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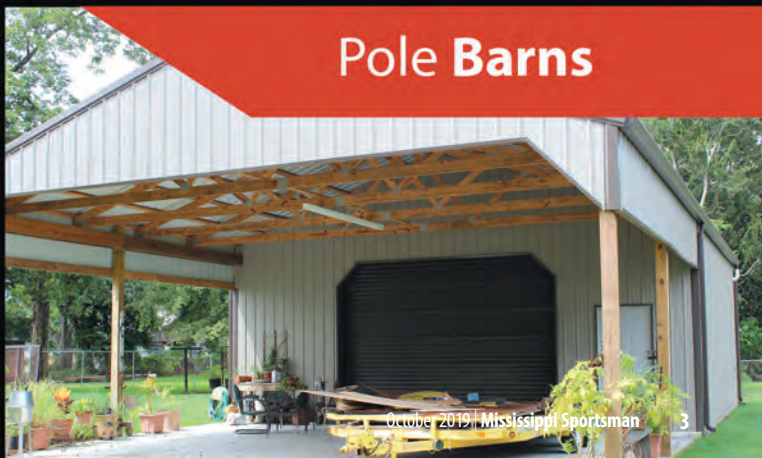
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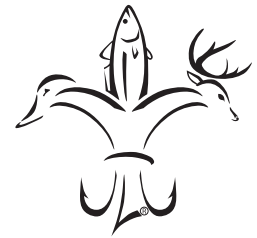


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**Volume 21 | No 10**

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**READY,  
SET, GO!**



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At last, it's time for deer season across Mississippi. What does the season hold for most hunters? Find out here. Photo by Rick Small.

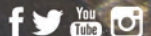
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Outdoor  
**UPDATE**  
with  
**Bobby Cleveland**

**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](mailto:bobbyc7754@yahoo.com).

Photo courtesy Barrett Van Cleave

# OCTOBER: FOCUS MOVES TO DEER

## ARCHERY OPENS DOOR TO LIMIT, SEASON CHANGES

Barrett Van Cleave has been among Mississippi's best bowhunters over the past decade, but even he couldn't believe the great opportunity he faced on opening day of the 2018-19 deer season on Oct. 1.

**L**et's preface this month's Outdoor Update by mentioning that it was 100 degrees outside on the day it was written. Factoring in the humidity, though low for Mississippi at the time, the heat index was pushing 110.

Whew, that's enough reason to welcome October's page of the calendar, when we do not have to worry about that kind of torture, but that's not why *Mississippi Sportsmen* really appreciate moving into the 10th month.

No, certainly not. October means opportunity, beginning with deer. Oh yeah; that's the big reason right there.

Oct. 1 is the opening day of archery season for deer for most Mississippians, even though more hunters than usual will have to wait until Oct. 15. We'll get to that more in a minute.

It's also the opening day of the small-game season. Squirrels become legal on Oct. 1, and the food and sport season on raccoons — plus bobcats and opossums — opens the same day. Rabbit will follow on Oct. 12, and hopefully, it will cool enough to go easy on the eager beagles.

And, if any light geese have migrated far enough south to reach the Mississippi Delta, the special conservation order allows hunting snow, blue and Ross' geese without limit beginning Oct. 1.

Although the migratory bird season on gallinules and rails ended Sept. 30, there will be other shooting opportunities in October, beginning with South Zone doves on Oct. 6 and North Zone doves on Oct. 19.

Yep, it's a busy month, including for many the end of deer-season preparations, a job that never seems to end.

The October edition of *Mississippi Sportsman* helps set the table for the action with several features to whet the appetite.

For fishermen, contributor Mike Giles takes a look at how to catch more blue cats on the Mississippi River, Phillip Gentry investigates how to put more fall crappie in the boat, and we have an interesting look at how to use a fly rod to catch reds in the marshes of the Gulf of Mexico.

Veteran writer David Hawkins shares some of his tips and more from others on early season deer hunting, and we've got a question and answer interview with Russ Walsh, chief of staff for the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks, covering topics from the flood-impacted South Delta to a more regionalized approach to wildlife management.

