

Mississippi

SPORTSMAN[®]

AUGUST 2019

TACTICS FOR SUMMER SLABS

TARGET BARNETT'S
AUGUST BASS

LATE-SUMMER
BREAM TIPS

PRESEASON
DEER
CHECKLIST

TROUT BAIT:
WHAT WORKED BEST?

GO FINESSE
FOR HOT
BASS

FLOUNDER
TRIPLE
PLAY



\$2.99 AUGUST 2019



www.MS-SPORTSMAN.com



Buck Busters Seed Company

Buck Busters Seed Company
5152 Highway 84
Vidalia, Louisiana 71373

"The most complete and cost-effective seed mix on the market!"

Serving deer hunters in the Southeast since 1999



Basic Fall Seed Mix

A mixture of 8 species of winter forage that deer love

36% Protein

1 bag plants 1 acre



Premium Fall Mix

Provides up to 12 months forage production
Same as our Basic Mix with Chicory and Arrowleaf Clover added

84% TDN

For more information or to find a dealer near you
Visit buckbustersseedcompany.com or Call (318) 336-3503

REED'S METALS, INC.

Features & Benefits

Up to 45-year written warranty
Weather-Resistant
Durable
Fast, Free Estimates
Order Today, Pick Up Today!
Pre-engineered Metal Buildings
delivered in 4-6 weeks
Pole Barns delivered in 10 days

How do you save at Reed's Metals?

Shingles must be replaced every 10-15 years.
A metal roof will likely be the last roof you ever install.
We are the manufacturer - no middle man to mark up the prices!

REEDSMETALS.COM



FLORIDA
BUILDING
CODE 2010
APPROVED
FL #12725-R1



METAL ROOFING
ALLIANCE
MEMBER



ACCREDITED
Metal Building Systems
AC 472

Metal Roofing

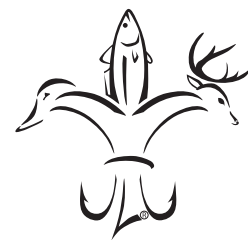


Metal Buildings



Pole Barns





Mississippi
SPORTSMAN
www.MS-SPORTSMAN.com



15
THERMO-SLABS

32
FINESSE FISHING
HOT WEATHER BASS

Mississippi
CONTENTS

Volume 21 | Number 8 | August 2019

FEATURES:

15 THERMO-SLABS

Find the thermocline on your favorite crappie lake and open up some great, hot-weather fishing. Here's how....

>>> By Bobby Cleveland

22 FLOUNDER TRIPLE PLAY

Find a ditch, a dock and an oyster bed — all in the same immediate area — and you've got the makings of a great place to catch a late-summer flounder.

>>> By Dan Kibler

26 BREAM: BETTER LATE THAN NEVER

The last bream spawn for Mississippi's summer is approaching. Here's how to take advantage of the Magnolia State's favorite sunfish.

>>> By David Hawkins

32 FINESSE HOT WEATHER BASS

Try going small to coax bites out of bass when the summer heat bears down.

>>> By Mike Giles

43 WHITETAIL CHECKLIST

Mississippi's deer season is still a ways off, but it's time to start getting things lined up for the promise of opening day.

>>> By David Hawkins

53 LIFE IN THE FAST LANE

Understanding fish metabolism for better summertime speckled trout fishing .

>>> By Jon Miller

OUTDOOR UPDATE:

7 FLOODING PROBLEMS

8 ALGAE BLOOM

FIELD NOTES:

68 Crappie after dark

69 Slinking up on catfish

70 Snell your hooks

71 Toothpick tricks

COLUMNS:

38 LUNKER LINES By Paul Elias

40 GETTIN' FRESH By Hal Schramm

50 STICKS & STRINGS By Sammy Romano

60 SPECIES SPOTLIGHT By Brian Cope

62 LURE REVIEW By Don Shoopman

64 SPECKLED TRUTH By Chris Bush

66 COOKING ON THE WILD SIDE

By Jerry Dilsaver

DEPARTMENTS:

12 Hunting/Fishing Scrapbook

72 Fishing Regulations

74 Astro Tables

74 Advertiser Index

ON THE COVER:



Don't put your crappie rods and jigs away just because the mercury has gone off the charts. There are plenty of slabs to be caught and ways to catch them. Photo by Dan Kibler.

PUBLISHER: Tony Taylor

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR: Bobby Cleveland
bobbyc7754@yahoo.com, 601.506.0739

MANAGING EDITOR: Dan Kibler

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT: Alicia LaFont

PRODUCTION DIRECTOR: Jeff Caldwell

ASSISTANT PRODUCTION MANAGER:
Desiree P. Lewis

ART DIRECTOR: Kevin Orgeron

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS:
Jeff Cashio, Alissa Zeringue

CONTROLLER: Juanita Guidry

SALES DIRECTOR: Jay Forrest
225.278.0258/jayf@lasmag.com

ADVERTISING SALES:

Mark Hilzim (National Sales), Mark Boyd, Asa Faulkner, Peter Church, Burton Angelle, John Cain and Bret Holten

CONTRIBUTORS:

David A. Brown, Andy Crawford, Jerry Dilsaver, Paul Elias, David Hawkins, Bill Garbo, Phillip Gentry, Michael O. Giles, Chris Ginn, Dan Kibler, Tommy Kirkland, Sammy Romano, Hal Schramm and Don Shoopman

CIRCULATION DIRECTOR:

Ricky Naquin 985.859.7744/rickyn@lasmag.com

ADVERTISING INQUIRIES:

Contact Jay Forrest
email: jayf@lasmag.com/225.278.0258

**SUBSCRIPTIONS OR
SUBSCRIPTION ISSUES,
CALL 1-855-371-1546**

Monday thru Friday, 6 am to 11 pm
Saturday & Sunday, 8 am - 5 pm CST

MISSISSIPPI SPORTSMAN is published monthly by Louisiana Publishing, Inc., Allen J. Lottinger, President, 14236 Highway 90, P.O. Box 1199, Boutte, LA 70039. Periodicals postage paid at Boutte, La., and additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to Mississippi Sportsman, P.O. Box 433294, Palm Coast, FL 32143. All rights reserved. Reproduction of contents is strictly prohibited without permission of Mississippi Sportsman. **EDITORIAL:** Mississippi Sportsman uses free-lance writers throughout the state. Call (985) 758-7217 for information on submitting articles and photos. Mississippi Sportsman is not responsible for the loss of queries, manuscripts or other materials.

P.O. Box 1199, Boutte, LA 70039-1199
985.758.7217

Volume 21 | No 8

GO GIANT OR GO HOME



GEORGIA
GIANT

GEORGIABOOT.COM   

G4274 / G4374

Outdoor UPDATE with Bobby Cleveland

August is usually a peak time for chasing redfish on Mississippi's Gulf Coast, and despite the freshwater incursion and blue algae bloom that hit the beaches in July, people were still catching fish and having fun.



Bobby Cleveland has covered sports in Mississippi for over 38 years. A native of Hattiesburg and graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi, Cleveland lives on Ross Barnett Reservoir near Jackson with his wife Pam. He can be reached at bobbyc7754@yahoo.com.



Bobby Cleveland

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS STEALING OUTDOOR HEADLINES

FLOODED SOUTH DELTA, 'FRESH' GULF COAST REMAIN IN HEADLINES

In what continues to be one of the worst environmental years ever for the state of Mississippi, we jump from the frying pan into the fire that is August in the Deep South.

Ouch! Talk about adding insult to injury...

This is especially brutal for thousands of Mississippians in the South Delta who have been battling backwater flooding since January, many without power to produce cool air in their homes.

Meanwhile, on Mississippi's beautiful Gulf Coast, beachgoers, fishermen and resource managers have battled fresh but silted water incursion from the west — Bonnet Carré Spillway diverting Mississippi River water through

Lake Pontchartrain into the Gulf — and an outbreak of blue-green algae that led to medical warnings from water contact and consumption of seafood from the impacted areas.

As bad as it sounds, Magnolia State residents are resilient and can make great lemonade from whatever lemons life has dealt them. Mississippi sportsmen are among them.

While our hearts and minds are with those severely impacted, we still take time to enjoy the outdoor opportunities nature provides us in our beautiful state. August, as hot as it is, is no exception.

This issue of *Mississippi Sportsman* is full of information from our staff of contributors to help you plan your August excursion, whether it be a fun day on the water catching fish or a sweaty day at the hunting camp preparing for the coming deer season.

David Hawkins provides a checklist for deer season preparations, and also has another story on beating bream this late in the fishing season.

Mike Giles discusses the best techniques from experts on finessing bites from what can be finicky largemouth bass in the summer months.

We've also got tips for catching crappie in their deep summer habitats, and finding flounder in the tidal waters of the Gulf Coast. The magazine is also full of regular columns and features that serve two important roles — prepare for outdoor adventures or entertain while kicked back under ceiling fans and air conditioner vents.

Enjoy and let's get outdoors. ■

Gulf coast anglers may not be catching the same fish in the same areas this summer because of freshwater intrusion, but they're making it up with fish like this tripletail.



SOUTH DELTA'S CATASTROPHIC FLOODING AFFECTS WILDLIFE

When you're worried about people's lives and well-being, both certainly being impacted in the catastrophic backwater flooding that has plagued the South Delta for half of this year, it might seem tacky to discuss the flood's impact on outdoor sports.

But understand, hunting and fishing is important to the very people hit hardest by the high water. Not only are hunting and fishing a big part of their lives, both have significant economic impact on their pocketbooks, as well as different communities.

"It has been terrible; it is terrible, and you can't help but worry about how terrible it's going to be in the long term," said Jeff Terry, an avid hunter, fisherman and land manager from Eagle Lake Community about 20 miles north of Vicksburg. "We're seeing wildlife stressed to the limits, from deer to turkey to alligators to ... look the list is long and getting longer.

"The South Delta depends a lot on recreational tourism, from hunting lease fees to fishing trips. We've already been stressed due to CWD (chronic wasting disease) being found in the wild (deer) population, and now we see a lot of them basically starving. The Eagle Lake Community has already lost an entire fishing season on Eagle Lake, as well as Chotard and Albemarle."

Wildlife officials are concerned and have taken a hands-on approach to supplemental feeding of stranded deer, while taking an understandable wait-and-see approach to fish.

"I know one impact I expect to see is the spread of more Asian carp (including the leaping silver carp) in the South Delta lakes," said fisheries biologist Ryan Jones of the Mississippi Department

of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks. "We just don't know right now, and until the water recedes and we can go look, we won't know. It's been six or seven months since we've been able get on the water in that region and we have no clue when we'll be able to."

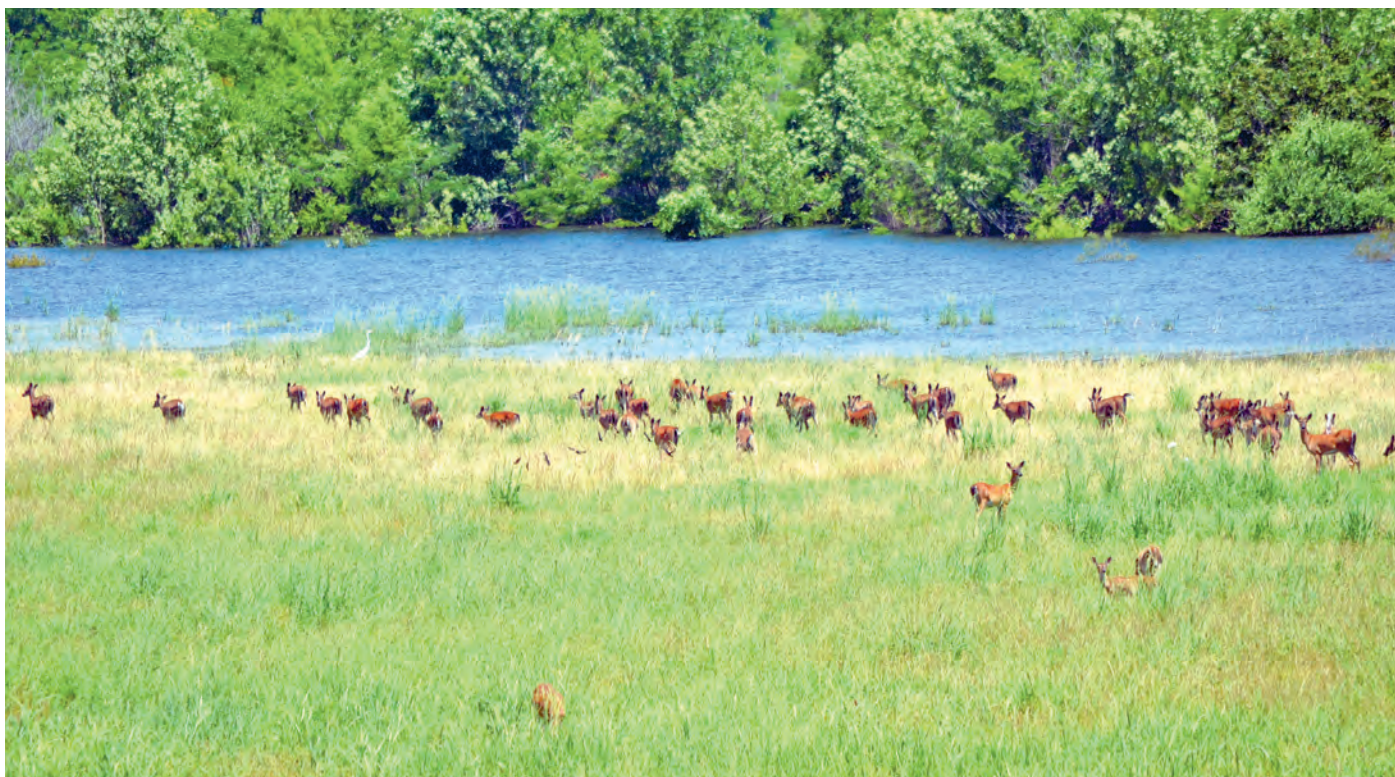
Eagle Lake, which has mostly escaped the carp invasion of past floods, could be vulnerable this year.

"That's just what we need," said Larry Turner, a crappie-fishing enthusiast from Vicksburg who is usually a regular at Eagle Lake. "You can hardly run the river-connected waters now without protective gear, and a lot of our other inland waters like Wolf and Bee lakes near Yazoo City, Lake George over at Sartartia and the Yazoo and Sunflower rivers, have been full of flying carp since the flood of 2011. Eagle Lake was the exception.

"I hope we find a silver lining or two in the aftermath. All these waters in the impacted area have been closed to fishing since the winter, so the pressure has been off the fish. If they stayed home, like Eagle Lake's great crappie staying in Eagle Lake, then boy, it ought to be great when everything returns to normal. At least give us that."

No doubt, the flood's impact on hunting and fishing in the South Delta will be a major story for years to come, but let's not forget about the thousands of our fellow statesmen who are suffering horribly because of this catastrophic event. ■

How will deer in the South Delta be affected by this summer's flooding?



ALGAE HAS GULF COAST IN TURMOIL

Intrusion of polluted freshwater into the Gulf caused a blue-green algae bloom that forced closure of many beaches.

AFFECTED WATERS CLOSE BEACHES

The same root cause of the flooding of the South Delta region — a high Mississippi River — has created issues for people on the Gulf Coast, a couple hundred miles to the south.

“At one point this spring, similar to three of the last five years, we were thinking that releasing river water through Bonnet Carré spillway would benefit our fishing on the Mississippi Coast,” said angler James Carr of Bay St. Louis. “Then, it kept on coming east and became a problem. Later, it became catastrophic, moreso for commercial fishermen and especially the oyster industry. Then came the blue-green algae outbreak, and the coastal waters were closed to swimming and we were warned not to eat fish or seafood from those waters.”

Things went from, as Carr put it, “Yeah, the Bonnet Carré effect is again pushing fish our way,” to “Oh crud, when are they going to shut those darn gates?” only he used much harsher language.

“As a recreational fisherman, I first thought we’d see more speckled trout pushed from Pontchartrain and the marsh over our way from Louisiana,” Carr said. “That has happened a lot in recent years. But this year, they’ve kept the spillway running — and with more gates open for a longer time. We’re seeing the downside.

“The trout that resettled in the Mississippi Sound have been either further east toward Alabama or further offshore south of the barrier islands. I’ve been running about 20 miles further than I normally have to go to find fish. At least out there, the blue-green algae isn’t a problem.”

According to scientists, the blue-green algae bloom occurs in water with low-salinity levels, a problem in Mississippi this year

due to Bonnet Carré releasing so much water.

Scientists at the University of Southern Mississippi’s Gulf Coast Research Laboratory lay the blame of the toxic algae outbreak squarely on the Bonnet Carré Spillway’s extended use. It has pushed polluted floodwaters from the Mississippi River into the Gulf, feeding an outbreak of cyanobacterium, commonly known as blue-green algae. It can cause rashes, diarrhea and vomiting in humans that contact the algae, leading the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality to close all beaches on Mississippi’s main shoreline to swimming. The beaches along the barrier islands were not impacted and remained open.

As you would think, the impact on tourism appears dramatic, although the financial numbers won’t be available for months.

“Eyeballing it, it’s pretty obvious it has hurt bad,” Carr said. “I drove Highway 90 from Waveland east to Pascagoula over the holiday weekend, and you’d see little groups of people here and there on the beaches, but not the hundreds and thousands normally seen over the fourth of July. None of them were in the water. I usually wade-fish off the beaches two or three days a week this time of year, but this year, I have not gone once.

“I’ve done most of my fishing on the south side of the barrier islands, but I started to see (fewer and fewer) fish at Cat Island (the west end of the coast, nearest the source of fresh water) in May and June. I have fished more at Ship and Horn, which requires either trailering my boat over or making longer runs in the water.” ■

Despite flooding and a blue-green algae bloom, Gulf fishermen are still catching plenty of redfish, even though they might be in different areas.



MS CHARTER CAPTAINS: 'WE'RE CATCHING FISH'

One coastal industry hurt by misinformation about the algae bloom and the freshwater incursion has been charter fishing, but most captains say they never quit catching fish.

"Where we were catching them changed, and what we were catching changed, but the action was always good, just like always," said Sonny Schindler of Shore Thing Charters of Bay St. Louis. "Freshwater incursion doesn't affect all species the same. Speckled trout — sure they are very saltwater conscious, and they will leave when salinity drops. You have to move with them.

"Redfish, not so much. They can tolerate a lot of freshwater. They won't up and leave, and the Biloxi Marsh, which is south of the algae but closer to the area impacted by (Bonnet Carré spillway), has produced redfish all through this period. Another species that has been consistent is sharks. People like to catch them."

The big problem, guides agreed, was the what the public knew about the algae bloom. People were slow to book trips, and some cancelled trips already booked due to the warnings about eating fish.

One captain said that the problem was in associating the bloom with the entire Gulf of Mexico, when only the beaches were impacted.

"We don't fish the beach lines," Clay Necaise of OutKast Charters told *The Clarion-Ledger*. "We go out 20 miles to catch fish, and I'm not seeing any (algae) out there."

Schindler said that he has talked to perspective clients about a change in mindset, from "making meat-haul trips to having fun."

With an emphasis on bent rods, he said, putting people on fish is not a problem. There's always something hungry in the Gulf of Mexico.

"Sharks, reds, tripletails, even trout, we can always find some fish," he said. ■

H&H
Since 1959
LURE COMPANY

BIG BALLIN' CORK

A must for Redfish, Speckled Trout, & Snook

- ◆ Ultra Heavy Gauge Titanium
- ◆ Large Acrylic Beads for Maximum Sound
- ◆ Molded Sound Chamber & Base
- ◆ Perfectly Balanced Polished Brass Weight
- ◆ Hi-Vis Colors
- ◆ High Quality Swivels

AVAILABLE IN TITANIUM AND MONOFILAMENT

#1 AND WIDENING THE GAP!

Facebook icon Instagram icon
WWW.HHLURE.COM

The Mississippi Wildlife Extravaganza will have plenty of activities for kids, including archery shooting.

AUGUST BARGAIN 'HUNTING' EXTRAVAGANZA, TAX-FREE WEEKEND ARE ON SCHEDULE

Mississippi hunters have two events in August that can produce bargains when it comes to firearms, bows and related accessories. One of the two even offers some savings for fishermen.

We'll start with that one.

The 33rd annual Mississippi Wildlife Extravaganza will be held Aug. 2-4 at the Trade Mart in Jackson, featuring more than 200 exhibitors offering the latest in hunting and fishing gear, booked trips and other accessories. Obviously, due to timing, it is a hunting-oriented show.

As always, the Mississippi Big Buck Contest will be a highlight of the show, featuring many of the best bucks taken from the 2018-19 season. The show is also an official scoring spot for Magnolia Records, open to all deer taken in Mississippi regardless of season.

In addition to shopping and gawking, sportsmen and women of all ages can be entertained and educated at the main stage. Kids will enjoy many hands-on opportunities. For more information, visit the Mississippi Wildlife Federation online at mswildlife.org.

