices. I think we've become more versatile, but I always have a spinnerbait tied on in my boat —either on the deck or in the rod locker -no matter where we go.

As I've mentioned before, fall fishing is all about covering water and there's just not a lot of baits that allow you to do that as effectively as a spinnerbait. If you tie on a crankbait, you're pretty much locked into a certain depth. You can tie on different crankbaits but each time, you're mostly limited to how deep that bait is made to run.

But I can tie on spinnerbait, and on the same cast, I'm able to change the depth of that bait. A lot of times



Noah Ice caught a nice golden trout at Conway Lake.

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in the fall, I'll throw that bait up on the bank and fish it kind of quickly and then get it out there and slow roll it.

You may come down a log and that bait allows you to do whatever you need to. I've seen the fish's preferences change during the day where at the beginning they want it faster and then they go to wanting it down deeper and then just slow rolling it on the bottom.

The thing I like most about a spinnerbait is that it's a "big fish" bait. My two favorite times of the year to throw a spinnerbait are the



Riley Wise hooked her 1st fish - a bluegill.

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spring and the fall when the water's in that 50-65 degree range. It can be coming up or going down, so we're getting right back into one of my favorite times to throw a spinnerbait.

There are a lot of different spinnerbait styles for you to choose from, but I keep it simple with a few basic styles. The first is a burner style. When I'm smallmouth fishing, I want something with some small willow leaf blades and something with a lot of weight so I can make long casts and something that I can reel fast.

My choice for smallmouth and clear water is a 3/4-ounce Booyah Spinnerbait with No. 4 willow leaf blades. If you go to a spinnerbait that's too small, the faster you reel it, the bait blows out. You gotta have something with some weight to keep it down below the surface.

continue to the next page

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Smallmouth are visual feeders and you want something that's pretty bright —white, chartreuse or a combination of the two. Smallmouth are kind of the opposite of largemouth. With largemouth, I'll try to throw shad colors, but with smallmouth I just try to throw something they can see.

If I fish in some off-color water, or some really cold water —under 60 degrees —I'll go to Colorado blades. That's when I want to slow roll it and really feel that vibration of the blades.

When I go with Colorado blades, I use multiple combinations of sizes. I go from a No. 3 1/2 to 4 1/2 size blade, all the way up to a 4 in the front and a 6 or 7 in the back. And if I'm seeing a lot of big shad, I like waking a spinnerbait with one big Colorado blade.

In semi-clear water that's still pretty warm, I'll use a spinnerbait with a combination of a Colorado and a willow leaf blade.

Now, here's something to consider: In the fall, a lot of lakes are full of leaves. Whenever the wind blows, huge numbers of leaves come falling to the water.



Shawn Ramme used a crossbow for this nice 8 point buck.

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It's hard to throw a crankbait through these leaves, but a spinnerbait is something you can throw and you don't have that much problem with it because it's kind of weedless.

I think when you look at the versatility of a spinnerbait and all the different combinations of size, color and blade selection, you can see why I put so much faith is this bait.

Bobcat Carcasses Needed For Study

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. - The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (DNR) and West Virginia University (WVU) are asking trappers and hunters to donate bobcat carcasses to assist in collecting much-needed data on bobcat populations in the state. The Bobcat Ecology Research Project is in its second and final year of data collection.

Carcasses provide reproductive and age information which will be used to model the state's bobcat population, letting biologists know how the bobcat population is faring, as well as how it will respond to any changes in bag limits and season lengths.

In 2014, 297 bobcat carcasses were collected from trappers and hunters. So far, carcass examinations have indicated a fairly healthy population. Female reproductive tract, stomach content, disease, parasite

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and age structure analyses are still being conducted. Preliminary results should be available this winter and will be posted in the West Virginia Furbearer Management Newsletter on the DNR website at www.wvdnr.gov.

DNR and WVU personnel hope to collect 300 bobcat carcasses during the 2015-16 trapping and hunting seasons. A \$20 gift card of the trapper's or hunter's choice is being

continue to the next page

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offered for each useable carcass. Useable carcasses include those with skulls and all organs intact. Trappers and hunters are asked to freeze carcasses as soon as they are skinned.

Fresh or frozen carcasses may be delivered to any DNR district wildlife office. Contact information for the DNR district wildlife offices can be found inside the front cover of the 2015-2016 Hunting and Trapping Regulations Summary. Trappers and hunters may also contact WVUBobcat@mail.wvu. edu or call 304-293-0050 for more information.

Reminder: Trappers and hunters should get their permanent DNR ID number prior to the trapping and hunting seasons at wvhunt.com, a DNR office or at any license agent, so they will be ready to check in animals with the new electronic game checking system.



Robert Lewis hooked a large Kanwah River flathead catfish.

Disability Roads

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. - Physically-challenged hunters

- Physically-challenged hunters possessing a Class Q/QQ hunting permit may hunt on designated roads throughout the Monongahela National Forest, portions of the George Washington/Jefferson National Forest in West Virginia and on selected wildlife management areas, according to Paul Johansen, chief of the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (DNR) Wildlife Resources Section.

"The designation of these Class Q/QQ roads on national forest lands in West Virginia is a cooperative effort between the U.S. Forest Service and the DNR," Johansen said. "This highly successful program provides hunting access for physically-challenged sportsmen and women. For the past 20 years, these areas have been well received by hunters."