We give you all that and lots more, so let's get to it, and start with some decent news from the flood-plagued South Delta, which will indeed have a 2019 deer season after all. ■

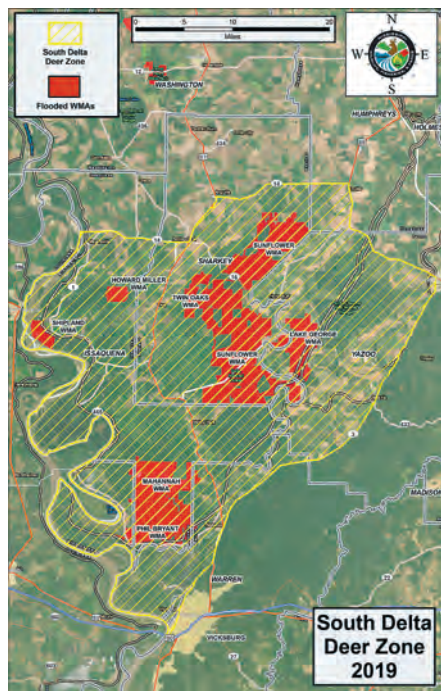
# SOUTH DELTA DEER SEASON, LIMITS REDUCED

The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks in August began surveying the state's deer hunters — especially those who chase whitetails in the South Delta — about how they thought the 2019-20 season should be impacted by the devastating 10-month flood.

The proposed options ranged from no change in the season's format or bag limit to a complete closure for the fall and winter. On Aug. 21, the MDWFP announced a shortened season with a reduced season bag limit of two bucks — one of which can be of any antler size — and two antlerless deer per hunter. It will open Oct. 15 and end Jan. 5, with the archery and gun seasons coinciding with the other zones during that period.

Basically, the MDWFP established a new South Delta deer management zone with its own seasons and limits.

"Thankfully, sound reasoning was used, and they didn't totally close the season," said Jeff Terry, an avid hunter, farmer and landowner from the hard-hit Eagle Lake community. "That



would have been devastating for our deer, adding to the devastation that hit our deer herd during this flood.

"Take away opportunity, and you take away the impetus for many hunters to plant food plots or provide supplemental feeding for the deer, and that would come at a time when deer need both. The natural habitat has been depleted, and there's no way it could rebound during the winter."

Terry didn't even mention the impact a closure would have on the economy of the already economically stressed region, nor did he discuss the need for hunters to continue providing deer carcasses for the MDWFP to test for CWD (chronic wasting disease).

CWD, a 100% fatal disease that affects cervids like deer, was first found in Mississippi in the South Delta region in 2018. The MDWFP didn't overlook that aspect, and others.

In an interview with the *Clarion Ledger's* Brian Broom, MDWFP chief of staff Russ Walsh said the agency looked at many issues involving the stressed herd in the South Delta.

"We did not recommend closing the season completely, but we knew we needed to change the dates and bag limits," he

# PHIL BRYANT WMA OPENING DELAYED

The MDWFP's inability to access and improve its new Phil Bryant Wildlife Management Area during the flood, the agency has delayed the opening of the 17,000-acre WMA in the South Delta for the time being.

Russ Walsh, MDWFP's chief of staff, said that due to the timing and duration of the flood, no access improvements have been made, parking areas have not been established, gates and signage are not in place, and structures that present liability have not been removed.

"We likely will not open it until Dec. 1," Walsh said. "There's just so much to do over there. We haven't been able to do anything because of the water. We haven't made (opening day) official because we may be able to open it sooner."

said, adding that the approved framework allowed hunting opportunity, included major holidays, and will allow the department to continue to test hunter-harvested deer for chronic wasting disease.

"It was a way to shorten the season, reduce stress on deer and change the bag limit," Walsh said. "A lot of factors went into it, and that's where we landed."

The survey results were interesting and varied by hunting groups.

"If you look at the survey, those who did not hunt the South Delta, they said they wanted the season closed," Walsh said. "Among private land hunters (in the South Delta), the majority of them said they wanted some semblance of a season. Public-land hunters who took the survey, the majority said they wanted the season closed."

Terry said he was, "okay with the seasons and limits." Other hunters whose primary hunting range is in the impacted area agreed.

"At least I have the opportunity to hunt," said Bill Thompson of Vicksburg, who hunts a small area of Sharkey County near the Issaquena County line. "It gives us, the landowners and lease holders, the chance to go and observe our herd and make decisions within their limits on whether or not to harvest deer, and if so, what is best for our surviving animals.

"We had already decided we were going to plant food plots, even increasing the total number and acres. But, I know there are some smaller clubs and landowners who would not have planted or put out food if they didn't have the opportunity to hunt," he said. "This works especially well for us, because our membership limit was only two bucks as it was, and while we were taking a lot of doe deer, this gives us a chance to assess our antlerless deer without overkill. I absolutely feel we need to take some deer off our damaged habitat, despite any die-off caused by the flood. The habitat must heal for the long-term good of the deer herd." ■

# COMMISSION EASES URINE BAN (A LITTLE)

**T**he Mississippi Commission on Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks voted Aug. 21 to back off a bit on its total ban on deer urine scent/lure products for the 2019-20 deer season.