Second, hunters needing new guns, bows or ammunition can save about 7% on their purchases if they stock up during the three-day "Second Amendment Tax Free Holiday" scheduled for Aug. 30-Sept. 1. Certain purchases will be exempt from state sales tax at hundreds of stores statewide.



For the purposes of this holiday, hunting supplies are defined as archery equipment, firearms, firearm and archery cases, firearm and archery accessories, hearing protection, holsters, belts and slings.

General hunting supplies, such as clothing, shoes, tree stands, calls and dogs/dog food, are not exempt from taxes. For a complete list of exempt and non-exempt items, visit the Mississippi Department of Revenue online at www.dor.ms.gov/Pages/Mississippi-Second-Amendment-Weekend-Guidance.aspx ■

MISSISSIPPI'S ALLIGATOR SEASON OPENS AUG. 30

Mississippi's public-waters alligator season opens at noon on Aug. 30 and will close at noon on Sept. 9, with 960 permits issued to hunters selected in two rounds of drawings in June.

Unfortunately, if you weren't one of the lucky applicants accepted, or a friend of one who was, then you're out of luck this year. But, please keep an eye on *Mississippi Sportsman's* website at ms-sportsman.com for some of the interesting stories that always come from the season.

Alligator season opens the end of August, and should produce some more outstanding — often both exciting and humorous — stories to share.



We'll do our best to get you the exciting, and often-humorous, tales from the season as they happen, and, of course, provide a roundup of the season in the October issue of *Mississippi Sportsman*.

GET READY TO SHOOT AS SEPTEMBER ARRIVES

Mississippi hunters won't have to wait long in September to get started shooting. Seasons begin as soon as the calendar page is flipped.

Albeit on a Sunday, Sept. 1 is opening day for numerous migratory game birds, including the special Canada goose season, dove season, and the mostly overlooked seasons for gallinules and rails.

On Sept. 14, the teal season opens.

It may still be hot, almost too torrid to consider, but hunting season is rapidly approaching.



Hunting for real starts the day August ends, with dove season opening statewide Sept. 1.



MOSSY OAK
PROPERTIES
LAND INVESTMENTS LLC

Jackson • Natchez • Vicksburg
601-362-0059 • 601-304-0744 • 601-636-5263

Let Us Sell Your Property

Adams Co. — 136+/- ac.

Located on Hwy. 84 just east of Hwy. 61 & Natchez Trace. Residential, recreational & commercial tract in a great hunting area. \$477,855. Call Tom.

Adams Co. — 227+/- ac.

Super hunting. Minutes from downtown Natchez. \$842,490. Call Tom.

Greene County — 71+/- ac.

Located on Hwy 63 just outside of Leakesville. Great deer hunting and residential. \$177,500. Call Ken.

Hinds Co. - 22+/- ac.

Located outside of Edwards in a great deer hunting area. Nice timber with small lake. \$75,000. Call Ken.

Jefferson Co. — 2,253+/- ac.

Contentment Plantation. Deer & duck hunters paradise w/4,900 sq. ft. lodge, 50 ac. bass lake & 65 ac. of duck holes. \$6,985,000. Call Charles or Tom.

Lawrence Co. — 277+/- ac.

Gently rolling mature pine & hdwd. timber. Over 1/2 mile on Silver Creek w/neat rustic camp. Infested with turkey. REDUCED! \$675,000. Call Bill.

Pearl River Co. — 1,549+/- ac. & 139 ac. & 110 ac. & 61 ac. & 60 ac. & 50 ac. tracts

Cybur Farms located on Hwy. 43 N. of Picayune near and/or adjoining the Bogue Chitto NWR and only a few miles from Old River WMA. Mixed timber w/great deer, turkey & small game hunting. \$2,950/ac. Call Ken.

Pearl River Co. — 133+/- Ac.

Located Northwest Picayune off Hwy 43. Property has a large creek in a good hunting area. \$172,900. Call Ken.

Rankin Co. — 11+/- ac., 13 ac., 15 ac., 44 ac., 48 ac., 65 ac. & 131+/-ac. tracts

Located in Johns between Brandon & Pucket w/light restrictions \$4,500 — \$5,000 per ac. Call Ken Owner/Broker.

Rankin Co. - 26+/- ac.

Great development potential inside city limits of Flowood on Vine Dr. across the street from NW Rankin High School. \$656,750. Call Ken.

Rankin/Simpson Cos. — 123+/- ac.

Near Florence w/16 yr. old plantation pine that needs thinning. Great deer/turkey area. REDUCED! \$307,500. Call Ken.

Scott Co. — 40+/- ac.

Located on Hwy. 25 w/residential, commercial and recreational (6 yr. plantation pine) mixed use. \$140,000. Call Ken.

Smith Co. — 91 +/- ac.

Located at the end of SCR 18-16 with approximately 1/2 mile frontage on Okahay Creek. 14 year old pines and mature hardwoods, great deer, turkey, and small game hunting. \$364,000. Call Dick.

Yazoo County — 92 +/- ac.

Beautiful rolling pasture land w/frontage on Hwy 16 in Benton. Sellers will consider splitting. \$458,500. Call Ken.

City of Natchez — Adams Co. -

3 BR 3.5 BA 1230 sf Condo built in 2013 in Old Canal St. Depot in Downtown Natchez, within walking distance to restaurants, bars & MS River frontage. \$330,000. Call Barton.

Washington Co. -- 35+/- ac.

Cropland located on South Main St Ext. near Hwy 1. and Hwy 454. Deer/turkey w/creek and hardwoods on North boundary. \$130,000. Call Ken.

Tom Middleton - 601-597-5727

Charles Feltus - 601-431-8285

Barry Maxwell - 318-719-0318

Bill Crigler - 318-201-0744

Barton McIntosh - 318-481-3840

Ken Hall, Broker - 601-942-9513

Dick Goddard - 601-310-6478

See pics of these and other hunting tracts on
www.landinvestments.ms

Each Office is Independently Owned and Operated

Hunting/Fishing
SCRAPBOOK



Morgan Brooks

Morgan Brooks, 5, spent May 18 fishing with her mom and pawpaw at Paul B. Johnson State Park in Hattiesburg. She caught a total of 5 this day.



Brody Brock

Seven-year-old Brody Brock with his third turkey of the year, a Smokey gray killed in Union County with his new 410 shotgun.



Aaron Barton

Aaron Barton of Oxford shows off a 40-inch channel catfish he caught on worms at Tippah Lake night fishing the flats. The fish was caught on a Zebco 33 with 10-pound test and a Durango rod.



Joyce Moody

Joyce Moody with a 16½-inch largemouth bass caught in a public lake in south Mississippi.



Tanner Knotts

Tanner Knotts caught this 9-pound 7-ounce bass at a private pond near Madison on June 23.

GOT PICS? We want 'em

Email images to: images@ms-sportsman.com

*Digital images must be sent in jpeg format. High-resolution images (taken on your camera's highest setting) will work the best. All images (physical and digital) become property of Mississippi Sportsman and cannot be returned.

PARISH TRACTOR



One of the **LARGEST** Kubota
dealers in North America!

Home of Parish Package Deals!



Kubota L2501, L3301, L4701



Z122RKW-42



RTV500



RTV-X900



SVL75

WE ARE MOWER THAN JUST A TRACTOR STORE

Hattiesburg 601-264-5877 | Poplarville 601-795-4521



www.parishtractor.com

DIXIE RVSM SuperStores



SUMMER SAVINGS

Class A



STK #28336

2019 Thor Motor Coach Windsport 27B



STK #27931

2019 Thor Motor Coach Windsport 29M



STK #29580

2019 Thor Motor Coach Windsport 34J

Class C



STK #26518

2019 Jayco Greyhawk 26Y



STK #29821

2019 Jayco Greyhawk 31F



STK #30906

2019 Jayco Greyhawk 30X

Fifth Wheels



STK #28100

2019 Forest River Wildcat 34WB



STK #28092

2019 Forest River SABRE 30RLT



STK #28123

2019 Forest River Sierra 378FB

NATION'S TOP SELECTION OF RV BRANDS



GRAND BAY, AL
Sales: 844-311-6772
Service: 844-628-4835

Exit 4 toward AL-188 E / Grand Bay
12167 Interchange Drive
Grand Bay, AL 36541

SALES:
Mon - Sat
8 am - 6 pm

SERVICE:
Mon - Sat
8 am - 5 pm

dixierv.com



**FIND THE THERMOCLINE
ON YOUR FAVORITE
CRAPPIE LAKE AND
OPEN UP SOME GREAT,
HOT-WEATHER FISHING.
HERE'S HOW....**

THERMO- SLABS

By Bobby Cleveland

Over a 40-year career of chasing fish, game and stories about the catching and killing thereof, I can clearly recall the dumbest thing I have ever considered doing in the pursuit of such journalism.

It was August, just before the turn of the century, in 1999. Remember Y2K?

Rabbit Rogers, only the best crappie fisherman I have ever known, called me one afternoon and said simply: “They’re biting!”

That meant an invitation for a long-awaited summertime crappie trip with Rogers on Barnett Reservoir was being offered. I was sitting at my desk at the newspaper, enjoying the air conditioning, worried about what I could possibly find to write about in the middle of a heat wave. It was torrid.

Without thinking sanely, I immediately seized the opportunity. “When we going?” was my response.

All I heard was laughter through the phone, which should have been a clue.

“Well, they’re calling for a high of 102 tomorrow, so we need to go,” Rabbit said. “The hotter the temperature, the hotter the bite. Are you ready for this?”

A writer without a story, facing a deadline, will do stupid things. I did.

“What time and what ramp?” I asked. “Sunrise is at 5:45.”

Another clue followed — more laughter

“Well, there’s no use getting there at daylight,” he said. “They don’t bite real good until the sun is high and the temperature is darn near unbearable. That’s when we need to be on ‘em. No need to wear ourselves out in the morning. Let’s meet at Highway 43 at 10. Wear something white and light and a big hat. Bring water. You best leave your beer at the house.”

Oh, Lord!

Here’s the short version of the trip. We went. It was hot. We limited out — 60 fish between us — in two hours. We fished for four more hours and threw back way more crappie than we kept.

To this very day, it was the best crappie-fishing trip I’ve ever had, and probably the one of which I should be the most proud — not because of how many we caught, but because I survived.

Know this: the amount of sunscreen I wore that day weighed more than my pants and shirt. Between us, we drank a case of bottled water and ate a couple of Rogers’ peanut butter and banana sandwiches.

It was fine.

ALL ABOUT THE SUN

Rogers taught me a lot about crappie fishing that day, and he helped me learn an important lesson about the water and the phenomenon known as the thermocline. I knew what it was

Rabbit Rogers knew what he was talking about when he invited the author on an August crappie fishing trip. They were biting!



Summer crappie in big reservoirs will set up a foot or two above the thermocline, giving fishermen a good place to start.

before then, but I never understood how it impacted fishing.

“That’s the key to catching crappie in the summer, especially on a lake like Barnett Reservoir,” Rogers said. “Once the thermocline is established, every fish in the lake will be forced to live in a small layer of water just above the thermocline. Nature helps fishermen by creating that.”

The definition: A thermocline — aka the thermal layer or the metalimnion in lakes — is a thin but distinct layer in a large body of fluid (e.g. water, as in an ocean or lake) in which temperature changes more rapidly with depth than it do in the layers above or below.

So one would think that the fish, stressed from the heat, would be as deep as they could get to avoid the high temperatures, surface temperatures above 90 degrees.

“The thing about a thermocline that impacts fish is that the level of dissolved oxygen below the thermocline in the cooler water is too low to support fish,” explained Ron Garavelli, the former director of fisheries for the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks. “Fish, like crappie, simply can’t survive that deep, but they also can’t survive in hot waters near the surface, which is the water with the highest level of dissolved oxygen.

“Crappie will try to find that layer of water that provides the coolest temperatures with enough oxygen to sustain them. That is usually about a foot or two of water just above the thermocline.”

Garavelli also said that the thermocline can change, not only day to day but hour to hour. On Barnett, it takes a horribly hot day for it to establish itself so firmly that a fisherman can actually find it on his or her fish-finding electronics by turning up the gain to increase the unit’s sensibility.

Rogers had an easier way to find it.

“I drop a jig down in one of my honey holes, and when a fish hits it, I know I’ve found the right depth,” he said. “Works every time.”

That day in August 1999, it was between 11 and 12 feet.



Not a single fish we caught — and we caught over 150 — was taken at a shallower or deeper depth.

**IT AIN'T WHAT,
IT'S WHERE**
UP NEXT >



LOUISIANA'S
CAJUN BAYOU
LAFOURCHE PARISH

You'll find an authentic Cajun lifestyle unlike any other filled with outdoor experiences, food, and festival celebrations. Come see the unpolished, unspoiled beauty up and down the Bayou. Where Cajun runs deep

LACA.JUNBAYOU.COM

#CAJUNBAYOU

LOUISIANA
Feed Your Soul.





Ross Barnett's bragging-sized slabs aren't immune to summer hunger pangs.

"IT AIN'T WHAT, IT'S WHERE"

"Once you've established the magic depth, you're halfway there," Rogers said. "The other part of the equation is finding the kind of cover or structure the fish like. On Barnett, that's old timber or brush piles. But on some of the state's other great crappie lakes, like Grenada, Enid and Sardis, most of the timber is gone, so the fish relate more to changes in depth, like channels and ledges. You have to learn the contour changes on those."

On Barnett, literally thousands of trees, stumps and brush piles are still available, but only a tiny fraction of them will attract and hold fish.

"If a piece of cover doesn't provide some horizontal (flat) cover, forget it," Rogers said. "A fish can't shut its eyes. It depends on putting something between its head and the sun. Finding something horizontal, like an old limb or a mass of timber like a brush pile, is gold."

A vertical tree, devoid of sun, can provide protection, but only on one side of the timber, and as the sun traverses the sky, the shade moves. Horizontal cover offers constant shade.

"Take an old lake bed in Barnett like Saddlebag or Three Prong," Rogers said. "There's hundreds of trees in each area, but only about a handful offer a good horizontal limb or limbs. Those are the trees and the limbs to find and concentrate on."

Once you've established the depth by finding the thermocline and identified the trees with limbs closest to that depth, you're on your way to a limit of slab crappie for a summertime fish fry. Don't worry so much about jig color or type.

"Like I've always said, it ain't what, but where," Rogers said.

Over decades of fishing, Rogers has established a lot of hot spots in the 33,000-acre lake by building and placing crappie structure. All of them offer an abundance of horizontal cover, and all of them produce outstanding summer fishing, on a given day.

TROLLING ANOTHER OPTION

Back in that time period, very few crappie fishermen trolled at Barnett. It was a practice used effectively at Grenada, Sardis and Enid, where anglers needed a way to cover a lot of water quickly.

"The timber up here is long gone," said guide John Harrison. "We depend on contour changes in the summer, any area with a drop or a sudden change in depth. It can be a long lake point, a creek or river channel, anywhere there's a depth change."

Trollers there have three methods of catching fish: pushing, pulling or power-trolling.

Pushing is the standard method of lining up rods across the boat's bow, each with one or two jigs — with or without a minnow — and using the trolling motor to push the baits into schools of crappie.

Pulling usually involves an array of rods off the boat's stern, each with a deep- or medium-diving crankbait. Fishermen, often in a pontoon boat, can pull four or five or even six rods — depending on what the law allows — using the gas motor at idle speed.

Power-trolling is what most fishermen call a method of pushing that involves extremely heavy sinkers, 2 or more ounces, and two jigs. It requires stout jigging poles and a three-way swivel. The terminal line from the reel is tied to the top swivel, and a jighead is attached with about 18 inches or more of fluorocarbon leader to one of the other swivels. Off the third is another piece of fluorocarbon line that contains the heavy sinker with a second jig about a foot or two below the sinker.



THE GREAT OUTDOORS IS CALLING YOU



Hunting and outdoor recreation is a calling that many of us share. From Texas to Virginia, our timberlands offer some of the best lease opportunities available in the south, and the largest private selection of recreational access in the United States.

If the great outdoors is calling your name, visit us online at www.WYrecreation.com to view all of our available hunting lease offerings.

www.WYrecreation.com

 Weyerhaeuser



Power-trolling with jigs allows fishermen to cover plenty of water and find concentrations of crappie.

Harrison prefers power-trolling and pushes about 1.2 miles per hour using his trolling motor. It allows him to cover a lot of water and a lot of different depths. “They can vary from 7 or 8 feet down to 11 or 12 feet, even deeper, depending on the temperature or thermocline,” he said.

Since Y2K, trolling has expanded south to Barnett and west to the Mississippi River oxbow lakes.

On Barnett, veteran angler Paul Johnson is working on perfecting the crankbait pull on the lake.

“I figured it had to work here, if it works there,” he said. “Used to be you never saw crappie fishermen on the open waters of the lower main lake in the summer. They’d be there in the spring during the spawn, fishing the rocks and the shallow flats, but once the summer came, they all went to the upper end of the old lake beds and standing timber.

“It only made sense that the fish that spawn on the dam or other areas on the lower lake live near there in the summer. It wasn’t like the crappie swam all the way down the lake to the dam to spawn, and then swam all the way back. A lot of us starting looking at pulling crankbaits.”

Now, a lot of crappie fishermen have already taken up the spider rigs and are slowly pushing an array of jigs through Barnett, especially on the upper end of the lake.

But down on the lower end, where the water is more exposed to the elements like wind, it is more difficult. Trolling with crankbaits and big engine was a lot easier.



“We simply found the contour changes with maps and electronics and began pulling crankbaits, and you know what, it does work on Barnett,” Johnson said. “Now, you see scores of fishermen doing that here, and it still works.”

Over the past decade, several lure companies have begun catering to crappie fishermen, designing and building crankbaits just for crappie — smaller-bodied lures that dive to different depths.

All of that combined have made crappie a year-round fish, and some of the hottest action comes at the hottest time of the year: summer.

Grab the water, the sun-screen and big hats, where light clothing and don’t be afraid to test your limits in the heat.

“You’ll be surprised at how hot the action can be,” Rogers said. “Pleasantly surprised.” ■



Bobby Cleveland has covered sports in Mississippi for over 40 years. A native of Hattiesburg and graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi, Cleveland lives on Ross Barnett Reservoir near Jackson with his wife Pam.

NauticStar
215XTS

G3 Boats
quality you can trust
performance you can see
satisfaction you can feel

20CC DLX



www.sevencsmarine.net

378 REYNOIR ST. • BILOXI
228-435-3389

“In Business Since 1960”

UNRIVALED IN QUALITY.
PERFORMANCE.
VERSATILITY.

★★★★★
5-Star Gold Certified Yamaha Service Center
with over 75 years combined experience



YAMAHA



SEE THE 2020 MODEL PELAGIC 266

AT YOUR LOCAL

Pioneer BOATS

Charting a new course.

DEALER



- Length 26' 6" Beam 9' 2"
- Fuel Capacity 180 Gallons
- Livewell 50 Gallons



For more information, go to PioneerBoats.com
or call 843-538-6604
or like us on Facebook at Pioneer Boats
for the latest available information.



Avenger



Born on the
Bayou of Louisiana,
Raised in the
Lowcountry of
South Carolina



For more information, go to
AvengerBayBoats.com
or call 843-538-6604
or like us on
Facebook at
Avenger Bay Boats
for the latest available information.

From The
Back Water
To The
Blue Water



Bulls Bay 2000



For more information, go to
BullsBayBoats.com
or call
843-538-6604
or like us on
Facebook at Bulls Bay Boats
for the latest available information.





Dan Kibler



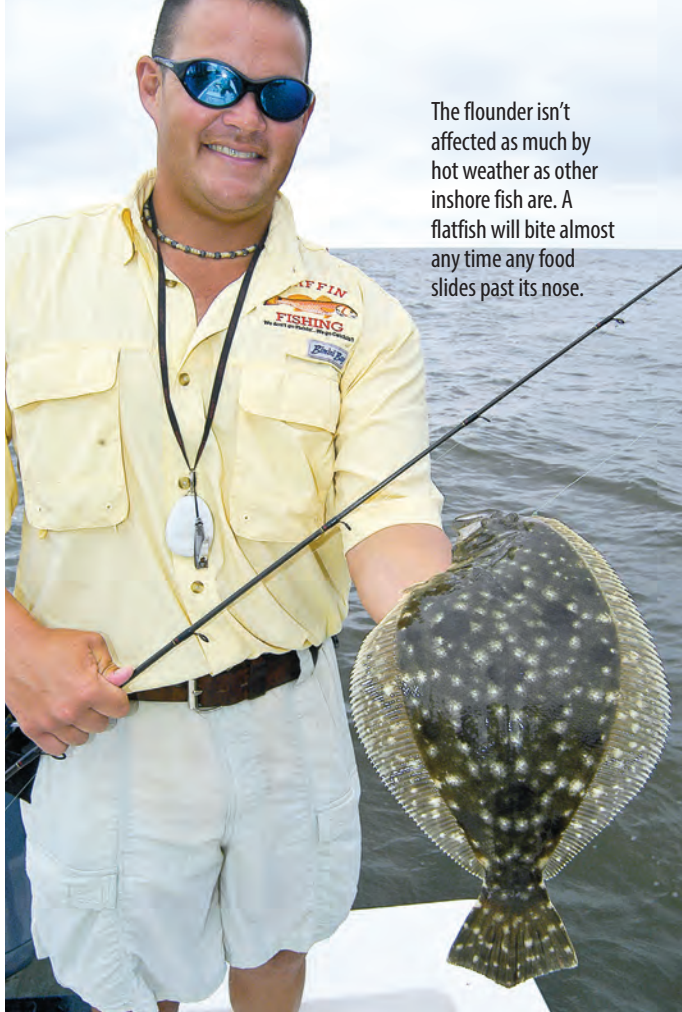
FLOUNDER TRIPLE PLAY

Find a ditch, a dock and an oyster bed — all in the same immediate area — and you've got the makings of a great place to catch a late-summer flounder.