To participate in this program, hunters must possess either a Class Q (resident) or Class QQ (nonresi-



Scott Smith, from Hurricane, caught a 42" red fish this summer.

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dent) permit issued by the DNR. Applications for these permits may be obtained at any DNR office or hunting and fishing license agent. In addition to the Class Q/QQ hunting permit, both resident and nonresident hunters must possess all applicable hunting licenses and stamps. Nonresidents hunting on national forest lands must also possess a National Forest Stamp (Class I).

Hunters with a Class Q/QQ permit must apply in person at the appropriate national forest district office or DNR district office and receive a letter of authorization. This documentation must be in the hunter's possession while hunting on the designated roads in the program.

The Class Q/QQ permit holders may be accompanied by no more than one assistant, at least 16 years continue to the next page

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of age, when hunting within a designated area. The assistant cannot hunt while accompanying the Class Q/QQ permit holder.

Authorized hunters will have access to specific gates via a special lock. While behind the gate, hunters must observe all national forest and/or state wildlife management area regulations and all state hunting regulations.

In addition to the special access areas, Class Q/QQ permit holders may participate in special Class Q/QQ antlerless deer hunts Oct. 17 and Dec. 26 and 28, 2015. This special split, antlerless deer season for Youth, Class Q/QQ and Class XS (Lifetime Senior Citizen) hunters will be held on private land in all counties having a firearms deer hunting season and on all public lands within these counties. The bag limit of one antlerless deer per day will not count toward the hunter's annual deer season bag limit.

The U.S. Forest Service and DNR are committed to providing quality hunting opportunities for physically-challenged hunters and welcome comments and suggestions from participating hunters. For more information concerning access to national forest or wild-

Advertise In The W. Va. Sportsman Details On Page 3

life management area Class Q/QQ roads, contact the U.S. Forest Service (304-636-1800) or DNR (304-637-0245). Information is also available on the DNR's website (www.wvdnr.gov). Specific areas with designated Class Q/QQ roads are listed below.

Class Q/QQ roads available:

Cheat Ranger District (304-478-3251)

Forest Road #933 Godwin Road – U.S. Route 219 south from Parsons, near the community of Moore. Turn north onto F.R. 933. Gated portion starts on left at top of ridge.

#973 – Brushy Fork – From Parsons, take Route 17 north to Route 21 west, then west onto Route 8. FR 973 is on the left.

#153 / 153A -- Five Lick - Take U.S. 33 east from Elkins to Wymer. Turn north onto State Route 10 and drive about 2.5 miles. Turn



Kate Buckbee, from Ravenswood, used a crossbow for an 8 point.

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left onto Forest Road 153. Potomac Ranger District (304-257-4488)

#814 Back Ridge – Drive west of Circleville on State Route 28 for 5.8 miles. Turn right on S.R. 28/10 and drive for 3.2 miles. Road 814 is on the left.

Greenbrier Ranger District (304continue to the next page

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#385 / 183B Little Beech Mountain – From Elkins, take U.S. 33 east approximately 10 miles to State Route 27 at Alpena. Turn right on S.R. 27 and go about 12 miles to Glady. Turn left onto S.R. 22 and go about 3 miles to F.R. 385 on the right.

#224 Span Oak - From Bartow, take US. 250 east approx. 2 miles to State Rt. 28. Turn left on Rt. 28 and go about 2 miles, turn left on FR 14 (near 4-H Camp above Thornwood), go approx. 3.8 miles, turn left on S.R. 250/4 and go about 4 miles to FR 224 on the right.

Marlinton Ranger District (304-799-4334)

#300 Marlin Mountain – From Marlinton, drive east on State Route 39 for 4 miles. Turn left onto S.R. 28. Drive 5 miles to F.R. 300 on the left.

#251 Crooked Fork – From Marlinton, take U.S. 219 north approximately 12 miles. F.R. 251 is on the left.

White Sulphur Ranger District (304-536-2144)

#298 Panther Ridge – From White Sulphur Springs, drive north on State Route 92 8.8 miles to S.R. 16, Blue Bend Road. Turn left and bear left at Camp Wood for 3.4 miles to Rocky Run Road. Turn right and drive uphill for 2.3 miles. Turn left onto F.R. 298 to gate just beyond the top of the hill.

#882 Bear Track – From White Sulphur Springs, drive north on State Route 92 14.8 miles to S.R. 14, Lake Sherwood Road. Turn right and drive 3.7 miles to Rucker Gap Road. Turn right and drive uphill 0.8 miles. Turn left on F.R. 882. Gauley Ranger District (304-846-2695)

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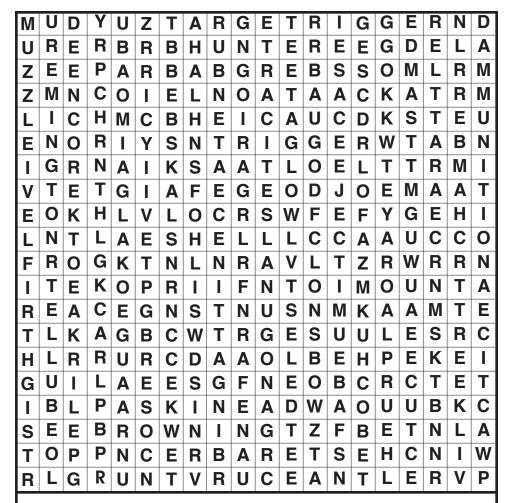
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