The Commission approved an exception to the recent ban of the use of natural deer urine, caused by fears that it could contribute to the spread of CWD. After much and careful consideration, Scott Coopwood, chairman of the Commission, said the Commission decided to allow certain brands that are tested for CWD and approved by the Archery Trade Association. According to Coopwood, Brands that are allowed will carry the ATA approval seal on the labels.

Coopwood said research showed the risk to be minimal, and commissioner Bill Cossar's motion was accepted by a unanimous vote. It will become law after a 30-day comment period, in time for the 2019-20 deer season.

A visit to the Archery Trade Association's website, [archerytrade.org](http://archerytrade.org), found this list of companies with scent products receiving the ATA approval:

Mississippi has relaxed its previous ban on natural urine-based deer scents.



Black Widow Deer Lures Inc.; Buck Baits LLC; Buck Bomb Inc.; Code Blue; Conquest Scents; CreekSide Whitetails; Denver's Deer Scents Products; Green Dot Bioplastics; Harmon Scents; Hunter's Edge; Hunter's Specialities; Indianhead Whitetails; Jackie's Deer Lures, LLC; James Valley Scents; Jinx'em Scents; LockDown Outdoors; Ms. Doe Pee Buck Lures; Nationwide Scents; Nature's Best Deer Scents; Nexus Outdoors; Nose Down Scents, LLC; Portland Outdoors; Pure-faction Scents; Pure Whitetail; RAW Frozen Scents; TGX3 Deer Scents; Tink's; TT's Buck Wild Deer Scent; Wild Carrot Scents; Wildgame Innovations; Wildlife Research Center Inc.; Wyndscent; and, Wyoming County Whitetails.

To obtain ATA approval, companies must guarantee, through their participation in the ATA Program, that the cervid urine used in their products comes from participating Deer Protection Program facilities that comply with the following measures:

- Participate in a federally approved CWD program.
- Have documented all cervid movement in/out of herd.
- Continually monitor their herd for CWD.
- Allow additional facility inspections
- Physically inspect 100% of the herd every three years.
- Commit to advancement of sound science related to CWD.
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# DRAW, AIM, AND RELEASE; IT'S ARCHERY SEASON

**M**ississippi's bowhunters will be the first to chase white-tailed deer and the first to test new bag limits set by the Commission on Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks for the 2019-20 seasons.

Without doubt, the biggest change concerns buck deer. While the season limit remains unchanged at three per hunter — except in the newly formed South Delta Zone where it is two — all hunters on private lands and the Holly Springs National Forest, will now have the option of taking one buck of choice without regard to antler measurement. The other two bucks — or one buck in South Delta — must meet the minimum legal-buck standards for the zone where taken.

Youth ages 15 and under can still take all three without regard to measurements.



Archery hunters get the first opportunity to test Mississippi's new deer regulations this fall.

While some hunters welcome the change, others view it with vile disagreement.


"That's absurd," said Gene Rankin of Madison. "We've come so far in quality buck management in this state that to take a step backward and saying it's okay to take young bucks is a slap in the face. I'm totally opposed to this change."

Roger Banks of Ridgeland disagrees.

"I'm not going to shoot any small bucks, but I think it's a great idea to allow hunters the freedom to take at least one buck of choice," Banks said. "Not all hunters are trophy driven; many are simply out there trying to have fun and put some healthy, low-fat protein on the table. Just because I don't want to shoot them and don't need to on our club shouldn't impact somebody who does not have equal opportunity and is happy to put any deer, any buck, on the ground. I don't think the majority of trophy hunters ever consider the wants and needs of other hunters."

The antlerless deer limit varies. The South Zone and South Delta Zones have a two-doe season limit, and in the South Zone, hunters are limited to one per day. For the other zones, the Northeast, North Delta, East Central, and Southwest, the antlerless deer is five per season with no daily limit prescribed — meaning a hunter can take up to five per day, as long as he or she kills no more than five per season. ■

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# SMALL GAME, BIG REWARDS

**T**errance Johnson of Jackson makes no bones about it, literally, when it comes to comparing deer hunting to his favorite pursuits — stalking squirrels and running rabbits.

“You can put a lot of meat in the freezer when you kill a deer, but you can put better eating on the table when you get a sack of squirrels or a pile of rabbits,” Johnson said. “There is no comparison to the deliciousness of tree rats and bunnies and that of deer, none whatsoever.