By Dan Kibler

[continued >](#)





The flounder isn't affected as much by hot weather as other inshore fish are. A flatfish will bite almost any time any food slides past its nose.

FLOUNDER TRIPLE PLAY

Dale Collins knows the equation for great late-summer flounder fishing. First, he said, you find a little ditch that's draining an area of marsh into a larger waterway. Second, you find a boat dock or pier next to the ditch. Third, you find an oyster bed near the first two.

The combination of those three, according to Collins, a veteran guide and flounder expert, "is a gift from God."

Ditches draining a marsh draw flounder and other predator fish on a falling tide because all of the bait and shrimp are pulled out by the current. That sets the table for big flatfish, and the current has a second major plus.

"If you've got a little current running out of there, (a flounder will) there with his nose in the mouth of that ditch, because he can stay there for a long time with that water running through his gills; it's easier for him to breathe," Collins said. "If you don't have any current, he's got to move around more."

The boat dock provides an ambush spot, plus shade, for a flounder. And the collection of oyster rocks will attract all kinds of bait and crustaceans, further setting a flounder's buffet.

"I'll fish live bait or a Gulp bait at the mouth of a little ditch or under a dock," Collins said. "As far as live bait, I like a 4-inch mullet minnow, but you've got to feed it to him before you set the hook — wait a little bit.

"I'll fish a Gulp bait on a 1/4-ounce jighead. I'll fish it on as light a head as I can, because I think most people fish too fast."

H&H
Since 1959
LURE COMPANY

GLASS MINNOW DOUBLE RIGS

EXTREMELY STRONG STAINLESS STEEL HOOKS
CLEAR COAT DIPPED FINISH
INTERNALLY WEIGHTED FOR LIFELIKE ACTION

AVAILABLE IN **1/8 OZ & 1/4 OZ**
10 DIFFERENT COLORS!

A ONE OF A KIND NIGHTTIME BAIT
#1 AND WIDENING THE GAP!

WWW.HHLURE.COM

The advertisement features a dark blue background with a night scene of a dock and water. Two glass minnow lures are shown in the foreground, one above the other, both on double rigs. The H&H Lure Company logo is in the top left. The main title 'GLASS MINNOW DOUBLE RIGS' is in large, bold, white and blue letters. Below it, three bullet points describe the lures' features. The weight and color options are listed in large white text. At the bottom, there are two lines of promotional text in white and yellow, and social media icons with the website URL.

Dale Collins looks for flounder to be set up in areas with certain features. This one came from under a dock.



Dan Kibler

WAMEKU = LOUD!!

SPRO
SPORTS PROFESSIONALS

Collins said if he's working the mouth of a ditch or drain, he tries to position his boat so he can cast directly into the opening. "If the water is pulling to one side, I'll set up for that, but I want to cast right into the middle (of the drain) and fish it out," he said. "If there are points on either side of the ditch, I'll fish across those, too."

If he's fishing a dock, he's more interested in getting his bait back under the platform and working it back to the boat. Because flounder make their own ambush points by settling down into the sand on the bottom, positioning close to pilings isn't quite as important as it would be if he was looking for redfish.

One good thing about flounder, Collins said, is that if you put a bait or lure in front of them, they aren't terribly picky.

"I've fished times when it was hard to get bait, and I caught flounder on five different live baits," he said.

That doesn't mean he just camps out.

"I won't fish a spot very long unless I catch a fish," Collins said. "If I catch a fish, I won't fish it more than five minutes if I don't catch another. I'll move to my next ditch or dock."

Collins said he's constantly amazed by the kinds of places he finds flounder.

"They'll get in water in places where you can't get your boat," he said. "I've see them way up in the marsh grass while gigging, in only 2 or 3 inches of water. That's all they need." ■



Dan Kibler is editor of Mississippi Sportsman. He has been covering outdoor issues full-time since 1985.

STIHL

A SUCCESSFUL SEASON STARTS WITH STIHL

©2019 STIHL/SSW STSW19MAG4-42-142160-4

STIHLDEALERS.COM

Bream: better late than never



The last bream spawn for Mississippi's summer is approaching. Here's how to take advantage of the Magnolia State's favorite sunfish.



A

ugust is marked by days of heat, two-a-day football misery, sweaty girls playing softball, NFL teams cutting final rosters and college teams checking the county jails for prospects.

Yep, summer in the South.

And, in a lake near you, bream will be bedding for perhaps the last time in 2019. Bluegills and their cousins are triggered to bed by photoperiod — the length of daylight in a 24-hour period — water quality and temperature. These pint-sized cricket eaters will repeat the process from spring to fall as long as these criteria are met. The days near the monthly full moon and, to a lesser degree, the new moon, are the peak bedding times. Where there is a bed in April, there will likely be a bed in September.

“State lakes have a good reputation as bream producers,” said Jerry Brown, a fisheries biologist with the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks. “As a rule, the fishing pressure may be a little lighter in the late summer. Skiing and pleasure boating may be restricted or prohibited, so the water is less disturbed, and a periodic restocking may have been completed with new fish having extra time to grow. There are just too many factors affecting the lake habitat to go into here.”

So many bream-related articles begin with a nostalgic note. While it’s true that many a first fish caught was of the bream variety and came from a creek or farm pond, the fact is the little fighters remain a popular pursuit by savvy anglers. With a small hook and a bit of earthworm, just about anyone can catch a pond perch, but bringing a trophy bluegill to the boat with a dry fly or light tackle is much easier said than done.

Brown points to a few lakes as being good destinations across Mississippi. In the central portion of the state, Lake Tom Bailey and Prentiss Walker Lake are among top choices. In the northern counties, Lake Lamar Bruce and Tippah County Lake are consistent bream producers. In the south, Lake Bogue Homa and Lake Mary Crawford hold favor among serious bream hunters.

THE INFORMATION HIGHWAY

“Regular updates on all these and other lakes are found at mdwfp.com,” Brown said. “Needless to say, the backwater flooding of 2019 had wreaked havoc with the lakes of the south Delta, such as Eagle and Chotard. They will rebound, but not soon. Catfish and Asian carp are plentiful, but bream missed a lot of spawning time.”

Anglers can get current information on the MDWPF website by reviewing the “Reel Facts” listed with each lake. Also available are lake-bottom reports, with the location of fish-attracting structure such as pallet piles and brush piles. Some state lakes, such as Tom Bailey, have fishing piers with nearby fish attractors for use by the boatless anglers.

Rick Dillard, a fisheries biologist for the U.S. Forest Service, tells anglers not to forget smaller lakes such as Marathon in the Bienville National Forest and Davis Lake in the Tombigbee National Forest. Turkey Fork, Choctaw Lake and Okhissa remain good picks as well.

continued >

A few minutes with a fly rod produced a mess of bream for supper. Fly fishing is a popular method of catching bream.

David Hawkins



Bream: better late than never

NEW KID ON THE BLOCK

The coppernose bluegill is not a newcomer to the fishing world, but its introduction has happened over a long-enough period of time that the long-term effect of the fish can be seen. To dispel a misconception, the coppernose is a specific subspecies common to Florida that's able to thrive in many Mississippi waters. Once introduced, the coppernose will reproduce and even hybridize with native bluegills and green sunfish. Sellers of bulk fish for stocking in private ponds and lakes offer coppernose as well as several other bream varieties. The basic bluegill and redear sunfish remain the most popular.

All bream prefer a bottom of sand or pea gravel for spawning. Males make the nest, attract the females and then protect the eggs and fry until they leave the nest. Crawfish, bigger fish, frogs and wading birds all take their share of the little ones. The sheer numbers of eggs is the greatest defense the bream have, that and the fact they can spawn monthly.

Insects are far and away the best live bait for bream success.

Bream go by a list of monikers; stump-knockers, redbellies, and shellcrackers are just a few.

David Hawkins

SUZUKI HOT SUMMER COOL DEALS

SUZUKI MARINE

ULTIMATE
PERFORMANCE

SIX YEARS OF PROTECTION

INSTANT SAVINGS

REPOWER FINANCE

SMITH MARINE

149 HARBOR DR,
RIDGELAND, MS 39157
601-856-3959

www.smithmarinesales.com

Suzuki Six Extended Protection promo is applicable to new Suzuki Outboard Motors from 25 to 350 HP in inventory which are sold and delivered to buyer between 07/01/19 and 08/30/19 in accordance with the promotion by a Participating Authorized Suzuki Marine dealer in the continental US and Alaska to a purchasing customer who resides in the continental US or Alaska. Customer should expect to receive an acknowledgment letter and full copy of contract including terms, conditions and voided card from Suzuki Extended Protection within 90 days of purchase. If an acknowledgment letter is not received in time period stated, contact Suzuki Motor of America, Inc. - Marine Marketing via email: marine-marketing@smc.com. The Suzuki Six Promotion is available for dealers use only, and is not redeemable for cash. Instant Savings apply to qualifying purchases of select Suzuki Outboard Motors made between 07/01/19 and 08/30/19. For list of designated models, see participating Dealer or visit www.suzukimarine.com. Instant Savings must be applied against the agreed-upon selling price of the outboard motor and reflected in the bill of sale. (Suzuki will, in turn, credit Dealer's parts account.) There are no model substitutions, benefit substitutions, rain checks, or extensions. Suzuki reserves the right to change or cancel these promotions at any time without notice or obligation. * Financing offers available through Synchrony Retail Finance. As low as 5.99% APR financing for 60 months on new and unregistered Suzuki Outboard Motors. Subject to credit approval. Not all buyers will qualify. Approval, and any rates and terms provided, are based on creditworthiness. \$19.99/month per \$1,000 financed for 60 months is based on 5.99% APR. Hypothetical figures used in calculation; your actual monthly payment may differ based on financing terms, credit line qualifications, accessories or other factors such as down payment and fees. Offer effective on new, unregistered Suzuki Outboard Motors purchased from a participating authorized Suzuki dealer between 07/01/19 and 08/30/19. "Suzuki Six", the Suzuki "S" and model names are Suzuki trademarks or ©. Don't drink and drive. Always wear a USCG-approved life jacket and read your owner's manual. © 2019 Suzuki Motor of America, Inc.

BATTERY WORLD

Brands You Know. Brands You Trust.

Trojan **\$30 OFF FULL SET OF TROJAN GOLF CART BATTERIES**

*SOME EXCLUSIONS APPLY. CANNOT BE COMBINED WITH ANY OTHER OFFERS OR COUPONS. ORIGINAL COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED. LIMIT ONE PER CUSTOMER PER SET. DOES NOT APPLY TO SPECIAL ORDERS. MUST BRING OFFER AT TIME OF PURCHASE.

6424 Hwy 98 West - Hattiesburg, MS 39402
601.264.4448
BatteryWorldOnline.com

There was a time when earthworms were the top seller, but a quick survey of local bait shops indicates crickets have leaped ahead of worms. Both get the job done with equal ability; crickets are just a little easier to handle — and chase around the boat.

Catalpa worms, aka catawba worms, are an excellent bait and a very durable alternative to earthworms and crickets. Finding these green and black leaf eaters can prove to be a challenge, and they usually fetch a pretty penny when you locate them. Roaches were a big ticket item in the middle of the last century, not the big, long cockroaches we find so disgusting, but smaller wingless models with little ridges on their back. Bream love 'em; fishermen, not so much.

So many good bream lakes exist in Mississippi that an entire magazine could be dedicated to that subject. The number of creeks, small rivers and farm ponds and their panfish offerings is beyond calculation.

“Proximity is a key factor in my choice to bream fish,” said Donnie Stuart of Pelahatchie, a Baptist minister and retired

continued >

David Hawkins



Most state lakes offer good bream fishing to bank-bound anglers. This fisherman at Lake Tom Bailey caught a fine mess of bream near willow stumps adjacent to the fishing pier.



www.anchormsre.com
Anchor Real Estate - 601-342-2540

Ron Odom, - Active MS Realtor
Ron_Odom101@yahoo.com
601-342-2540 office • 601-410-3089 cell

Anchor Real Estate,
your source for hunting, fishing or timber properties.

See the amazing results at
ProCleanMarine.com ★ 844-290-2927



*“The Last Cleaner
You’ll Ever Need”*

ProCleanMARINE™
BOAT & WATERCRAFT CLEANER

MADE IN THE USA SAVE \$1 on-line Use Coupon Code **LMSPORTSMAN**



PHOENIX
BOATS



Mississippi-Louisiana's Boating Headquarters Since 1986

Bryan's
MARINE

Family Owned & Operated

4899 HWY 84 WEST
VIDALIA, LA 71373
318-336-9009

www.BryansMarine.com
Mon - Fri 8 am - 5 pm • Sat 8 am - 12 noon



Bream: better late than never

school teacher. "If I just want to catch a mess for supper, I'll stay close to home, going to a local pond or maybe Shadow Lake at Roosevelt State Park. If I have the time to travel, I'll include a friend and we'll take a day trip to a lake such as Lake Mary Crawford or perhaps Lake Prentiss Walker."

TACKLE TROUBLES? NAH

Being a country boy reared on a Rankin County chicken farm, Stuart didn't have access to the big box stores for tackle. He was limited to the offerings on the wall at Pep Gray's country store: "ready rigs" that required just a pole, an offering of loose hooks, simple floats and a split-shot box that admonished the buyer to "Take a kid fishing." All a boy needed to go bream fishing was a dollar and the time to go.

"Early on, I developed a strong attraction to fly-fishing, partially because of reading magazines at the barber shop," Stuart said. "So my fly rod became my go-to pole for all fish. In recent decades, ultralight tackle and crappie poles with underslung reels have taken the spotlight, but I still love to use a fly rod for bream."

Baits for bream were never a problem for Stuart; farm products or by-products, as the case may be, supplied an endless supply of earthworms, gall worms, beetles, grasshoppers and crickets. Roaches were and remain a favorite food of bream, but very few bait shops bother to stock them. Tadpoles are another good bream offering but are difficult to catch and keep. Excellent bait listings must include catalpa worms. They can be home grown, and a few shops offer them on a limited basis. Snip off the head and turn the worm inside-out on a long-shank, No. 6 bait-guard hook. It should be good for multiple catches before it's necessary to bait up again.

"There are hundreds of excellent bream flies on the market, and few of them are anything new, just showing a different paint job or a different display card," Stuart said. "Breambugs.com has the best off I've seen and at reasonable prices. They offer the old Bar-Nun patterns Mississippi anglers loved."

Scott Sheppard of Brandon is another avid bream fisherman who has a few likes and dislikes. He offers these observations from years of fishing.

"Bream hooks need to be dark, not gold or silver, but black or blued. And the split shot needs to be small and well up the line from the bait," Sheppard said.

"The other thing is the size and contrast of the bobber. No bobber, just a tight line, is good for bedding bream. Males on the nest are look-



David Hawkins

Fishermen use a variety of baits to draw strikes from bream, but worms are hard to beat.

ing for danger from above, and when a large object lands in the water overhead, they become beware."

Sheppard uses natural floats and quills that resemble floating debris and make less disturbance when they move; a quill makes for less splash than a red/white, hard-plastic float.

KIDS ARE QUICK STUDIES

Kids today fish with a different passion; instead of procuring tackle, they have big box stores and an almost limitless choice of tackle. Few, if any, will have to secure a pole and use black electrical tape to attach a line, and don't even ask them about a "ready rig." But the passion for fishing remains, sparked by those times when catching is good and the promise of more days to come is a good bet.

Lilly Hawkins is an 11-year-old from Brandon who responds immediately to the call of the water. Statically, as many girls are fishing as are boys; she just seems a little more dedicated than her sisters. She removes her own fish, baits her own hook and helps clean the catch — not to mention, she is good at skinning frogs. When strangers approach and ask how to catch big stringers, she has a simple answer. "Fish like a girl." ■



David Hawkins is a freelance writer living in Forest, Miss. He can be reached at hawkins2209@att.net.



Find a bed full of bream and it's not a big stretch to fill up a stringer in a short period of time.

The Yamaha Outboards

POWER THE SUMMER

SALES EVENT

Offer valid from
July 15, 2019 – August 30, 2019

For a limited time, purchase an eligible new Yamaha four-stroke outboard and receive:

5 YEARS

OF WARRANTY PROTECTION*

on the purchase of select, eligible
90 hp-300 hp four-stroke outboards*

Three years of Yamaha Limited Warranty Coverage, along with the additional protection of a two-year Yamaha Extended Service (Y.E.S.) plan. That's a total of five years coverage at no additional cost!

\$500

up to IN DEALER CREDIT

on the purchase of select, eligible
2.5 hp-75 hp four-stroke outboards*

Up to \$500 in dealer credit toward the purchase of additional goods/services from your authorized participating Yamaha Outboard Dealer.

Eligible Four-Stroke Outboards Only	3-Year Ltd. Warranty + 2-Year Y.E.S.	2-Year Y.E.S. Value Based On MSRP
250-300 HP	5 Years Total	Free! \$2,300 value
200-225 HP	5 Years Total	Free! \$1,800 value
150-175 HP	5 Years Total	Free! \$1,125 value
115 HP	5 Years Total	Free! \$800 value
90 HP	5 Years Total	Free! \$725 value

* Add two years of Yamaha Extended Service (Y.E.S.) to your three-year Yamaha Limited Warranty.

Eligible Four-Stroke Outboards Only	Dealership Credit Toward Purchase of Additional Goods/Services
60-75 HP	\$500 based on MSRP
30-50 HP	\$400 based on MSRP
20-25 HP	\$300 based on MSRP
8-15 HP	\$250 based on MSRP
2.5-6 HP	\$200 based on MSRP

See your authorized participating Yamaha Outboard Dealer today for details! Other restrictions and conditions apply.

***PROGRAM TERMS AND CONDITIONS:** Consumer benefit for purchasing a new (unused, not previously warranty registered) select, eligible Yamaha 90hp to 300hp four-stroke outboard is a 24-month Yamaha Extended Service contract (choice offered in Florida is a 24-month Yamaha Limited Warranty). Consumer benefit for purchasing a new (unused, not previously warranty registered) select eligible Yamaha 2.5hp to 75hp four-stroke outboard is a credit based on MSRP toward the purchase of goods and/or services at the authorized participating dealer that sold the outboard, at no extra cost to consumer. NO BENEFIT SUBSTITUTIONS. To be eligible, outboards must also have been manufactured since January 2012. Promotion is only applicable from authorized participating Yamaha Outboard dealers in the U.S.A. sold to purchasing consumers residing in the U.S.A. Promotion is limited to available stock in dealer inventory that is sold, PDI completed, delivered and warranty registered on YMBIS by the dealer in accordance with Yamaha's promotion and warranty registration requirements during applicable dates. Applicable models may vary. No model substitutions, benefit substitutions, extensions or rain checks will be allowed. Outboards sold or provided for commercial, camp, resort, guide, rental, promotional/demo, government agency, competition, tournament or sponsorship use are not eligible. This promotion cannot be used in conjunction with any other Yamaha offer. Some exceptions may apply. See authorized participating Yamaha dealer for complete details. Yamaha reserves the right to change or cancel this promotion at any time. Other restrictions and conditions apply.

REMEMBER to always observe all applicable boating laws. Never drink and drive. Dress properly with a USCG-approved personal flotation device and protective gear.
© 2019 Yamaha Motor Corporation, U.S.A. All rights reserved.

Finesse fishing hot-weather bass

By Mike Giles

Hunter Miles made a long cast across a submerged shelf on Pickwick Lake and watched his line peel off the reel until the shaky head jig rested on the bottom. He noticed a slight twitch in the line and felt just a bit of pressure on the other end, so he snapped the rod back and drove the hook deep into the jaws of a lunker bass. The bass exploded like a surface-to-air missile and proceeded to wallow on top as Miles fought him back towards the boat. The lunker largemouth finally tired a bit, and the young angler was able to wear him down and land him.

Miles admired the bass and quickly released him to try for another one. “X” marked the spot as he cast to the exact same spot and let the shaky head glide towards the bottom slowly.

“I knew that they were down there, and after I caught that first one, I knew they’d bite, so I got back out there as soon as I could,” Miles said. “Sometimes, it’s important to fish the same spot until they quit biting, so you make sure you work the spot thoroughly.”

continues >>>





“Wham!”

Another bass smashed his lure and bore down towards deep water like a torpedo. Miles slammed the brakes on this one, too, and drove the hook deep as he turned the bass around like a roped calf. Over the next hour or so, Miles caught and released many bass on the submerged shelf and caught bass in the 3 to 4-pound range.

WACKY RIGS

Finesse fishing means using many different lure presentations, according to Miles.

“It really depends on where I’m fishing in hot weather,” Miles said.

“I like to fish wacky rigs when the bite is tough,” said Miles. “I’ll fish the wacky rig under docks, in shallow water and around bedding bluegills when they’re spawning and anywhere I can find shallow water bass. If you can find locate them during the hot summer, you can finesse them into biting a wacky rig.”

Miles likes to skip, pitch and flip a wacky rig under, beside and off the end of docks when the bass are utilizing them for cover and shade from the sun. After he combs under the docks and beside them, he’ll search for submerged brush piles out from the docks as the bass typically hold on any structure in the area also. On more than one occasion, Miles has located quality bass in those submerged brush piles.

“Riot Baits has a Senko, actually two different baits I use for a wacky rig,” Miles said. “One is a Probe, and the other is a Baton. The baton is a thicker Senko bait with three grooves that give it a lot more action.”

“If I’m not getting many bites, I’ll use the Probe, it is basically a trick worm with a little thicker tail on the end, which gives it a little more wobble, and sometimes, that’s all it takes. I can use it on a shaky head, also.

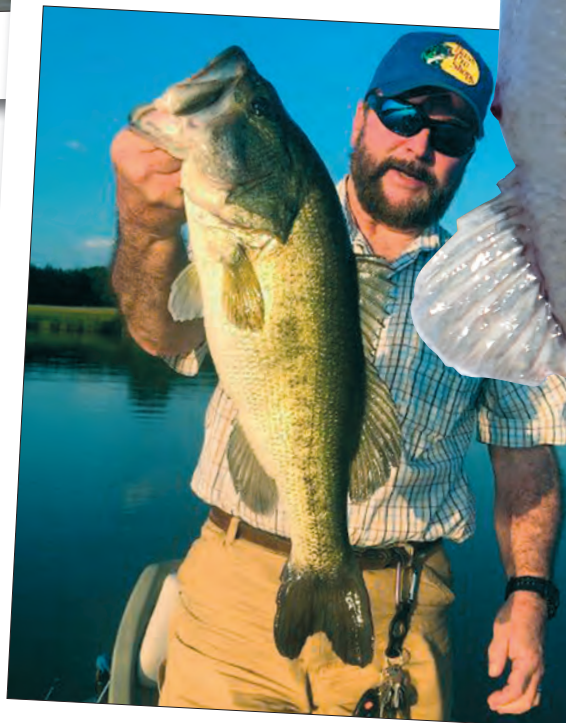
NED RIG

Another hot lure for deep clear water is the Ned rig, which recently burst onto the scene on the professional tournament circuits after much success and critical acclaim.

“I like to use a Z-Man Ned rig and cut a Baton down to about 2 inches,” Miles said. “I like to fish it mostly in clear-water lakes. I’ll fish it on the bottom in places like Pickwick, that have a lot of smooth ledges. We fish it like an open-hook, swimbait jighead, so you can’t really fish it in structure. I like to use green pumpkin and watermelon seed colors.”

Miles has caught some of his biggest bass on the Ned rig, and it’s a killer on Pickwick.

During another trip to Pickwick a while back, Miles located a





good school of bass on a bluff and really worked on them.

“They were all up shallow on a bluff, and I cast the Ned rig out and let it fall to the bottom and just moved the bait up a little and didn’t even shake it and they nailed it,” Miles said. “I caught several good smallmouths and a 5-pound largemouth in that one spot.”

NEKO RIG

“I like to use the Neko rig in deep clear water too,” Miles said. “I’ll use the Riot Baton on a Neko rig too, it’s a 4½-inch bait, which is the same size as a regular Senko, and it’s pointed on both ends and has three grooves down the sides.”

The Neko rig is a relatively new lure rig in the bass-fishing world, and several top pros have had excellent results with it as has Miles.

It’s really a weighted version of a wacky rig with a weight inserted into one end of the soft-plastic bait, giving the rig a unique action as it falls, and it usually stands straight up once it hits the bottom.

“I don’t like to use it in grass, but I use it in brush piles in deep water and sometimes under docks,” Miles said. “I’ll just put a nail in one end of it and just rig it like a wacky rig.”

DROP-SHOT RIGS

Another good hot-weather rig is the drop-shot, though it’s not used as much in lakes with murky water, but it’s been good for Miles on lakes like Lake Ferguson and even in murky water lakes.

“I’ll usually use a trick worm on the drop-shot,” Miles said. “I love to drop it down on them, even in dirty water

continues >>>

Smaller, finesse baits don’t just appeal to small bass; they’re often the ticket to catching bragging-sized largemouths during the peak of summer heat.



David Brown

like around here on lakes like Okatibbee Lake. In the fall, I'll use a shorter leader under a foot, but probably 12 to 15 inches in the summer."

"I love fishing Ferguson; the water is usually really clear, and it's slam-full of cypress trees and barges," Miles said. "There's a lot of barges near the mouth of Ferguson, and there's some sandbars there, too. We located some bass in 15 feet of water, and they were located right beside and under the barges, so we flipped the barges with drop-shot rigs on 12-pound line and really caught them."

Miles and one of his fishing partners caught several bass from the barges in the 3- to 5-pound range, just plucking them off the barges like ripe tomatoes. Sometimes, you just need to slow down and work an area thoroughly with something different, and that's just what Miles likes to do when finesse fishing.

"I like to use something different, that the bass in that area haven't seen much, and if you can locate them and do that, you'll be successful," Miles said. "Finding the bass and using a little something different is sometimes the difference between catching a limit of bass in hot weather or going home empty handed, but you can't be afraid to try something different."

A wacky rig is often the ticket to coaxing a strike from a lethargic, summer bass.

Have you been in a wreck? You have a choice. **CHOOSE THE BEST!**



Barnett's
BODY SHOP

24
Hour
Towing

5 LOCATIONS TO SERVE YOU!!!
FLOWOOD, MS • 601-939-9700
RICHLAND, MS • 601-664-9770
BYRAM, MS • 601-372-0042
RIDGELAND, MS • 601-856-0700
GLUCKSTADT, MS • 601-499-1700

FINESSE TUBING

The late Guido Hibdon was a well-known bass angler and guide before he became a tournament sensation on the BASS trail, and he consistently caught bass in high-pressured, deep, gin-clear lakes using tubes. The simple tube bait propelled him to a world championship and helped him establish a career that lasted a lifetime and earned him worldwide respect.

If it's good enough for Hibdon, I figured it had to work in Mississippi, too, and I found out he wasn't wrong when he said you could fish it anywhere and catch fish. He also said that it would be around forever, and I'm inclined to believe that's correct, too.

When the fishing gets tough, I pull out the tubes and fish them two ways. The first is to take a slender, 3- to 4-inch tube rigged Texas-style with an unpegged weight and use it with a light line and spinning tackle. Simply pitch the tube around brush, or vegetation and let it fall on a slack line. It's important to watch your line at all times, because most of the strikes will occur on the fall.

If the bass don't strike on the initial descent, sweep your rod slowly back up and let it fall on slack line again. Sometimes, you'll see the line twitch, or just start moving to the side. When this happens, reel in the slack and jack his jaw. This technique will catch bass when nothing else will.

Another deadly tactic I use is to take a Magnum tube, 4½ to 6 inches and fish it Texas-rigged with a pegged sinker. I'll fish it on braid or 25-pound line and target brush tops and laydown trees. Start on the edges of the brush and simply flip or pitch the rig along the outer branches and then work your way deeper until you've probed every spot in the top. Let the lure go to the bottom and pick up on it slowly. If it feels mushy or doesn't move, then set the hook, because the bass has it in the mouth.

If they don't hit on the initial fall, then jig it up and let it fall again, and many times,

they'll strike it then. If they're suspended in the brush, they'll hit it on the fall or when you bring it back up. When the bass are not active, they will hit this combo. I have plucked many 5- to 7-pound bass from brush tops in hot weather with this technique, and it will work time after time, and they will usually strike a tube when they won't hit a jig.

If you're looking to have success in August in Mississippi, then try a few of these tried-and-true techniques and you should catch a few bass and maybe a lunker or two also. ■



Mike Giles of Meridian has been hunting and fishing Mississippi since 1965. He is an award-winning wildlife photographer, writer, seminar speaker and guide.

**FROM
DUCK BOATS
TO
BASS BOATS**

**CHECK OUT WHAT
GATOR TRAX
CAN DO FOR YOU**

FOR A FULL LINE OF GATOR TRAX BOATS, VISIT
WWW.GATORTRAXBOATS.COM

LUNKER LINES

Paul Elias

Fishing on drop-offs at the ledges and in Ross Barnett's shallow water, you may not catch any monsters, but you should catch plenty of 1½- to 2-pound bass.

ROSS BARNETT'S HOT-WEATHER BASS

FISH LEDGES, HUMPS AND LILY PADS FOR SUMMER ACTION

August is a tough month to catch bass, no matter where you decide to fish. One of the reasons I like to fish Ross Barnett this month is because it's a shallow lake with lots of vegetation. You can mix up your fishing and catch good numbers of bass. If you find one very productive lily pad patch, you may catch one or two nice bass.

In shallow lakes in August, vegetation provides shade, cover, oxygen and an abundance of baitfish for bass, which will be feeding on bluegills, shad and crayfish.

LEDGES AND HUMPS

Ross Barnett features numbers of ledges with stumps and drop-offs. You may have your boat sitting in 8 to 10 feet of water and be casting into 2 to 3 feet of water. I like to aggravate these bass into biting, although I may get hung up.

I'll start off casting a Mann's Grey Ghost 15+ crankbait and follow that bait up with a C4 Squarebill crankbait on a 7-foot-6, medium-action rod with a 6.4:1 Bruin reel spooled with 20-pound White Peacock fluorocarbon. I like to start with

the 15+ because the big lip on that lure helps keep me from getting hung when coming through that shallow water and the stumps on the edge of the drop-off.

To fish the 15+ successfully in shallow water, reel it fairly slowly. Once the crankbait hits a stump, it usually will kick off the stump and not get hung.

When there are stumps in 2 to 3 feet of water, I'll cast the C4 squarebill with a purple back and pearl sides. It will only dive 4 to 5 feet on the same rod, reel and line. When I'm casting into 3 feet of water, those stumps will top out at about 1½ to 2 feet. By using the C4 Squarebill and reeling it faster than the 15+, I can still get this crankbait to swim over the tops of the stumps or just on their edges and not get hung as often.

These ledges and vegetation are present on both the eastern and the western



Mann's C4 Squarebill

sides of Ross Barnett. Some of these ledges may be 70 yards or more long before you'll hit a sweet spot where the stumps are the thickest, or you'll discover one isolated stump that produces a good number of bass.

You also can pinpoint some sunken roadbeds on the eastern side of the lake that provide good bass fishing. The eastern side has more humps covered with

stumps than ledges. Once you locate a hump, it may contain numbers of bass. On this side of the lake, you often can catch large numbers of bass from 12 to 15 inches long. You may see some schooling bass on the surface in August.

DROP-SHOT AND SHAKY HEAD

I like to fish Mann's Jelly Bug in junebug or watermelon red on a drop-shot or as a shaky head rig in the same places where I've fished the crankbaits. When I'm fishing it as a drop-shot, I'll use spinning tackle. I'll be fishing 15-pound bass braid with a fairly long — 8 to 10 feet — leader of 15-pound fluorocarbon. On the drop-shot rig, I'll use a ¼-ounce weight with a hook about 6 inches above. When I'm fishing the shaky head, I like to use a ⅜-ounce jig, if the wind will allow me to fish a head that light.

BIG-BASS CHANCES

To catch big bass in August, the frog will be your best bet once the day heats up. I fish two types of frogs: Mann's Pygmy Frog in white and the black Super Frog. I don't think the color is a big deal in August. When fishing thick vegetation, I think the bass key in more on movement than on color. I like a heavy action, 7-foot-6 to 8-foot rod with a 7.5:1 reel and 65-pound bass braid.

Ross Barnett features two types of lily pads: the taller ones in shallower water and the thicker but smaller pads of a different color in deeper water — often with their leaves right on the surface.

Bigger bass seem to concentrate in the smaller pads but will be more difficult to reach to cast to them. You must time your strike and be sure the bass has a frog in its mouth. Bass know how to get off a frog as easily as they do taking a frog. If you catch 50%

of the bass that strike your frog, you'll have had a very good day of bassing. I tend to set the hook too quickly, and that's probably why I miss numbers of bass when fishing the frog.

You won't get as many bites frog fishing as you do when you're fishing the crankbaits, drop-shotting or shaky head fishing. But the bass you do catch will tend to be bigger. ■



Mann's Super Frog



Paul Elias, of Laurel, has fished 15 Bassmaster Classics with career winnings of over \$1 million, including one Bassmaster Classic Championship. Elias also holds the current record for a four-day BASS tournament weigh-in with 132 pounds, 8 ounces, on Falcon Lake in Texas.

RJ'S OUTBOARD

Sales & Service

Since 1980

Over 70 Years of Service Experience!

NEWEST DEALER FOR PHOENIX BOATS



1208 Old Fannin Road
 Brandon, MS 39047
 601-919-0919
 www.rjsoutboard.com



YAMAHA

GETTIN' FRESH

Hal Schramm

Largemouth bass like this 10.35-pound lunker are rare, even in healthy, fast-growing populations managed for trophy bass.

GETTING A HANDLE ON TROPHY BASS

NON-TRADITIONAL SAMPLING PROVIDES INSIGHTS

For many bass anglers, size matters, and several states have implemented management efforts to enhance trophy bass opportunities.

Evaluating these efforts is difficult, because very large bass are rare and infrequently collected in routine electrofishing or creel surveys. Results of a cooperative effort by biologists at the University of Florida, University of Georgia, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks may offer something of a solution.

THE PROBLEM

Calling Panther Lake is a 400-acre state

lake in Copiah County, that opened for fishing in 2006. It was stocked with crappie, bluegill, redear sunfish and channel catfish to provide a multi-species fishery. Florida bass were stocked to provide trophy bass potential, and forage stocking and a series of regulations have been used to help build a trophy bass population. Were the efforts working? What was the status of the trophy bass population?

Electrofishing is the standard method for sampling largemouth bass in southeastern states. Although providing important information about relative abundance, population-size structure, and recruitment, electrofishing has been shown to under-represent large bass compared to angling. While angler-

provided data can fill in some gaps in fishery assessment data, biologists remain skeptical about angler data due to potential biases and validity. Could angler-caught fish caught under properly controlled conditions be a valid source of accurate data?

THE STUDY DESIGN

The bass population at Calling Panther was sampled by standard electrofishing in October and November of 2010 and 2012. Creel surveys were conducted from February through June of 2010, 2011 and 2012. All bass collected were measured for length and weighed.

Specialized angling designed to catch trophy bass but still be a standardized

sampling method occurred from June to December 2011. The specialized angling consisted of two anglers trolling live golden shiners in all habitats in the lake where trolling was possible. All bass collected were measured for length and weighed. In addition, all bass collected were checked for tags, and a tag was applied if the fish was not already tagged to allow a mark-recapture population estimate.

THE RESULTS

During 5½ hours of electrofishing, 166 Florida bass were collected that ranged from 3.5 to 24.7 inches, with an average length of 10.7 inches. Only four of those bass were classified as “trophy size” —greater than 22 inches or approximately 8 pounds.

Anglers interviewed during 65 creel days caught 707 bass; 337 were harvested and measured by creel clerks. The harvested bass ranged from 5.5 to 26.8 inches and averaged 13.3 inches. Twelve trophy bass were measured.

The specialized-angler team fished 256 hours and caught 95 trophy bass. Twenty-nine of those fish were larger than 10 pounds, and the largest was 26.3 inches and 13.2 pounds. On average, it took the specialized anglers 2.7 hours to catch a bass greater than 8 pounds and 8 hours to catch a bass greater than 10 pounds.

Analysis of tagged and recaptured bass caught by the specialized anglers estimated of the trophy bass population at 150 fish or about 0.4 trophy fish per acre.

IMPLICATIONS

The specialized angling, which was designed to be a standardized sampling method — and thus, provide repeatable and comparable estimates — clearly was more effective than electrofishing and creel surveys for capturing trophy bass and provided useful information about a segment of a bass population that is poorly estimated by

traditional sampling methods. As such, it is useful to assess trophy bass.


Although useful, this specialized angler-data approach is not a replacement for traditional sampling that provides information about bass population-size structure, recruitment and angler harvest. It’s effectiveness as a way to estimate the abundance of trophy bass is also limited to relatively small waters.

Statistically, the population estimate was relatively precise and indicated Calling Panther Lake had a large population of trophy-size bass. However, the accuracy of the population estimate is vulnerable to changes in catchability of the bass, a topic that has been discussed


previously. If catchability of previously caught bass declines, as several studies have found, the specialized angling method will underestimate the abundance of trophy bass. If that is the case, Calling Panther Lake had a lot of trophy bass, at least in 2011. ■



Hal Schramm is an avid angler and veteran fisheries biologist.



TOHATSU



EMMETT'S MARINE

354 DALE TRL NE • BROOKHAVEN, MS 39601
(601) 833-2277
WWW.EMMETTSMARINE.COM

STAY
DRY

STAY
COOL

SPORTSMAN
COOL BREEZE



 **SPORTSMAN**
www.SPORTSMANGear.com

Whitetail checklist

By David Hawkins

Mississippi's deer season is still a ways off, but it's time to start getting things lined up for the promise of opening day.

The start of Mississippi's deer season is just around the corner, so it's time to start getting things at the camp ready. Here are some suggestions:

It was a hot day for baling hay, but any day that is right for making hay is going to be a little on the hot side in Mississippi. Clyde Risher stopped for a moment in the shade of an oak and naturally searched the limbs for the coming crop of acorns. Deer favor acorns, and Clyde is a dedicated deer hunter. For him — and thousands like him — deer season never closes, only the days when it's legal to shoot them end.

continues >>>







As July transitions into August, whitetail fawns dropped in July begin to travel with their mothers. For hunters such as Risher, a farmer who is in the field most every day, the sighting of the first fawns is a key to determining the first rut for the coming season. That's important because bucks will lose their inhibitions and make themselves available targets.

"When a fawn is born, (it has) little or no scent," Risher said, "or that is what I was told by a deer biologist ... at a seminar about deer. For about two weeks, the mother visits the fawn and feeds it, perhaps move it as it gains strength. So when I start seeing fawns following their mothers, I can count backward the 190 to 210 days, minus the time it lay still, and I have the probable date of the first rutting period."

According to Risher, if the first fawn is spotted July 15, then the fawn probably dropped around July 2. Split the difference on gestation and count back 200 days, and you can be pretty confident the doe was bred around the last week of November.

Not exact science, but a good starting place.

START A JOURNAL

Tommy Hemphill of Florence has hunted deer for most of his life, and in the past few decades, he has discovered the importance of keeping a hunting journal. It contains notes about deer sightings, behavior, how those behaviors correlate with moon phases and solunar tables.

"It's not something that will help the hunters who have never done one," he said. "But it's never too late to start. I record the first food I see deer favoring, then the next and then the next. One example is soft mast. Persimmons begin to fall in September, unless we have a dry summer.

The persimmons on my place are gone by mid-October. The honey locust pods are the next to go. By this time, the first acorns begin to fall.

"Deer know all these times and places as well as you know your own kitchen and pantry. Having a journal allows hunters to select a stand that is likely to produce a sighting."

Hemphill has found that solunar tables indicating major and minor activity times are quite accurate when averaged. Naturally, droughts, hurricanes, habitat removal or enhancement and hunting pressure add to the mix. Based on his journal, Hemphill begins searching for mast well before the Oct. 1 opening of archery season, because promising food sources, even if they will be gone before the season opener, attract deer. Trail cameras record the deer visiting the food sources and give the hunter some indication of herd numbers and conditions before the first arrow flies.

continues >>>

☑ **Whitetail checklist**

FOOD PLOTS

Most hunters accept establishment of food plots as a broadly beneficial practice for multiple wildlife species. Rabbits, deer, turkeys, songbirds and even predators are attracted to these green patches.

For deer, they are a sure attractant.

In terms of existing food plots that just need to be replanted, August and September stand out as the most-opportune time for this activity.

“Assuming a food plot has already been established, soil testing completed and proper pH maintained, the choice of a planting becomes pretty academic,” said Bronson Strickland of Mississippi State University. “An excellent mix, the one that I use, is this: 30 pounds of oats, 30 pounds of wheat, 12 pounds of crimson clover and 5 pounds of arrowleaf clover per acre. This will feed deer for a good five months.”