“Squirrel and dumplings. Rabbit and dumplings. Jambalaya. Mulligan stew. Sauce piquant. Either one in gravy over biscuits. Man, I’m getting hungry talking about it. I can’t wait to get them smothered down.”

That’s why Johnson works hard conditioning himself for the work ahead, starting Oct. 1 when squirrel season opens statewide — the youth season was Sept. 24-30 — and then picking up speed Oct. 12 when rabbit season begins.

“I’m a hard worker, so I stay in pretty good shape anyway, but every Sept. 1, I start getting serious on the treadmill at the gym,” he said. “I’ve got to get ready to walk and walk and walk and then some. You can’t get after the small game unless you got some good wheels under you, and it helps to lose a few pounds before eating all those great dishes.

“I will hunt two or three days a week from October through February (both rabbit and squirrel seasons end Feb. 28). Once it gets cool, we’ll run our rabbit dogs, my buddies and I, every Saturday from daylight to about 2, and I’m the briar buster. I’m in there right with the beagles, dang near every step.”

How many miles is that?

“You know, I’ve never thought about it, but that’s an interesting question,” Johnson said. “It’s gotta be well over 100, and probably 200. But it’s worth it, that’s for sure. The toughest thing is cleaning the squirrels, but again, that’s sure worth every second.”

The limit in Mississippi for both squirrel and rabbit is 8 per hunter per day.



Mississippi’s statewide rabbit season begins Oct. 12, giving beagles around the Magnolia State a reason to celebrate.

“A limit of squirrels is pretty easy, if you have enough places to hunt,” Johnson said. “That’s the key. You need to have different areas so you don’t put too much pressure on the same trees. Rabbits, well that’s more difficult because there’s five or six of you out there, maybe 10 or 12, and it’s kind of up to the rabbit as to who’s going to get the shot, but being the briar buster I do get more chances.” ■

# DUCK COUNTS REMAIN PROMISING FOR 2019-20 SEASON

Surveys on duck populations from the midwest and Canadian nesting grounds are in for 2019, and there's both good and bad news to be gleaned from the counts done by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

It's bad that the overall count of 38.9 million ducks is down from 41.3 million in 2018, but it's good that the 2019 number is still 10% above the long-term average since 1955.

It's bad that of the six of the top 10 species of ducks that hunters target have shown a decline in the past year, but it's really good that there's more of Mississippi's top three targeted ducks — mallards, gadwall and green-winged teal — in the count. Mallards (9.4 million) are up 2%, gadwalls (3.3 million) are up 13%, and green-wing teal (3.2 million) have increased 4%. Wigeon remained statistically unchanged at 2.8 million.

It's bad that blue-winged teal showed a huge decline, 16%, but the 5.4 million blues is still 6% above the long-term average.

"The one thing in the survey that disturbs me is that the pintails are down again, and by drastic numbers," said hunter Glenn Woods of Grenada. "They were only down 4% this year, but it's the

long-term average that is so disturbing. They are 42% below the long-term. That's not good."

The only other species among the top 10 that is below the long-term average is scaup, which at 3.6 million is down 10% from 2018 and 28% below long-term.