Strickland said that hunters who want to add rye should be sure to add cereal rye, such as Elbon Rye and never just rye grass.



A good application of fertilizer will increase natural browse.

**AS MALE ENHANCEMENTS GO,
NOTHING PERFORMS LIKE OUR GUNS.**

STEPHEN HANSEN // OWNER

BUY. SELL. TRADE. PAWN.

hcguns.com // (228) 206-1384 // Long Beach, MS



Food plots can improve the health of your deer and serve as an attractant.



Rick Small

Oats will be the first of the seed to grow, followed by the wheat and clover. Strickland considers this a good general mix for most all Mississippi soils when properly prepared. "Several years ago, the (Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks) and Pennington Seed developed a Mississippi Mix that does well in most soils in the state, and offers a broad spectrum of forbs and grasses for a wide variety of wildlife," said Chad Dacus, former chief of wildlife for the MDWFP and now an official with the Mississippi State University Extension Service. "The mix contains wheat, oats, crimson clover and arrowleaf clover. This combination, with ample moisture, will provide deer a good level of nourishment during the winter stress period and well into the spring green-up."

NATURAL BROWSE

Fertilizer has become a costly commodity over the past few years as the cost of production and transportation have soared. Still, where field and forest edges allow, fertilizer will add to the nutrients in native browse. Some

continues >>>

Tried and true
for 70 years




THIS SEASON,
GO WITH THE BEST



CLENZOIL

PROTECTING SINCE 1948

- SAFE ON ALL FINISHES
- EFFECTIVELY REMOVES OILS, DIRT, COPPER, LEAD, PLASTIC WAD AND OTHER CONTAMINANTS
- PROVIDES A THIN, NON-GREASY COATING THAT PREVENTS RUST AND LUBRICATES ALL MOVING PARTS OF FIREARMS
- WILL NOT HARM GUN BLUING, CASE-COLORING, GOLD INLAYS, CAMO-COATINGS, SYNTHETICS OR WOOD STOCKS
- REPELS DEBRIS AND GRIME BUILD UP
- PERFORM IN ALL CONDITIONS
- MADE PROUDLY IN THE UNITED STATES

AVAILABLE
AT FINER SPORTING
GOODS STORES



CALL CLENZOIL FOR FREE SAMPLE

WWW.CLENZOIL.COM





☑ Whitetail checklist

Mississippi companies are using chicken litter, the cake that remains in a commercial chicken growing house when the birds are removed, and treating it to create an organic fertilizer. The price for a 70-pound bag is about half the price of commercial chemical fertilizer such as 13-13-13. Look for it at locations that sell organic gardening supplies.

Chicken farmer Andy Wedgeworth of Lorena has used this organic fertilizer on his food plots. He said the organic material boosts growth and lasts longer than commercial fertilizer.

STAND PLACEMENT, SELECTION

Late summer and early fall are good times to move stands. Hunters know stands become stigmatized because deer begin to associate people with the structures. Hemphill has favorite shooting houses and tree-stands that deer have learned.

“(Deer) step out of the woods, and the first thing they do is look at that stand to see if there is anybody in it,” he said. “Instead of moving the stand, I just made a dummy and put a hat on it. They get used to seeing a hat in the stand, so when I’m there, it looks just like it always does.”

“I guess, all this said, any changes to stands need to be made early, so the deer can become acclimated to the changes before season begins.”

BOOTS ON THE GROUND

In a military sense, boots on the ground indicates the number of soldiers required to get a job done. For the deer hunter, it should signify the number of hours walking, looking, checking browse and available mast crops.

Hunters should be able to read the woods, seeing where deer have been without seeing the tracks. Dropping are, of course, a dead giveaway, but so is a browse line. Plants such as green briar, honeysuckle, strawberry bush and even young oaks will show the evidence of browsing.

Notice where weeds like ragweed have flourished; the better the soil, the greater the palatability, and the greater the palatability, the greater the chances deer will browse there in the summer as well as in the winter when the weeds have turned brown.

Trail cameras cannot be out too early. Capturing images of bucks as they grow antlers is fun and educational. Antlers in velvet always seem larger than when dried, but the drying process marks a change in a buck’s hormone levels. Bucks will rub the drying velvet against trees and bushes to remove it from the



Get your stands located and hung well before the season.

hardened bone antlers.

Locating these rubbing sites is a good way to locate a buck’s probable core area. This core area is perhaps the most-important find a hunter can make. Since it is a place where the buck feels safe, has escape routes and good bedding cover, he is apt to be found there all during his life, unless he or the cover is removed. ■



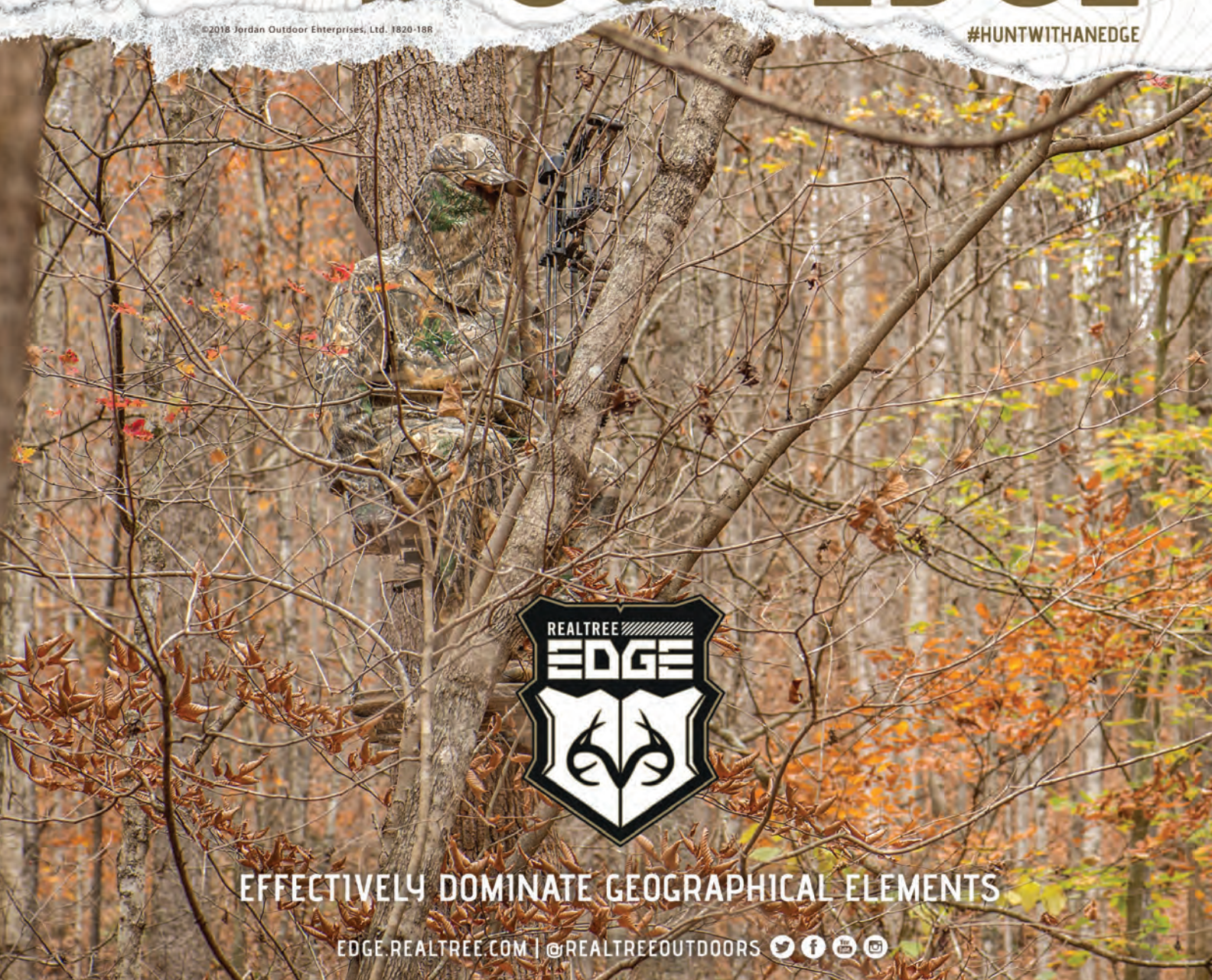
David Hawkins is a freelance writer living in Forest, Miss. He can be reached at hawkins2209@att.net.



CONCEALMENT IS OUR EDGE

©2018 Jordan Outdoor Enterprises, Ltd. 1820-188

#HUNTWITHANEDGE



EFFECTIVELY DOMINATE GEOGRAPHICAL ELEMENTS

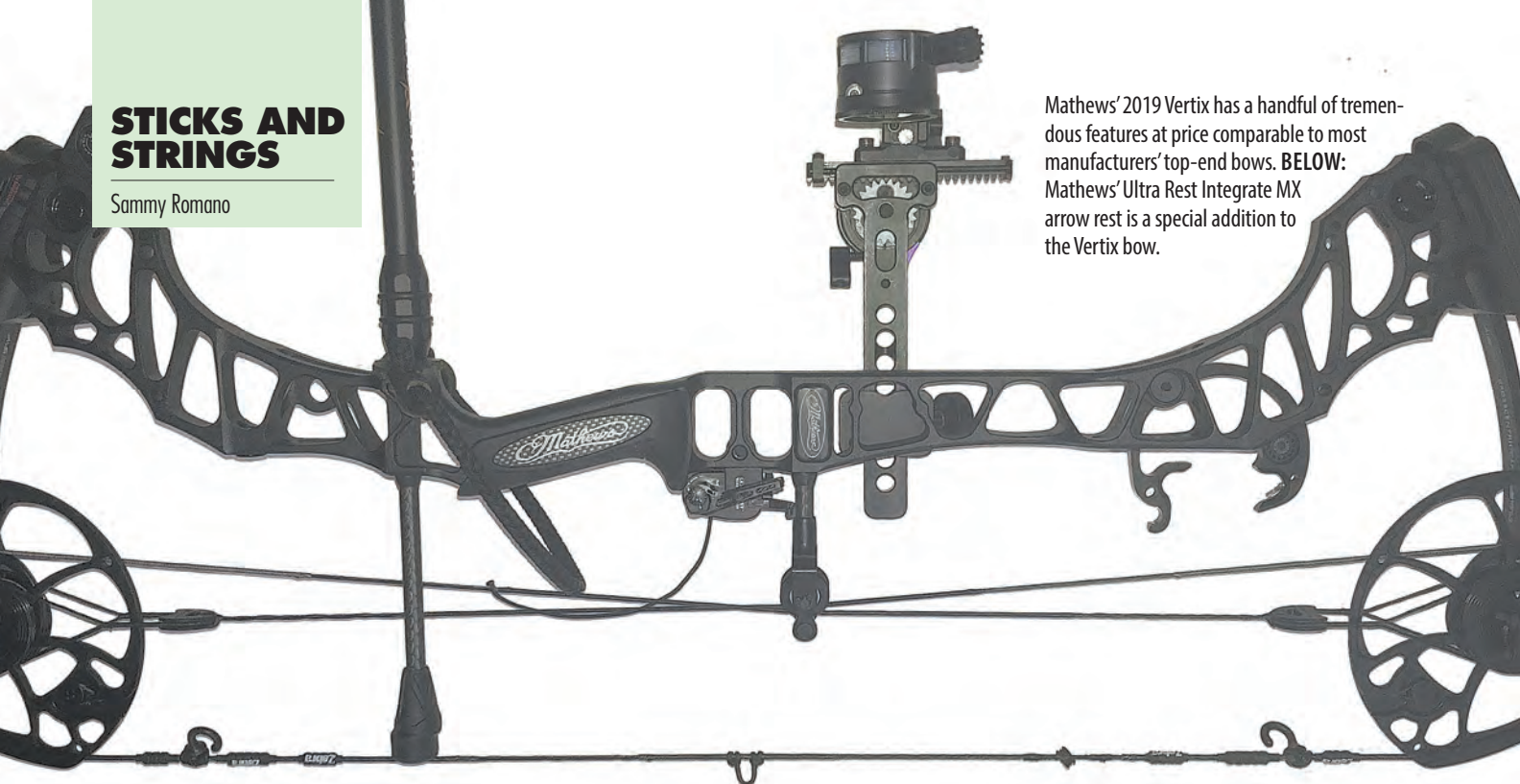
EDGE.REALTREE.COM | @REALTREEOUTDOORS



STICKS AND STRINGS

Sammy Romano

Mathews' 2019 Vertex has a handful of tremendous features at price comparable to most manufacturers' top-end bows. **BELOW:** Mathews' Ultra Rest Integrate MX arrow rest is a special addition to the Vertex bow.



MATHEWS' VERTIX IS A BOW TO CHERISH

TOP-DRAWER FEATURES MAKE THIS 2019-MODEL BOW A PLEASURE TO SHOOT

Mathews archery is responsible for many innovations found throughout the archery industry, such as roller-cable guards, harmonic damping, perimeter weighted cams, and long-riser, short-limb designs.

For 2019, they continue this tradition of innovation. While Mathews always brings a strong offering to the marketplace, this year they really pulled out the stops. The new Mathews Vertex offers several features never seen before, including Switchweight technology, and an integrated arrow-rest mounting system — all on a frame that is extremely fast, quiet, smooth and with extreme shootability. This bow is a perfect blend of all of these features, and offers something for almost any hunting application.

Given the price of today's bows, most archers only own one, making it more important than ever for that bow to fill many roles. With a 30-inch axle-to-axle length, the Vertex bow is an ideal length for any type of hunting. It is short enough to be extremely maneuverable in a tree

stand or ground blind, yet, due to its long riser length, it is extremely forgiving. This bow will be equally at home hunting white-tailed deer in Eastern hardwoods, or on a spot-and-stalk Western big-game hunt in more open terrain. With a brace height of 6 inches, it offers blistering arrow speeds of up to 343 fps (IBO), but is still forgiving of mistakes.

The heart and soul of any modern compound bow is its cam system. When designing the 2019 Vertex, Mathews used its proven Crosscentric cam system, but with the addition of new Switchweight technology for a slam dunk. This revolutionary new technology allows the shooter to change peak draw weight to 60, 65, 70 or 75 pounds without using a bow press by simply changing the cam modules.

In contrast, other compound bows on the market require a new set of limbs and the use of a bow press, making this both difficult and expensive. Draw length and let-off can also be changed by changing modules, all without affecting

continue on page 52 >>>



Sammy Romano is a lifelong hunter who has worked in the archery industry for more than 25 years. His expertise includes compounds and crossbows. He can be reached at samboka31@aol.com.

SNAP LOCK IS THE INDUSTRY LEADER IN AFFORDABLE & PORTABLE BOX BLIND TECHNOLOGY

The double wall construction keeps you warmer in winter and cooler in summer by providing a barrier of insulation that single wall designs don't have.



Hunting Blinds
BY Formex

snaplockhuntingblinds.com • 800-310-3867

Snap Lock Hunting Blinds utilize a unique system of interlocking panels that assemble securely in minutes without the need for hardware or tools.

DEALERS WANTED!

ONE HUNTER

Size: 4' x 4'
Weight: 75 lbs.

The included straps provide a simple and convenient method to attach Snap Lock blinds to an optional base or platform.

TWO HUNTER

Size: 4' x 6'
Weight: 88 lbs.

QUICK & EASY 15 MINUTE ASSEMBLY GIVES YOU THE ABILITY TO CHANGE SET-UPS FAST!

WE SELL LAND

\$1.1 BILLION
293,000 ACRES
sold company wide
in 2018



WESLEY MCCONNELL
Agent, North LA
(217) 371-9094



BLAKE CHARLES
Agent, Northern LA
(337) 945-4061



CADE TAYLOR
Agent, Southeast LA
(225) 719-0495



CLINT WOOD
Agent, Northeast LA
(318) 348-0675



CONNOR CAMP
Agent, North LA
(318) 458-7563



BLAKE SHELBY
Agent, Northeast LA
(318) 366-5913

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL LAND SPECIALIST TO LEARN MORE ABOUT BUYING AND SELLING HUNTING, RANCH, FARM AND TIMBERLAND



WHITETAIL PROPERTIES REAL ESTATE

HUNTING | RANCH | FARM | TIMBER

WHITETAILPROPERTIES.COM



Whitetail Properties Real Estate, LLC (dba Whitetail Properties) | Nebraska & North Dakota DBA Whitetail Trophy Properties Real Estate LLC | Lic. in IL, MO, IA, KS, KY, NE & OK - Dan Perez, Broker | Lic. in AR, CO, GA, MN, ND, TN, SD & WI - Jeff Evans, Broker | Lic. in FL, OH, & PA - Kirk Gilbert, Broker | Lic. in NM & TX - Joey Bellington, Broker | Lic. in IN - John Boyen, Broker | Lic. in LA, MS, GA & AL - Sybil Stewart, Broker | Lic. in TN - Chris Wakefield, Broker | Lic. in TN - Bobby Powers, Broker | Lic. in AR - Johnny Ball, Broker | Lic. in SC - Rick Elliot, Broker | Lic. in NC - Rich Baugh, Broker | Lic. in MI - Edmund Joel Nogaski, Broker



continue from page 50 >>>

efficiency. In theory — since I have noticed most Vertex bows run approximately 5 pounds over on draw weight — this gives the shooter the ability to adjust one bow from 50 to 80 pounds of draw weight by using a combination of changing modules and adjusting the limb bolts.

In an age of increasing prices, Mathews has held steady on its retail prices. While most other manufacturers have raised the MSRP of their high-end bows by \$100 or more, Mathews has not. With an MSRP of \$1,099, the Vertex is reasonably priced compared to other manufacturers' flagship bows. That, coupled with its unique features, flexibility and excellent shootability make this bow a no-brainer for many prospective buyers.

The Vertex is offered in Realtree Edge, Black, Stone, Optifade Elevated II, Optifade Subalpine as well as Ridge Reaper Forest and Ridge Reaper Barren. Mathews offers matching accessories in these patterns. For a small upcharge, custom-colored strings

and cables are an option, and Mathews has a bow-builder option on its website that allows consumers to visualize how their custom bow will look when completed.

One of the more interesting features of the Vertex is its integrated arrow-rest option. In collaboration with QAD, this is a first-of-its-kind arrow rest and mounting system. Like all QAD arrow rests, the Ultra Rest Integrate MX arrow rest offers complete capture with a fall-away feature. What separates it from other arrow rests of its kind is a machined-aluminum launcher, and the way it mounts onto a machined dovetail on the riser of the Vertex. This is a Mathews exclusive, although I expect other manufacturers will soon follow suit. This feature offers a lower profile, as well as micro adjustable windage and elevation, plus "lockdown" to eliminate launcher bounce-back for perfect fletching clearance every shot.

The Vertex also features the Engage grip system, which, in my opinion, is the best grip Mathews has ever offered. This grip has a narrow throat to minimize bow torque, and its ergonomic design is extremely comfortable in the shooter's hand. The Vertex is also the smoothest, quietest bow Mathews has ever produced. Although it weighs 4.67 pounds, it balances almost perfectly neutral. That, plus the fact that it uses Mathews' patented EHS 3D damping system to virtually cancel any noise and vibration, makes a heavy stabilizer unnecessary. The Vertex is 20% smoother than the Triax, which was unbelievably smooth and quiet. This is a quantum leap in smoothness that has to be experienced to be believed.

If you're in the market for a new bow this year, the 2019 Mathews Vertex is well worth considering. It features versatility, speed, quietness, and performance — all at a lower price than most other manufacturers' high end bows. Stop by your local Mathews retailer to test-shoot one and experience this amazing bow for yourself. ■

Freedom to roam is closer than you think.

With best-in-class acceleration and handling with cargo*, the new gas-powered Sidekick delivers durability and speed. All the way up to 40 mph. And with a great offer available, tasting freedom just got a whole lot sweeter. Visit us today.

SIDEKICK
Durability meets speed



Best-in-Class acceleration and handling with cargo
40mph • Gas Powered • 2 year/1000 hour warranty

 **Kubota**
Shape your world.

\$0 DOWN 0% APR 48 MONTHS

 **CRAIN TRACTOR & EQUIPMENT**

508 Hwy 98 Bypass
Columbia, Mississippi 39429
601.736.4527 • www.craintractor.com

Sidekick.KubotaUSA.com

*Class is based on these models: Polaris Ranger XP 900, John Deere XUV835M & Kawasaki Mule PRO-FXR. The handling comparison was performed on the FSAE SKIDPAD course in gravel conditions. © Kubota Tractor Corporation, 2019. \$0 Down, 0% A.P.R. financing for up to 48 months on purchases of select new Kubota RTV Series equipment from participating dealers' in-stock inventory is available to qualified purchasers through Kubota Credit Corporation, U.S.A.; subject to credit approval. Some exceptions apply. Example: 48 monthly payments of \$20.83 per \$1,000 financed. Offer expires 8/31/19. See us or go to KubotaUSA.com for more information.

By Jon Miller

UNDERSTANDING FISH METABOLISM FOR BETTER SUMMERTIME SPECKLED TROUT FISHING

LIFE IN THE FAST LANE



Summer is in full swing, and many anglers are juggling family, travel and work, while still looking for the time to fish. Summer is both a time of freedom and confinement to traffic jams, long lines at anything touristy and launching ramp chaos. We say that our lives are fast in summer, but this is nothing compared to how fast a speckled trout lives, literally speaking. Physiologically, it lives faster in summer than in winter.

WHAT IS METABOLIC RATE AND WHY SHOULD ANGLERS CARE?

Metabolism in biology is a measure of the chemical reactions happening inside cells as they extract and use energy. As an angler, my interest is in the metabolic rate, which is a way to track the frequency of these chemical reactions. Understanding metabolic rate is not just academic, it's a practical way to predict fish behavior.

For creatures like humans and fish, the chemical reactions in cells related to energy extraction and energy use are reactions involving oxygen. So the amount of oxygen a fish uses is a measurement of a fish's metabolic rate. Oxygen use is measurable; it provides us a handle to open a window on fish behavior.

Measuring the amount of oxygen used by fish can't be done from your boat, but don't worry, biologists have performed many studies on oxygen consumption by fish in controlled environments, which we can use for our purposes. Biologists do these tests by putting fish in a tank and measuring the change in dissolved oxygen in the tank as it is used up by the fish. Remember the last time you killed your bait because you didn't know the aerator died or the circulation pump stopped? Same experiment, except you weren't measuring the oxygen in the water.

**THE EFFECT OF WATER TEMPERATURE
ON METABOLIC RATE UP NEXT >**

THE EFFECT OF WATER TEMPERATURE ON METABOLIC RATE

While biologists have studied the metabolic rate of fish under many environmental conditions, the one of most interest to me as an inshore angler on the Gulf Coast is water temperature.

Biologists have established that metabolic rate increases with water temperature. As we know, fish are cold-blooded, and so their body temperature is always the same as the temperature of the water around them. Simply said, the higher the water temperature, the more oxygen fish need, and the more food they must eat.

You may have already verified this principle in your bait bucket, because you know that in summer, if you put a frozen water bottle in the with your shrimp, they won't die as quickly. Lowering the water temperature slows their metabolic rate, which slows their breathing and need for food, while reducing the stress induced by a high metabolic rate.

On Louisiana's Gulf Coast, the water temperature ranges from a low around 50° F to a high of 90°. Figure 1, which was created with data from a 2014 research paper, *Water Temperature, Fundamentals of Environmental Measurements*, shows the relationship between metabolic rate in aquatic organisms and water temperature.

As you can see, the metabolic rate at 90° F is four times the rate at 50°. As we know, the metabolic rate sets the amount of food that fish must eat in a given time period, so redrawing the data as food consumption vs. water temperature in Figure 2 is meaningful to anglers.

METABOLIC RATE IN WINTER

As we see in the graphic, the low water temperatures in winter will significantly reduce a speckled trout's respiration and digestion rate. The information I found on digestion rates suggests that, in moderate water temperatures, a speckled trout will digest a full stomach in around 3 days. Therefore, when the water temperature drops from 70° F to 50° F, the metabolic rate will slow to about 50% of what it was, and the digestion rate will be reduced. If we assume the digestion rate will decrease

Figure 1

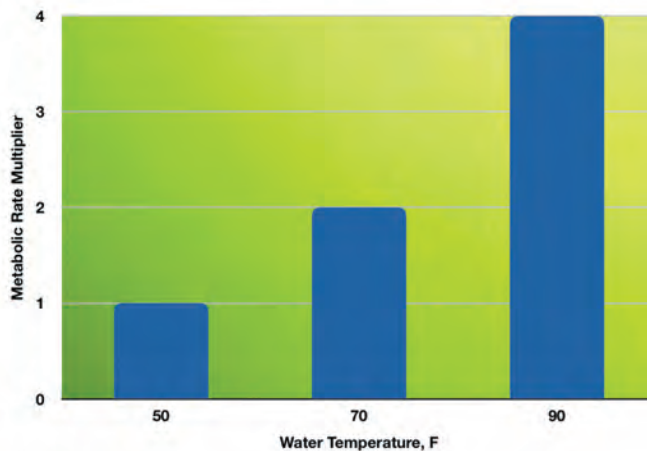
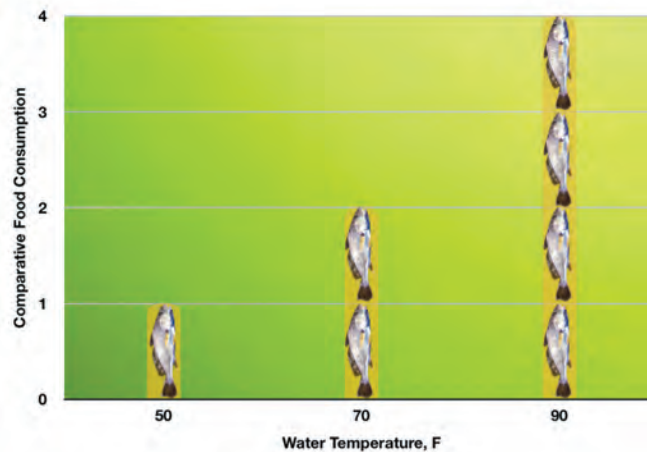


Figure 2



It takes longer in colder water for fish to digest the food in their stomachs, so there is less need to feed. **ABOVE:** A speckled trout's metabolic rate rises appreciably as the water temperature in its home area rises, requiring much more food to keep the fish alive.

by roughly the same ratio as the metabolic rate, the trout in 50° F water may only need to eat every four or five days.

If the water temperature drops too much, the lowered metabolic rate will result in immobilization of trout and eventual death. Timothy O'Donnell reports in the paper, *Effects of Cold Winters on the Genetic Diversity of an Estuarine Fish, Spotted Seatrout*, that Florida speckled trout have died when subjected to a water temperature less than 45° F for more than 24 hours.

So, when a strong winter cold front makes the water temperature plummet, it may seem to us like the trout have left the area, but in actuality, they are still there, just chilling. Most trout are caught due to hunger-driven feeding, so with the cold water suddenly reducing their digestion, there is little need for them to strike at a bait.

My fishing buddy and I have been inspecting stomachs of trout for the past couple of years, and most are empty when we catch them. If there is food, then it's relatively fresh. That's why I think trout will not start feeding until their stomachs are empty and conditions for feeding are reasonably good. If this is true, it's likely that in very cold weather, trout may only feed once a week, and then only in the best conditions. That theory fits pretty well with the inconsistent catching pattern I have experienced when the water temperature drops to the low 50s.



Chris Ginn

METABOLIC RATE IN SUMMER

So now we get to the matter at hand: what will be the feeding behavior of speckled trout in the heat of summer?

Summer is a dynamic period for speckled trout, and in many ways, much more dangerous than winter. Trout are forced by their spawning function out into water with a higher salinity level, where, despite the high predation risk, they must leave protective cover to feed frequently. When the water temperature reaches 90°, data says that a trout's metabolic rate is roughly four times its metabolic rate in winter, requiring them to fill their stomachs every day or two.

In addition to feeling hungry quite a lot, the high water temperatures will increase the trout's physiological function, which I imagine is like having a continuous caffeine buzz or worse. Remaining in water that is too hot will eventually cause a fish to go into shock because of their high physiological function. This state will result in a drop in feeding and lead to death.

If that was not dire enough, hot water holds less oxygen than cold water, and so summer speckled trout may find less



Higher water temperatures in summer increase a trout's metabolic rate and force it to feed four times more often than it feeds during the winter.

available oxygen at a time when their respiration function is elevated. Plus, there are a number of other changes that occur in warm water, each of which can be toxic to fish. Like I said, summer is a dynamic and dangerous time in the life cycle of speckled trout, so how do they survive?

WHAT TO CONSIDER IN SUMMERTIME

UP NEXT ➤



WHAT TO CONSIDER IN SUMMERTIME

Despite surface water temperatures that often reach as high as 90° F, trout are able to survive and even grow. To do so, they must retreat to areas with cooler water where they can calm down and where their physiological function drops.

You have probably noticed that on a sunny, hot, summer day, trout often feed in the early morning in shallow water, but when the sun starts to feel like an open oven door, the shallow-water bite slows. Since trout must eat frequently in summer, they can't depend on feeding only in the morning, so sustained feeding will also happen at other times, but where the water temperature is cooler.

Cooler water can be found deeper, at night, and in clear areas. Speckled trout are primarily a sight-feeding species, so night feeding generally happens under lights and around the full moon. Clear water is typically cooler than water with high suspended solids, because solids absorb heat from solar radiation more efficiently than the water molecules themselves.

A common place to find trout in deeper water is around oil and gas rigs. In the sounds and bays, these rigs can be in 7 to 12 feet of water; the trout will hang out on the bottom where the water is coolest. The rigs are good habitat, because in addition to being in deeper, cooler water, there is structure to hold bait and structure to provide protection from large predators.

Because of the frequency at which trout need to eat in summer, they have to stay in areas that are holding a significant amount of bait. Therefore, if you are looking to catch limits of trout, look in areas with evidence of large amounts of bait. Big pods or schools of baitfish can be directly seen swimming or jumping, and indirectly by feeding birds, nervous surface water, and the splashing of feeding predators.

BAIT SELECTION FOR SUMMER SPECKLED TROUT FISHING

Live bait, specifically shrimp, is the most-popular summer bait in Louisiana and is considered by some anglers as the only way to catch speckled trout in summer. Live shrimp is most often fished 2 to 3 feet under a popping cork or with a sliding cork in deeper water, such as around rigs.

Shrimp can also be fished on the bottom on a Carolina rig or similar rig, but this method is often plagued by hardhead catfish. Be prepared to buy more live shrimp on summer than winter trips, because in addition to speckled trout, you will be feeding a variety of unwanted characters.

Also, keeping shrimp alive when the thermometer hits 90° can be challenging. If you use an aerated baitwell or bait bucket, one trick to prolonging the life of shrimp is to add a frozen water bottle every hour or two. Do not put ice directly into the bait bucket, because it will lower the salinity.

If your baitwell only circulates water from outside to supply

Speckled trout can't feed shallow during the summer except near dawn and dusk because of scorching water temperatures.



oxygen to the bait, it will struggle to survive on hot, summer days. In this case, consider adding an aerator and a means to cool the water.

Artificial baits also catch fish in summer and have a few attractive differences from live shrimp. For one, they are pleasantly incapable of dying. They are also more selective at attracting gamefish.

I find swimbaits fished under popping corks and topwater stick baits to be the most productive shallow-water artificial baits in summer.

Around rigs, ¼- to ⅜-ounce swimbaits thrown into the pilings can be very effective.

When using this technique, give the swimbait time to hit the bottom before beginning your retrieve. For an added confidence booster, try adding a bait strip product like Fishbites onto your swimbait hook. The natural chemicals released by this product can increase speckled trout strikes. Even for the diehard live shrimp angler, having a pack of swimbaits and bait strips could save your fishing on a day when the ladyfish are around to lick your bait clean. ■



Trout are suckers for live shrimp during the summer, but because they're feeding more often, they can be fooled by artificials, too.



Jon Miller is an engineer, lifetime fisherman, and host of the YouTube channel Jon Miller Fishing.

STIHL

A SUCCESSFUL SEASON STARTS WITH STIHL

CLEAN OFF THE OUTDOORS



RB 400 
DIRT BOSS®
PRESSURE WASHER

\$579⁹⁵

- Clean up after cleaning fish and dressing game
- Power wash tools and equipment
- Clean trucks and trailers
- Clean UTVs and ATVs

MSA 120 C-BQ
BATTERY-POWERED
CHAIN SAW

BATTERY POWER.
MADE BY STIHL.



\$299⁹⁵

Includes AK 20 battery and AL 101 charger

- Clear stand locations
- Clear sightlines
- Clear shoreline
- Build ground blinds
- Use for firewood and other camp tasks

All prices are SSW-SRP. Available at participating dealers while supplies last. *The actual listed guide bar length can vary from the effective cutting length based on which powerhead it is installed on. ©2019 STIHL STSW19MAG4-12-142160-3

STIHLDEALERS.COM

CLENZOIL MARINE & TACKLE 12OZ. AEROSOL

Finally, a product you can use to clean and protect not only your fishing tackle, but also your outboard motor and other metal features on your fishing vessel.

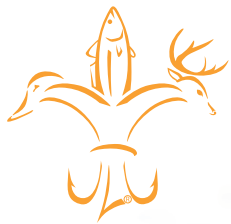
Clenzoil Marine & Tackle comes in a 12-ounce aerosol can, and with as many things as it can be used to clean and protect, that might not last long.

Use it to clean, lubricate and protect reels, tools, engines and other equipment that is exposed to the environment. It can remove

oils, dirt, old grease and leaves a thin, non-greasy coating that prevents rust and corrosion on engine blocks, hose clamps, locks, latches, hinges, down riggers and moving parts on trailers. Clenzoil Marine & Tackle will also preserve and protect wood accents on boats.

MSRP is \$17.99

For more info, visit: www.clenzoil.com



FRABILL'S TROPHY NET HAUL SERIES

The first connection between fish and angler — the hook and knot — is tremendously important, and so, it seems, is the final connection: the net.

Frabill debuted its Trophy Haul Net series this spring, with several features that should thrill all fishermen: an oversized, triangle-shaped handle that won't slip or spin out of your hand, a big net bag constructed of Frabill's patented Conservation netting that will make it easier to control and land fish, and a net bag control ring that gives anglers complete control of the net during landing.

In addition, the Power Extend Trophy Haul Net has a three-stage LED light mounted under the yoke handle to provide illumination during low-light fishing situations.

The Standard and Power Extend nets come in three different net sizes: 18"x21", 21"x24" and 24"x27". The Standard net comes with a 48-inch handle; the Power Extend net has a telescopic handle that extends from 48 to 72 inches.

MSRP for the Standard net is \$79.99, for the Power Extend, \$129.99.

For more info, visit: www.frabill.com

SHIMANO'S SLX DC 150 BAITCASTING REEL

Shimano's line of baitcasting reels just got a lot more impressive at the ICAST trade show in early July with the introduction of its Digital Control (DC) braking system in a reel, the SLX DC 150, that's within reach of more anglers' budgets.

The reel features Shimano's SLX low-profile style with the same I-DC4 digital brake control system already featured on the Curado DC series, a system that flattens out the learning curve for anglers new to baitcasting reels,

helping eliminate the backlashes so many experience.

The SLX 150 DC is offered in both right- and left-hand retrieves, and in three gear ratios: 6.2-to-1, 7.4-to-1 and 8.5-to-1.

MSRP is \$189.99.

For more info, visit: fish.shimano.com





HEVI METAL

★ LONGER RANGE. BANG DEAD.™ ★



New for 2019, HEVI-Metal® LR improves downrange knockdown power by 16% with a new, higher density bismuth alloy (30%) layered over corrosion-resistant steel shot. Tighter patterns, longer range, clean kills.



- ★ Lethal at even longer range
- ★ Pattern Density™ technology puts more pellets on target™
- ★ Improved cold weather performance
- ★ More reliable gun function
- ★ Priced like HEVI-Metal®

WWW.HEVISHOT.COM | "I DIDN'T COME THIS FAR TO MISS!"®

SPECIES SPOTLIGHT

Brian Cope



SPECIES SPOTLIGHT: AFRICAN POMPANO

OFFSHORE BATTLERS ARE WELCOME IN ANY ANGLER'S BOAT, BUT ARE RARELY TARGETED

African pompano, *Alectis ciliaris*, are saltwater fish that are usually caught in deep, offshore waters around wrecks and artificial reefs. They are found in warmer oceans throughout the world, including the Gulf of Mexico, the Atlantic Ocean and the Pacific Ocean.

This species has a deceiving name. Though it bears a slight resemblance to Florida pompano, the African pompano is a member of the jack family, along with jack crevalles and amberjacks.

These fish have flattened bodies similar to those of Mahimahi and other jacks. They are silvery in color, with shimmering sides and a pattern of chevrons that range from very faint to quite dark. They

have very blunt, steeply-sloped heads. They appear to have smooth skin with no scales, but they actually have many tiny, tightly-packed scales.

African pompano change fairly drastically as they age. When young, these fish have very long, thin, hair-like filaments growing from their dorsal and anal fins, filaments that are often longer than the fish itself, and when flared, they give off an appearance similar to a jellyfish. Fisheries biologists believe this is to ward off predators until the fish is large enough to survive on its own. As the fish ages, those filaments disappear completely.

Juvenile African pompano are sometimes caught in estuaries along the coast,

but they usually leave these areas at a fairly young age and move into deeper, offshore waters.

WEATHER WATCHERS

Interestingly, these fish seem heavily influenced by adverse weather conditions. An example is when a major hurricane built off the coast of North Carolina in the mid-1990s. Before that storm, African pompano were considered a rare catch off the North Carolina coast, but a huge influx of the species was observed directly after that storm. And ever since then, these fish continue to show up in much bigger numbers than they ever did before the hurricane. Anglers very rarely target African



Nice-sized African pompano are caught regularly, but the biggest members of the species will approach 50 pounds.

pompano specifically. However, they are welcome by-catches of fishermen seeking snapper and grouper. And for anglers targeting those bottom species, African pompano are not a huge surprise, though fishermen are usually happy to catch them.

Their diets mostly consist of crab, shrimp and smaller fish. They are known to turn away food that is dead, seeming to prefer live food more strongly than most other species.

Mississippi's state-record African pompano was caught in June 1997 by Lawrence Pichon. His fish weighed 36 pounds, 4 ounces.

Louisiana's state record for the species was caught by Michael Phillips off S. Timbalier Blk. in June 2003. That fish weighed 40.60 pounds.

The fish are known as great table fare, and they are hard fighters when hooked on rod and reel. The average size of these fish is 10 to 30 pounds, and they grow up to 50 pounds. ■



Brian Cope of Edisto Island, S.C., is a retired Air Force combat communications technician. He has a B.A. in English Literature from the University of South Carolina and has been writing about the outdoors since 2006. He's spent half his life hunting and fishing. The rest, he said, has been wasted.



For a world-class, center-console bay boat, look no further than BlackJack Boats. From design to construction, each and every boat is hand-crafted with precision, creating one of the fastest bay boats on the market. With BlackJack, you get quality, show-stopping design plus a performance like no other!

Go to blackjackboats.com to learn more or find a dealer near you!

BlackJack

POWERED BY **YAMAHA**

LURE REVIEW

Don Shoopman

Charleigh Champagne, the 2½-year-old daughter the daughter of Matrix owner Chas Champagne, admires a huge speckled trout that fell for a Matrix Rip Shad.



MATRIX RIP SHAD TARGETS THE 'TWEENER' DEPTHS

JERKBAIT TRIGGERS SPECKLED TROUT BITES FROM LOUISIANA TO FLORIDA

Chas Champagne of Slidell continues to expand the line of Matrix Shad artificials that saltwater fishermen covet in their efforts to catch speckled trout and other fish in and around the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Ocean.

His latest entry into the market will be the Matrix Rip Shad, a hard-body jerkbait, already a favorite of his and guides in Louisiana and Florida. The company is rolling out several artificials in the coming months that have been proven before hitting the market.

Champagne said the Rip Shad will likely be available on shelves this month.

"We've been working on that about a

year," he said.

Another of the eight new products scheduled to hit the market within six to eight months is the Matrix Monster, a 5-inch version of the Matrix Shad that should target speckled trout, bull reds, jack crevalle, lemonfish and even tarpon.

A JERKBAIT NEED

Champagne, 36, a graduate of St. Paul's High School and University of Southern Mississippi, said the Matrix Rip Shad was born out of necessity, i.e., to cover that depth between 2 feet and 6 feet. The Matrix Minnow, the second hard bait made by Matrix Shad, has been picking off beaucoup speckled trout at its optimum

depth on the retrieve ever since its debut.

The Matrix Minnow runs about 6 feet deep, which is ideal for many areas. However, while on a fishing trip in 2018, Champagne found himself wanting something that covered shallower depths.

"Last summer, when I was throwing the Matrix Minnow in Florida over some shallow grass beds, I was catching grass consistently. I wanted to make something for the shallows," he said.



Don Shoopman fishes for freshwater and saltwater species mostly in and around the Louisiana's Atchafalaya Basin and Vermilion Bay.

Matrix Rip Shads fill the niche as Matrix owner Chas Champagne continues “to make something for every situation.”

“When it hits the water, it’s floating. When you rip it down, it dives about 3 feet,” he said, adding that, during a pause in the action, it rises slowly to the surface.

“It’ll be great to fish 2 to 6 feet of water over shells and grass,” he said, having tried it out fishing prototypes at the Rip Shad at the MRGO and in Florida. “I’ve been personally fishing with them about six months.”

After prototypes became available in December and January, Champagne used Matrix Rip Shad, which are armed with heavy duty, black-nickel No. 6 hooks that are rust- and corrosion-resistant, to catch speckled trout on the MRGO rocks that border Lake Borgne, then returned in the spring to shallow areas in Florida.

“When I went back to the grass flat in Florida, we were very pleased with it. That’s when we pulled the trigger (on the production schedule),” he said.

TESTING GROUND

Champagne knew he had another winner, because if a speckled trout nails an artificial lure in the Sunshine State, it will nail it anywhere, because of the clean, salty, water and the amount of fishing pressure, the number of baits those fish see off the Florida coast.

Champagne sent some Rip Shads to several guides who fish 200 days or more each year, including Josh Lim of Pensacola, Fla., who owns Lim-It-Out Charters. As fate would have it, Lim caught a 26-inch speckled trout 10 minutes after he started fishing with it.

“He was SO excited. His word in Florida is good as gold. I knew if he liked it, everyone would,” Champagne said.

“Like I said before, some of the smartest speckled trout and redfish are in Florida. When you can catch 10 (speckled trout) a day over there, that means it works. It’s effective.”

The Rip Shad, which weighs $\frac{5}{16}$ -ounce, will be produced in five colors: purple passion, orange crush, goldie knox, cool breeze and glass shad.

His company’s goal is to make as many baits in a few colors rather than a few baits in many colors.

“We try to make something for every situation. That way we have something for everybody,” he said.

It started around 2010 when Champagne introduced what emerged as the wildly popular 3-inch Matrix Shad. Later, he introduced a 2-inch Matrix Shad for sac-a-lait fishermen, and at the request of so many saltwater anglers who venture to near-offshore and offshore waters, he is bringing out the Matrix Monster.

Josh Lim of Pensacola, Fla., who owns and operates Lim-It-Out Charters, smiles as he holds an ol’ yellowmouth he caught on a Matrix Rip Shad.



SPECKLED TRUTH

Chris Bush

Take notes about which lures worked this past year, and when, and put that knowledge to good use next time out.

WHAT LURES WORKED FOR YOU AND WHEN?

KEEP THE WINNERS AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

Christopher Bush

Fishing is a cyclical process, and those who are consistently successful understand that process.

What it often boils down to is figuring out the pattern in a certain time of year and dialing in presentation through lure selection. As I do most every year, I take off during the heat of the summer. What often ensues is a bit of preparation for the next winter wading season, but also a time of reflection. During this time, I look at the lures in my wade boxes and consider why they were successful. Here is a summary of what I noticed to hopefully help you prepare for the latter months of the year.

• **MirrOlure MirrOdine (17 MR), MirrOdine XL (27 MR).** These baits consistently produced throughout the year. I've thrown them in all four seasons and they have easily become a confidence bait. January and February were really good months for me, then it slacked off, only to pick back up in the end of May and into June. The colors that were most successful were: Greenback (18), pink/chartreuse speckled trout (C17MR-ECTR) and blue back/silver sides white belly (27MR-EB).

• **MirrOlure SoftDine, Custom Corky SoftDine XL.** When searching for a slightly more-subtle presentation with less flash than a MirrOdine, I've found the SoftDine a fantastic alternative. Like the MirrOdine, this bait provides the

capability to produce in all seasons and does so for me regularly. My top producing colors were: bayou/green back (49), pink/silver (08) and chartreuse/silver white belly (91). In addition, when searching for larger bites with larger bait present, primarily mullet, I'll throw the SoftDine XL. My confidence colors stay in line with the first three, except I love two custom colors in Custom Corkys: bay mistress and double bubble.

• **Rapala Shadow Rap Shad, Shadow Rap.** Similar in functionality and fishability, these two baits were incredibly effective on big fish from December to February. The long, exaggerated pause I would employ simply drove the big fish crazy during colder temperatures or days with a slight warming trend. As we moved into spring, these baits lost some of its effectiveness, but they have produced for me on a year-round basis. My favorite colors in both models are blueback herring, bone, haymaker and halloween.

SOFT PLASTICS

Last but not least, the unending versatility of having soft plastics in the box. Slowly, but surely I'm throwing larger profiles, but I haven't completely dismissed smaller soft plastics (under 4 inches) from my arsenal. For smaller profiles, I've found that a NED Rig (Owner Blockhead and ZMan Finesse TRD) can be super productive. For more

traditional-style swimbaits, Matrix Shad, Down South Lures or the Slayer Inc SST on a round or aspirin-style jighead produce year-round and simply produce bites. These can be great search baits; once you find the fish, upsize or switch techniques to entice the larger fish.

On the larger side of the soft-plastic spectrum, I've found that the KWigglers BTS (Ball Tail Shad) to also be super productive. Paired with a lighter jighead, this bait and profile gives a distinct glide that allows you to fish shallower more efficiently. Another large, soft-plastics bait that perpetually produces is the 6-inch Flap'n Shad from Gambler. These can be effective on both a traditional jighead as well as leadbelly swimbait hook. The elongated profile and pliability allow you to present a bait with tremendous action. The only downside is they are softer, and as a result, they only last a few fish. My favorite colors of the KWigglers are lagunaflauge and mansfield margarita, and my favorite colors of Flap'n Shad are coolade and night train.



Chris Bush is an Air Force officer and a licensed charter captain, husband and father. He spends his time targeting big speckled trout and sharing his knowledge on his website, Speckled Truth.

FANTASTIC FATBOYS

Wow, where do I begin? Paul Brown Fatboys are my perennial favorite and yet another way to target bigger bites. Know that these are, without a doubt, my confidence baits when it comes to targeting one big bite. Attributes like a healthy profile and an exaggerated wobble descent allows me to really pick apart an area I feel is holding larger-than-normal fish. My color selection varies widely, especially given water conditions. However, I find that Texas chicken (98), black back/silver sides/pink belly (11) and black back/gold sides/orange belly (09) are what I gravitate to the most.

So as we gear up for another full fall fishing season, I encourage you to really reflect on what has and has not been productive. Simply learning from what works and when can bolster your consistency; it may lead to a lot more success in the future.

Tight lines, God bless and remember to take what you need and release the rest. ■



The author's favorites include Paul Brown Fat Boys (top), a variety of soft plastics (above) and MirrOdines (right).

National Exposure, Local Expertise®

Specializing in all types of rural real estate, including:

- Homes
- Farms
- Timberland
- Recreational Land
- Waterfront Properties
- Executive Estates

Over 200+ listings in Mississippi and Louisiana

#1 United Country Real Estate Office Internationally in Sales

United Country Real Estate | **Gibson Realty & Land Company**

601.250.0017
GibsonRealtyMS.com
Facebook.com/UnitedCountryGibsonRealty

SUZUKI HOT SUMMER COOL DEALS

SUZUKI MARINE | **ULTIMATE**

3+3 36 MONTH WARRANTY

SUZUKI POWERBUCKS INSTANT SAVINGS

REPOWER FINANCE

Atlantic Marine
Waveland, MS

103 Highway 90 Waveland, MS
(20 minutes from Slidell)
(228) 467-2847 • Toll Free: (877) 396-8079
bobbyatlantic@bellsouth.net

Monday - Friday:
8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
www.atlanticmarinebk.com

Gimme Six Extended Protection promo is applicable to new Suzuki Outboard Motors from 25 to 350 HP in inventory which are sold and delivered to buyer between 07/01/19 and 09/30/19 in accordance with the promotion by a Participating Authorized Suzuki Marine Dealer in the continental US and Alaska to a purchasing customer who resides in the continental US or Alaska. Customer should expect to receive an acknowledgment letter and full copy of contract including terms, conditions and voided card from Suzuki Extended Protection within 90 days of purchase. If an acknowledgment letter is not received in time period stated, contact Suzuki Marine of America, Inc. - Marine Marketing via email: marinemarketing@smoa.com. The Gimme Six Promotion is available for pleasure use only and is not redeemable for cash. Instant Savings apply to qualifying purchase of select Suzuki Outboard Motors made between 07/01/19 and 09/30/19. For list of designated models, see Participating Dealer or visit www.suzukimarine.com. Instant Savings must be applied against the agreed upon selling price of the outboard motor and reflected in the bill of sale. (Suzuki will, in turn, credit Dealer's parts account.) There are no model substitutions, benefit substitutions, rain checks, or extensions. Suzuki reserves the right to change or cancel these promotions at any time without notice or obligation. * Financing offers available through Synchroway Retail Finance. As low as 5.99% APR financing for 60 months on new and unregistered Suzuki Outboard Motors. Subject to credit approval. Not all buyers will qualify. Approval, and any rates and terms provided, are based on credit worthiness. \$19.99/month per \$1,000 financed for 60 months is based on 5.99% APR. Hypothetical figures used in calculation; your actual monthly payment may differ based on financing terms, credit tier qualification, accessories or other factors such as down payment and fees. Offer effective on new, unregistered Suzuki Outboard Motors purchased from a participating authorized Suzuki dealer between 07/01/19 and 09/30/19. "Gimme Six", the Suzuki "S" and model names are Suzuki trademarks or ©. Don't drink and drive. Always wear a USCG-approved life jacket and read your owner's manual. © 2019 Suzuki Motor of America, Inc.

COOKING ON THE WILD SIDE

Jerry Dilsaver

FLOUNDER WITHOUT FRYING

THIS UNUSUAL RECIPE WILL HAVE YOU ASKING FOR MORE

August is the hottest month for sportsmen in the South. Fishing has been good all summer, but being smart rather than bold helps keep fishermen a bit cooler. Being the early bird is a good recipe for fishing success until a few cool mornings roll by in September and you can enjoy them in the shade or air conditioning once the day heats fully.

Meanwhile, hunters are stirring, and the whoosh of arrows splits the air heading for targets as hunters get fired up.

With Mississippi's archery season not starting until Oct. 1, sportsmen can be spend lots of time stocking their freezer with flounder before the anticipated season closing. Because it's hot, they should appreciate this recipe that keeps them in the air conditioning.

This is a tasty and simple recipe for preparing flounder other than frying it. Some folks think flatfish should only be dredged through a bowl of seafood breader and dropped in a pan of 350-degree peanut oil, but this might change their minds. This recipe is about as simple as cooking gets and is a bit healthier than frying. It uses whole flounder, so they are easy to clean too. If you prefer simple recipes, this is one you should enjoy preparing and eating.

Catching the guest of honor yourself is what makes this recipe special. In August, flounder are spread from the



backs of creeks, across coastal bays to nearshore rocks, shipwrecks and artificial reefs. Flounder are chewing, too, especially later in the month after a couple of cool mornings and the finger mullet begin heading towards the ocean. One of those finger mullet pegged on a Carolina rig should attract a healthy flatfish. ■

Scoring a whole flounder with a knife allows the sauce to better penetrate the meat.

INSETS: Adding the mixture of butter, parmesan cheese, lemon juice and mayonnaise.

BROILED FLOUNDER WITH BUTTERY PARMESAN SAUCE

I realize many folks consider me a little off-kilter since I freely admit that flounder aren't one of my favorite fish. They're okay, but I prefer fish with a more-robust flavor. Don't think I don't eat them; I do, but I look at things to add or bring out flavor and this is one of those recipes. It isn't strong or spicy, but steps up the mild flavor of flounder so even a old sea dog like me enjoys it.

I don't remember who gave me this recipe; it might have been one of our Alaskan friends offering a way to cook halibut without drying it out. It worked there, and the mixture has a good taste, so I began looking for other fish to use it on. Flounder look the most like halibut, just a whole lot smaller, and they have a similar mild taste, so they were the first we tried. It worked too.

Even small halibut fillets are thick, so we decided to try it with whole, pan-size flounder; It would probably also work well with fillets from a larger flounder. We score the flounder to give the sauce places to penetrate. My wife and I have different preferences for lemon in recipes, and we settled on two tablespoons as a medium flavor. You can add a little or use less to suit your personal tastes. Two tablespoons also happens to be about what you get from a fresh lemon. Warming the lemon for 20 to 25 seconds in a microwave helps get its juices flowing and makes it easier to get the juice.

PREPARATION:

Scale the flounder and remove internals, head and tail. Score the dark side of the flounder several times, both vertically and lengthwise. Score the white side of the flounder a couple of times vertically and horizontally.

Cover a baking or cookie pan with aluminum foil and spray with non stick spray. Preheat the oven to broil. Place the flounder on the foil in the pan, dark side up. Broil the flounder on a middle rack for 6 to 8 minutes until it is beginning to flake.

Remove flounder from oven. Spoon on and spread the buttery parmesan sauce well on the dark side of the flounder. Sprinkle or grind black pepper on the flounder. Return the flounder to the oven and broil for approximately 1 to 2 minutes, or until the buttery cheese sauce begins to brown.

Remove the flounder from the oven and allow to set for a couple of minutes. Serve the flounder while it is still warm and the buttery cheese sauce is soft.

This is a light summer meal that can easily be prepared inside, in the air conditioning, during the hottest part of the summer. It uses the mild flavor of flounder for its base

If you would prefer to add the pepper in the sauce, feel free to do it. Begin with a half teaspoon and add it slowly. I like to add it on top of the sauce so I can see how much I'm adding. I think it gives a better visual presentation this way too. I don't use any salt, but some folks don't eat without it. My suggestion is to try some sea salt or Himalayan salt in a grinder.

The cheese sauce is mild and can't be added until the flounder is almost cooked. It will brown quickly and scorch if left unchecked for very long. This is the only real diligent part of this recipe, and it passes quickly. Keep a close watch, and as soon as the sauce begins to brown, remove the flounder from the oven. It will go from browning to scorched very quickly, so pay attention for this step.

With the flounder out, give it a minute or two for its juices to stabilize and serve it while it's hot. Enjoy! ■

INGREDIENTS:

1 whole flounder (approximately 2-3 pounds)

¼ cup softened butter

½ cup grated parmesan cheese

3 tbsp mayonnaise

2 tbsp fresh squeezed lemon juice

Coarse ground black pepper

Buttery flavor, non-stick cooking spray

Aluminum foil



The finished flounder is a delight to behold and eat.

Jerry Dilsaver

and adds a little zip with the butter, lemon and pepper, but it does not approach spicy. This was served with some baked mushrooms and onions and a combination of fresh green beans and asparagus. Chilled rice pudding is an excellent dessert. ■



Jerry Dilsaver of Oak Island, N.C., is a freelance writer, as well as a former national king mackerel champion fisherman. Readers are encouraged to send their favorite recipes and a photo of the completed dish to possibly be used in a future issue of the magazine. E-mail the recipes and photos to Jerry Dilsaver at captainjerry@captainjerry.com.

TIPS FOR SLABS AFTER DARK

By Phillip Gentry

Like any type of modern fishing, the details of your setup and presentation can often spell the difference between a so-so night and a great night on the water. Follow these tips to help you make the best of your night-fishing trips for crappie.

CHECK YOUR DEPTH

During the summer, a maximum water depth may not apply, but for night-fishing during the summer, a minimum of 10 to 12 feet of water is recommended. The best areas will be adjacent to a creek or river channel that has fish holding around nearby structure.

SEE THE LIGHT

Two light systems will assist in attracting and catching crappie. An ambient light system will help with seeing rods, baiting hooks and unhooking fish. Use as little light as possible to avoid attracting insects. A submersible lighting system is used to attract baitfish. Green is a popular color, and some models can even be submerged.

THE RIGHT ROD

Rod lengths from 6 to 9 feet work best, especially under bridges where overhead clearance might be a problem. Use rods long enough to reach outside the light to catch fish in the shadows. Painted or glow tips will assist in seeing bites.

Crappie will bite at night, especially if you follow a few guidelines.



Phillip Gentry

LIVE-BAIT TIME

Though jigs will also work, live bait typically gets the nod for stationary, vertical fishing. If using store-bought minnows, try to match your baits with the size of the natural bait. Where legal, consider cast-netting bait from the lake to use for night fishing.

THERMOCLINE TRICKS

Though crappie may hold below a thermocline, most active feeding will take place in current areas where there is no thermocline, or just above the thermocline. You can determine the depth of the thermocline by increasing the sensitivity on your sonar and looking for a thin horizontal line. ■



Slinky weights, built with large split-shot or buckshot pellets stuffed into paracord and sealed inside, are much less likely to hang up when dragged across the bottom for catfish.

SLINKY UP ON CATFISH

Phillip Gentry
By Phillip Gentry

HOMEMADE TROLLING WEIGHT IS THE TICKET FOR SUMMER CATFISH

Winter and spring catfishing generally involves site-specific fishing tactics such as anchored down, cut-bait fishing. However, from late June through November, catfish move around a lot, due to a number of factors, and one of the best ways to target them is to drift or troll.

Such is the case on Lake Mary Crawford, where catfish react to changing water currents, baitfish movements and any number of factors that affect food sources.

Since catfish are most productively targeted on or near the bottom, trolling for catfish may sound like an invitation to retie often and cuss a lot. To counter this, veteran catfish anglers employ a homemade trolling rig that places baits within reach of the bottom, yet still resists snags.

"The key to trolling or drifting is to use a Slinky weight," said veteran angler Chris Simpson. "A lot of catfishermen make them by inserting 00 buckshot pellets into a 6-inch length of nylon paracord. It's hollow, and you squeeze the shot into it like a sock."

After heat-sealing the ends of the cord to hold the shot in place, a snap swivel is punched through one end of the weight and the main line slides through the eye of the swivel. A barrel swivel holds the weight away from the hook with a 3- to 4-foot leader in between. About midway down the leader, a 2-inch Styrofoam crappie float is attached. The float raises the baited hook off the bottom, just above head level to a prowling cat, while the Slinky weight holds the rig to the bottom and pulls over underwater structure without snagging.

On days with adequate wind, anglers can start their drifting runs upwind and drift across open sections of the lake. Days without wind require the use of a trolling motor to move the boat at .5 to .7 miles per hour. ■

DeerView
WINDOW CO.

DeerView manufactures the best windows in the industry!

Dealer(s)/Manufacturer Pricing Available

All of our windows and doors can be custom made or you can select from our standard sizes.

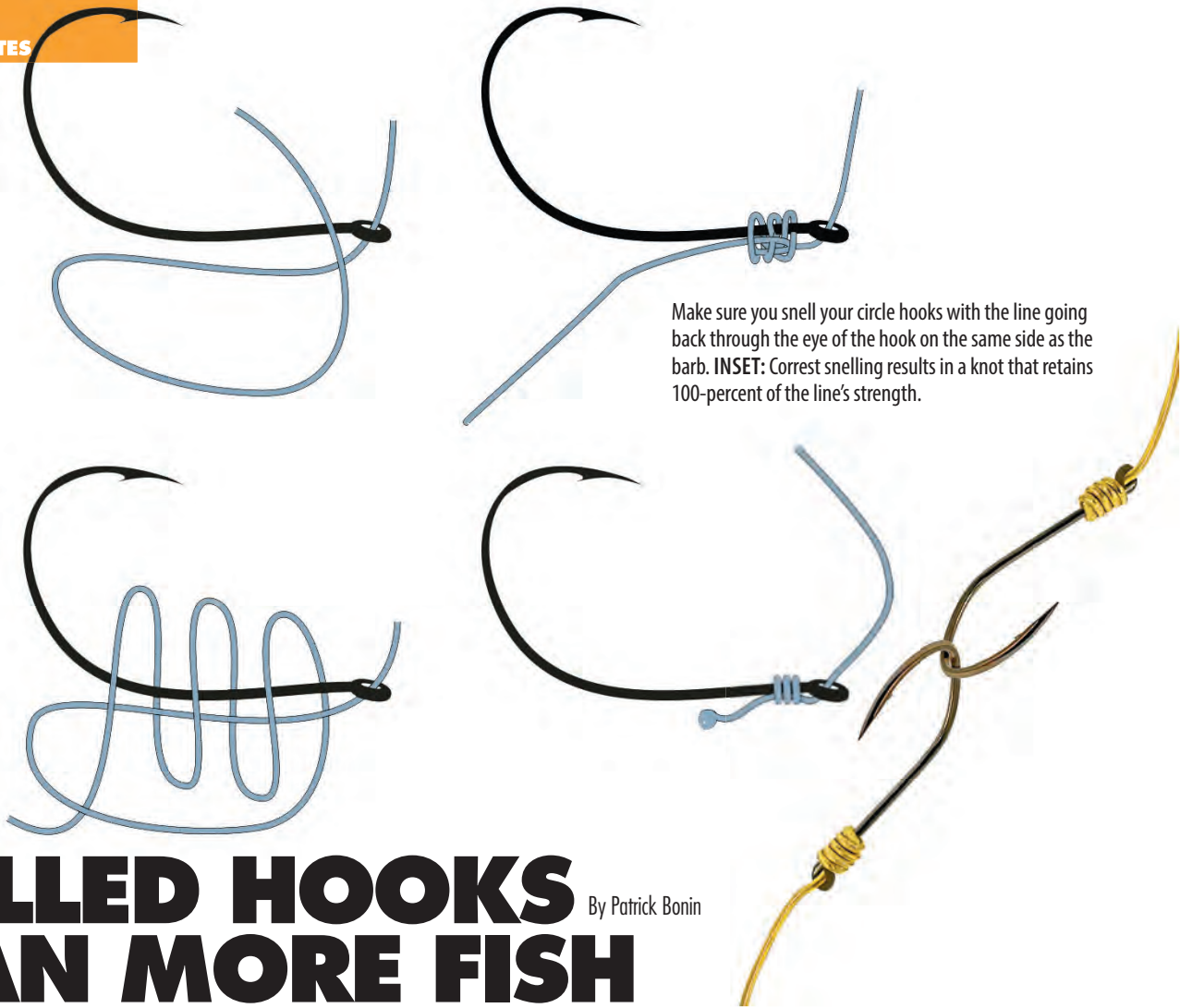
817-453-7421
www.DeerViewWindows.com

MS Exotic Hunting Ranch
Mississippi's Finest Exotic Trophy Hunting

Axis Doe Hunts Available

Why travel all over the world to hunt Trophy Exotic's when you can come to Liberty, Mississippi?? We have a unique array of exotic big game animals available to hunt: Fallow Deer, Nyala, Waterbuck, Pere' David, Axis, Zebra, ZeDonk, Gemsbok, Black Buck, and Mouflan Sheep just to name a few!

2423 S. Greenburg Road • Liberty, MS • 337-380-6019
www.huntexotic.com



Make sure you snell your circle hooks with the line going back through the eye of the hook on the same side as the barb. **INSET:** Correst snelling results in a knot that retains 100-percent of the line's strength.

SNELLED HOOKS MEAN MORE FISH

By Patrick Bonin

GUIDE ADVISES SNEILING CIRCLE HOOKS FOR BOTTOMFISH

Sometimes little things can make a big difference in fishing, and guide Tommy Pellegrin firmly believes snelling circle hooks for offshore fishing has a direct correlation to the number of fish coming over his gunwales.

And as an added bonus, Pellegrin said he can tie a "quick snell" with a leader in a matter of seconds. In essence, the knot is tied to the shank of the hook rather than the eye, providing leverage to embed the barb in the fish's mouth when the hook is set.

"The key is, the line has to come out of the eye of the hook toward the barb side when you tie it," Pellegrin said. "You'll never see me tie a regular knot on a circle hook. A lot of people just tie a straight-up knot, and I'm not going to lie — that works, but if you want to increase your hooksets, learn how to snell."

Non-stainless steel circle hooks are required when fishing with natural baits for reef fish offshore, but Pellegrin snells

other hooks with success, as well.

"The same technique works for wide-gap hooks used with minnows and shrimp for speckled trout," he said. "The wide-gap hook works a whole lot better with the snell."

Pellegrin's offshore setup usually consists of 60-pound line with a 4-ounce egg sinker and a 150-pound swivel tied to 100-pound leader with a 6/0 Mustad Ultrapoint circle hook.

"This knot is actually pretty much one of the really true '100-percent' knots," he said. "The only way to break monofilament is to overstress it, or you tie a bad knot and the tighter the knot gets, the more it pinches down and it eventually just cuts itself off. Other than that, you have to cut it with teeth or knives or whatever — that's the only two ways that monofilament will break.

"With this knot, the actual pull line that your power is going to your rod with is outside the wraps. So the wraps get tighter and tighter, but they just grab the hook."

During his years of fishing, Pellegrin has come to believe tying a snell knot is a sure-fire way to hook up with more fish.

"I've proven this so many times on my boat with people who want to tie their own stuff," he said. "They'll tie a regular knot on, and they'll catch fish, but they'll miss more, and the ones I'm tying will hook up more.

"It's amazing how much difference that it makes; it's just one of those little tricks."

It's also a fun way to prank unsuspecting friends, he said.

"If we want to mess with somebody, we'll tie a snell backwards and have the line come out of the back side of the hook," Pellegrin said with a chuckle. "They'll get bites left and right, and they'll have fish pulling, but that hook just won't set.

"They can't figure out what's wrong. It just totally messes them up." ■

STICK A TOOTHPICK IN IT

By Craig Holt

One of the best tools a bass fisherman can have, especially during the summer when fish live largely in deep, cool, oxygenated water, are toothpicks — and not to clean peanut butter from an angler's teeth.

What's the deal with toothpicks? For years, fishermen would "peg" the bullet weights used on Texas rigs with a toothpick, jamming the sharp end of a pick into the hole where the line threads through the weight. After breaking off the rest of the pick, fishermen had a bullet weight that wouldn't slide up the line — a big aid in being able to cast longer and more accurately.

The next problem solved by toothpicks is the time spent readjusting or putting new soft-plastic lures on hooks after a bite. Often, a fish that hits a soft-plastic bait might not be impaled on the point of the hook, but it would pull the worm or lizard back off the hook.

"Got a solution for that one," said veteran guide Maynard Edwards. "I like to use this with a jig-and-pig, but you also can use it with creature baits."

Edwards' solution to prevent bass from ripping or tearing off jig trailers is to insert a piece of toothpick sideways through the head of the soft-plastic bait, then break it off even with each side of the lure. When he slides the trailer on the jig's hook, he makes sure the point goes in below the toothpick in the lure's body. That way, the toothpick will be in place and help keep the trailer from tearing off.

When it comes to Texas-rigging soft plastics, he'll thread the bait all the way up on the hook, then push one end of a toothpick through the plastic and through the eye of the hook. That helps keep the bait from being pulled down on the hook.

"It keeps the hook from pulling free (from the lure), and you can cast (jigs) farther," he said. "You also don't fling (soft plastics) off the hooks so much." ■

Using the tip of a toothpick, pushed through a soft-plastic bait and the eye of the hook, will help keep a Texas-rigged bait from sliding down. Break off both ends of the toothpick just outside the worm's margins.

Dan Kibler



AVAILABLE NOW

THE SPORTSMAN
SPOOLER & REAPER
THE ULTIMATE IN FISHING & LIFESTYLE COMFORT
— CRAFTED BY ANGLERS, FOR ANGLERS



SPORTSMAN
www.SPORTSMANGear.com

Not an official document.
Refer to MDWFP's official reg
guide, www.dmr.ms.gov, or
www.mdwfp.com.

SALTWATER

STATE COASTAL WATERS REGULATIONS (0 - 3 miles)

FISH SPECIES	Minimum Lengths	Creel Limit (per person)
Greater amberjack	34" FL	1/day
Blue marlin	99" LJFL	no limit
White marlin	66" LJFL	no limit
Sailfish	63" LJFL	no limit
Sharks (large coastal/pelagic)@	37" TL*	1/day or 3/boat
Sharks@	25" TL*	4/day
Cobia	33" FL	2 per day
Redfish (red drum)	18" minimum	
	30" maximum TL	3/day (1 over 30")
Flounder (state waters)	12" TL	15/day
Groupers (black and gag)	24" TL@	4/day aggregate
Hogfish	12" FL@	5/day
Red, yellowfin grouper	20" TL@	4/day
Scamp grouper	16" TL@	4/day
Speckled hind/Warsaw grouper	no minimum@	1/day each
Gray/schoolmaster/cubera/ mahogany/yellowtail/dog snapper	12" TL@	10/day aggregate
Mutton snapper	16" TL@	10/day
Queen/blackfin/silk/winchman snapper	none@	10/day aggregate
Vermillion/lane snapper	10"/8" TL@	20/day aggregate
Gray triggerfish	14" FL@	20/day
Golden/blueline/anchor/blackline tilefish	none@	20/day
King mackerel	24" FL@	2/day
Spanish mackerel	no minimum size@	15/day
Yellowfin tuna	27" CFL@	3/day
Bigeye tuna	27" CFL@	no limit
Tripletail	18" TL	3/day
Spotted sea trout (speckled)	15"	15/day

@ For openings and closings of federally regulated fish and updated size limits, visit gulfcouncil.org.

FRESHWATER

FISH Species (Inland waters)	Minimum Size Limit	Creel Limit (per day)
Crappie/Panfish #	%	30 crappie, 100 bream
Largemouth, smallmouth, spotted bass	%	10 in combination
Channel catfish	No more than 1 over 34"	None +
Blue catfish	No more than 1 over 34"	None +
Flathead catfish	No more than 1 over 34"	None +
Striped bass or hybrid bass	15"	6 in combination
Mountain Trout (Lake Lamar Bruce)	No restrictions	3
Sauger	%	10
Walleye	%	3
Alligator gar/paddlefish	No fish over 30" in creel	2

TL=Total Length; LJFL=Lower jaw to middle of fork in tail; FL=Fork Length (tip of snout to middle of fork in tail); CFL=Curved Fork Length (measure of a line tracing contour of body from tip of upper jaw to fork of the tail).

+ In Lake Okhissa, 5 per day, in ReCon Lake and all MDWFP lakes, 10 per day

% For lake-specific regs, see MDWFP's Regulations Digest or www.mdwfp.com/

In Lake Okhissa and Percy Quin State Park, the creel limit is 50 per day.

* Possession of certain species of sharks is prohibited.

CLASSIFIEDS

Display Ads

1/32 Page \$75/mn
1/16 Page \$107/mn
(vertical or horizontal)
1/8 Page \$155/mn
(vertical or horizontal)

Up to 25 words \$19.95/mn or \$45
for 3mns. Add a photo for \$10/mn

To place a classified display ad
Call 1-800-538-4355
Mon-Thurs 8-5 • Fri 8-3

REAL ESTATE

HAPPY JACK CABIN RENTAL. Great Fishing Lodge on the water with launch -Can Sleep 10- visit: www.LaCabins.com for booking & availability or call/text 504-628-7577

REAL ESTATE

LAKEFRONT PROPERTY. 2 story, 2BR, 2 bath house with 1,500 sq. ft. living area and 85' x 12' deck overlooking White Oak Lake, 15 mi. from Camden, Arkansas. House is pre-furnished and surrounded by 23,000 ac. Poison Springs WMA. Hunt deer, turkey, hogs. \$75,000. Call Mike at 870-403-1104.

Peel & Stick



SPORTSMANGear.com

**HELP
WANTED**

We are looking for drivers to deliver the Mississippi SPORTSMAN Magazine.

If You Love to Fish, Hunt and Meet People You Qualify!

Circulation experience helpful but not necessary
dependable vehicle & a valid MS drivers license a
must. If you have 3-5 days a month to help spread
the word I would like to hear from you!

Please Contact: Ricky Naquin,
Circulation Director @ 985-859-7744 -or- ricky@lasmag.com

Mississippi
SPORTSMAN

SUMMER CLEANING IS FISH CLEANING



Subscribe today for the best:

- FISHING HOTSPOTS
- HUNTING TACTICS
- LATEST MUST-HAVE GEAR
- EXPERT ADVICE

Toll-free 1-855-371-1546 or for faster service visit

[MS-Sportsman.com/subscribe](https://www.MS-Sportsman.com/subscribe)

Mississippi
SPORTSMAN

Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery of first issue

ANCHOR REAL ESTATE.....	29	ENVIRON METAL, INC.....	59	SEVEN C'S MARINE.....	20
ATLANTIC MARINE.....	65	FIRST SOUTH FARM CREDIT.....	76	SMITH MARINE.....	28
BARNETT'S BODY SHOP.....	36	GATOR TRAX.....	37	SNAP LOCK BLINDS.....	51
BATTERY WORLD.....	28	GIBSON REALTY/UNITED COUNTRY.....	65	SPRO CORPORATION.....	25
BAYOU LAFOURCHE AREA CVB.....	17	H&H LURE COMPANY.....	9, 24	STIHL SOUTHWEST.....	25, 57
BRYAN'S MARINE.....	29	HIGH CALIBER.....	46	VAN'S OUTDOORS.....	75
BUCK BUSTERS FEED COMPANY.....	2	K2 MARINE.....	61	WEYERHAEUSER COMPANY.....	19
CAROLINA COMPOSITES, LLC.....	21	MOSSY OAK PROPERTIES LAND INVESTMENTS.....	11	WHITETAIL PROPERTIES.....	51
CLENZOIL.....	47	MS EXOTIC HUNTING.....	69	YAMAHA MOTOR COMPANY.....	31
CRAIN TRACTOR.....	52	PARISH TRACTOR.....	13		
CWP PROSERIES.....	29	REALTREE OUTDOOR PRODUCTS.....	49		
DEER VIEW WINDOWS CO.....	69	REED'S METALS, INC.....	3		
DIXIE RV.....	14	RJ'S OUTBOARD SALES & SERVICE.....	39		
EMMETT'S MARINE.....	41	ROCKY BRANDS.....	5		

Get decked out in the latest from the **SPORTSMAN** Store.....42, 71

Subscribe Today and SAVE.....73

ASTRO TABLES

Astro Tables is far more effective than "moon tables," because it takes into account critical solar energies as well as lunar.

- The "Best Days" column is based on the ever-changing positions of the sun and the moon, rating each day on a scale of 0 to 100. The higher the number, the more solar/lunar influence that day is experiencing (see "Value" column or corresponding black bars).
- The two Primary periods (Moon Overhead and Moon Underfoot) vary in length from one hour to three-and-one-half hours, depending on a number of important lunar cycles, such as how close the moon is to the earth that day and how high its orbit is. The solar symbols alert you to when a Primary period overlaps a major solar period (eg: Dawn, High-Noon, and Dusk). The secondary periods of Moonrise and Moonset last about one hour each... 30 minutes before and after the listed time. (See key at bottom of each month for more detail.)
- Astro Tables** is a quick-reference version of its parent publication, the **PrimeTimes Wall Calendar**, which is recommended for those wishing more complete data on the best days and times to go fishing and hunting for the entire year (see "Available Products" below).
- PrimeTimes** forecasts are based on solar/lunar research at a leading college of astrophysics and our own research pond/wildlife area. Annual data is supplied by the U.S. Naval Observatory. All times are adjusted to the center of your time zone and for Daylight Saving Time.

AVAILABLE PRODUCTS:
The 2019 PrimeTimes Wall Calendar. \$13.95 (plus \$4 s&h). Know the best days, best times, and their relative strengths for all of 2019 with this information-packed, full-color, 11-inch by 17-inch, graphic peaks

and-valleys forecaster. Includes rise and set times for the sun and moon, space to log your catches, "Timely Tips," plus fish and game symbols showing you each month's don't-miss periods. Also includes exclusive summary charts revealing the best and worst days of 2019, the year's best periods, and look ahead at 2020, and more. Comes with FREE 2019 Astro Tables pocket calendar, which sells separately for \$8.95, plus \$3 s&h.

Book: "How to Know When to Go" by Rick Taylor. \$14.95 (plus \$4 s&h). 100 pages, 43 illustrations. A comprehensive look at the main factors influencing fish and game activity periods, plus how to devise an effective when-to-go game plan using any year's PrimeTimes calendars. Individual assessments of bass, panfish, deer, turkey, and more.

2019 Ultimate PrimeTimes software for PCs. \$29.95 (plus \$3 s&h, or no s&h if downloaded from web). The world's best forecaster allows you to fine-tune the peak times to your exact location, quarry, and even weather. Too many features to list here, including making your own App. For more details, please call us or visit our web site (see below).

SPECIAL PACKAGE OFFERS:
 #1: **Wall Calendar, Astro Tables and "How to Know..." book...** \$19.95 (plus \$5 s&h).
 #2: **Same as #1, plus Software...** \$47.95 (plus \$6 s&h).
 #3: **Same as #2, minus book...** \$38.95 (plus \$5 s&h).

Send to: PrimeTimes 2019 - Dept. LS - 2487 NW 75th Ave., Ste. 100 - Ankeny, IA 50023

For credit/debit card orders, call **515-964-5516**, or go online to **primetimes2.com** and click **Catalog**.

BEST DAYS				LUNAR PERIODS			
POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCL	MOON RISE	MOON OVERHEAD	MOON SET	MOON UNDERFOOT
2019 AUG				TIMES OCCURRING AT NIGHT ARE SHADED			
Thu 1	83			6:47 am	12:23 pm - 3:35 pm	9:03 pm	Midnight - 3:04 am
Fri 2	71			7:59 am	1:27 pm - 4:27 pm	9:47 pm	12:48 am - 4:00 am
Sat 3	57			9:11 am	2:32 pm - 5:14 pm	10:26 pm	1:52 am - 4:52 am
Sun 4	48			10:22 am	3:35 pm - 5:57 pm	11:02 pm	2:57 am - 5:39 am
Mon 5	44			11:30 am	4:36 pm - 6:38 pm	11:36 pm	4:00 am - 6:22 am
Tue 6	45			12:36 pm	5:34 pm - 7:20 pm		5:01 am - 7:03 am
Wed 7	52			1:41 pm	6:33 pm - 8:01 pm	12:11 am	5:59 am - 7:45 am
Thu 8	39			2:45 pm	7:30 pm - 8:46 pm	12:47 am	6:58 am - 8:26 am
Fri 9	31			3:46 pm	8:26 pm - 9:32 pm	1:26 am	7:55 am - 9:11 am
Sat 10	29			4:44 pm	9:21 pm - 10:19 pm	2:08 am	8:51 am - 9:57 am
Sun 11	27			5:39 pm	10:13 pm - 11:11 pm	2:55 am	9:46 am - 10:44 am
Mon 12	36			6:29 pm	11:04 pm - 12:02 am	3:45 am	10:38 am - 11:36 am
Tue 13	46			7:13 pm	11:49 pm - Midnight	4:38 am	11:29 am - 12:27 pm
Wed 14	55			7:53 pm	Midnight - 12:55 am	5:33 am	12:14 pm - 1:20 pm
Thu 15	60			8:28 pm	12:33 am - 1:45 am	6:29 am	12:58 pm - 2:10 pm
Fri 16	52			9:00 pm	1:11 am - 2:37 am	7:25 am	1:36 pm - 3:02 pm
Sat 17	44			9:30 pm	1:48 am - 3:26 am	8:20 am	2:13 pm - 3:51 pm
Sun 18	37			9:58 pm	2:23 am - 4:15 am	9:15 am	2:48 pm - 4:40 pm
Mon 19	35			10:26 pm	2:56 am - 5:04 am	10:09 am	3:21 pm - 5:29 pm
Tue 20	38			10:54 pm	3:31 am - 5:53 am	11:04 am	3:56 pm - 6:18 pm
Wed 21	41			11:25 pm	4:04 am - 6:44 am	12:01 pm	4:29 pm - 7:09 pm
Thu 22	50			11:59 pm	4:40 am - 7:36 am	12:58 pm	5:05 pm - 8:01 pm
Fri 23	63				5:22 am - 8:28 am	1:58 pm	5:47 pm - 8:53 pm
Sat 24	56			12:37 am	6:05 am - 9:25 am	2:59 pm	6:30 pm - 9:50 pm
Sun 25	53			1:22 am	6:57 am - 10:23 am	4:01 pm	7:22 pm - 10:48 pm
Mon 26	54			2:14 am	7:53 am - 11:23 am	5:02 pm	8:18 pm - 11:48 pm
Tue 27	74			3:14 am	8:55 am - 12:21 pm	6:50 pm	9:20 pm - 12:46 am
Wed 28	64			4:22 am	9:59 am - 1:19 pm	8:50 pm	10:24 pm - 1:44 am
Thu 29	83			5:33 am	11:06 am - 2:12 pm	7:37 pm	11:31 pm - Midnight
Fri 30	86			6:47 am	12:12 pm - 3:02 pm	8:18 pm	Midnight - 2:37 am
Sat 31	72			8:00 am	1:17 pm - 3:49 pm	8:56 pm	12:37 am - 3:27 am

25 50 75
AVERAGE

ANY LUNAR PERIOD IS ENHANCED WHEN IT OVERLAPS A KEY SOLAR PERIOD. THE BEST OF THESE OVERLAPS ARE DESIGNATED BY THE SUN SYMBOLS:
 ☀ = DAWN ☀ = HIGH NOON ☀ = DUSK
 WHILE THE LESSER MOONRISE AND -SET OVERLAPS (ABOUT 30 MIN. BEFORE AND AFTER THE LISTED TIME) ARE DESIGNATED BY BOLD BLACK TYPE.

For more information and samples of PrimeTimes products, visit our web site: **www.primetimes2.com**

For more, visit **primetimes2.com**

FEDERAL



SHOOTER
READY

SHOOT LIKE A PRO



GET A FREE FEDERAL COMPETITION JERSEY!

Spend at least \$250 on Gold Medal® centerfire rifle or handgun ammunition, or Syntech® Range, Action Pistol or PCC to get an exclusive Federal® competition jersey by Gemini Jerseys, retail value \$90.



777 Hwy 468
Brandon, MS 39042
601.825.9087

2045 County Road 222
Cullman, AL 35057
256.775.4031

www.vansoutdoors.com

Follow us on 

Valid on purchases made between April 1, 2019 and August 31, 2019.
For details and reward coupon visit: <https://promotions.vistaoutdoor.com>

FEDERALPREMIUM.COM



It's About
LAND



Let's finance yours.

Your land is where your next chapter begins. It's a place to put down roots, carry on traditions, or even raise a family.

If land ownership or refinancing your land is what's next in your story, let First South guide you through financing the next chapter.



Let's talk



800-955-1722 | FIRSTSOUTHLAND.COM