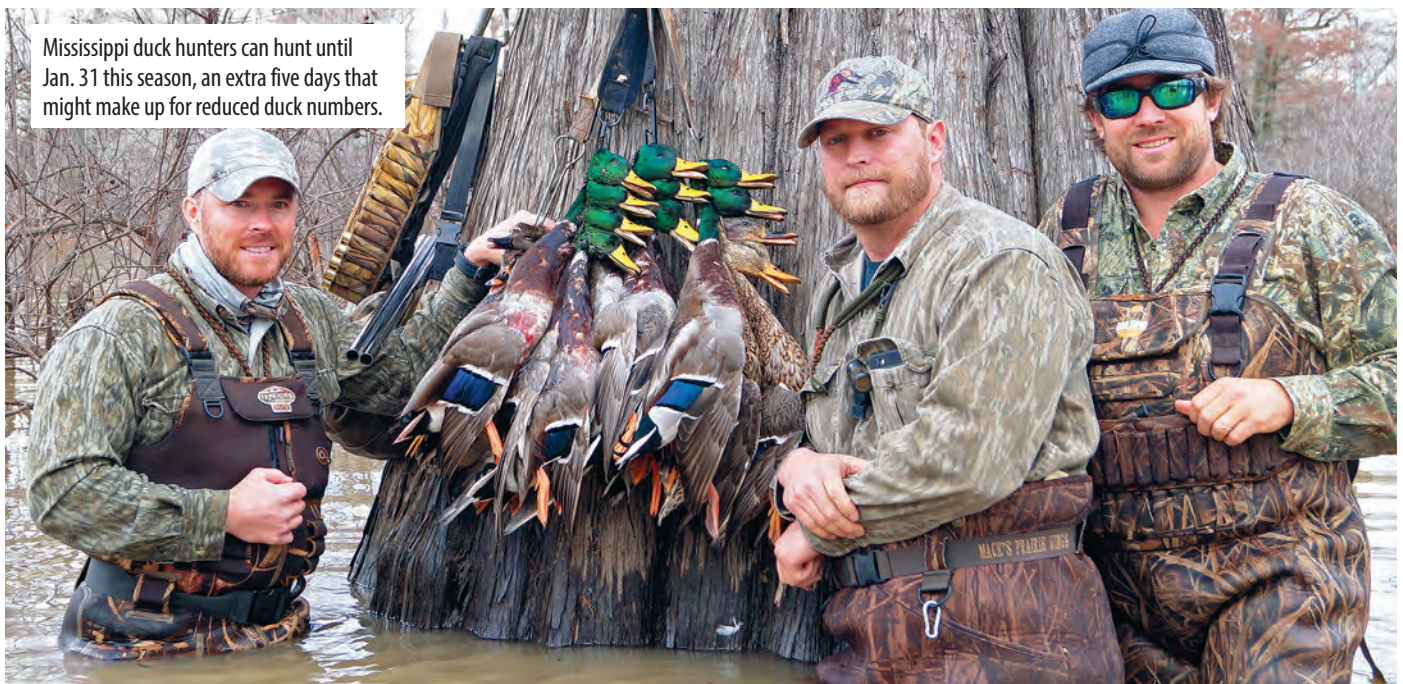
Mississippi's season will be different from past years in that it will have only two periods, Nov. 29-Dec. 1 and then from Dec. 6 to Jan. 31. A change in federal regulations now allows states to go to the last day of January, instead of a forced ending on the Sunday before Jan. 31.

"That doesn't sound like a big deal to a lot of people, namely those who don't duck hunt," Woods said. "But if you're one of the die-hard duck hunters like me, those extra days are a blessing, a big blessing. This coming season would have closed on Jan. 26 under the old guidelines, and we basically get another whole week to shoot, and it's at a time late enough in migration to put more birds in the Delta.

"That's great and something we've been asking for since I was a teenager, starting to duck hunt with my dad and uncle. I'm talking 1986 and 1987, back when the state took federal wildlife officials to court



over that very thing. We lost of course, and my dad was so mad he almost quit hunting. I hate he didn't live long enough to see this finally happen. I plan to hunt every single day between Jan. 26 and Jan. 31 in his honor. It might cost me a week of vacation time at work, but so be it." ■



Mississippi duck hunters can hunt until Jan. 31 this season, an extra five days that might make up for reduced duck numbers.

Hunting/Fishing  
**SCRAPBOOK**



**Tom Pierce Sr.**

Tom Pierce Sr. pulled in a big bluegill while fishing at a friend's pond on June 5 in Leakesville.



**Gage Damazio**

Gage Damazio with a hog killed in Benndale on Jan. 10, 2019.



**Mark Lance**

Mark Lance with a turkey killed in Senatobia on March 30, 2018.



**Buddy & Luke Ballard**

Buddy Ballard and son Luke Ballard with a hog from Marion County.

**GOT PICS? We want 'em**

Email images to: [images@ms-sportsman.com](mailto:images@ms-sportsman.com)

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# COOLER WEATHER, HOTTER ACTION IN THE MARSH

**M**ississippi's coastal fishermen, plagued all summer by freshwater related problems beyond their control, have been eyeing the arrival of October for a long, long time.

"We eagerly look forward to the fall every year, but 2019, it's different; it's even more important for us," said Tommy Sutton, a Columbia native. "We've had a rough year so far with all the trouble that fully opening the Bonnet Carre Spillway. Normally, we're just glad it's cooling off, but this year we're also looking for great

Cooler, fall weather pushes more salt-water gamefish into the marsh and in range of more anglers.



A large advertisement for Emmett's Marine. The background is a photograph of a family (a man, a woman, and a child) on a blue and white pontoon boat on a body of water. The boat has a Tohatsu outboard motor. The text "TOHATSU" is prominently displayed in the upper right of the ad. At the bottom, the "EMMETT'S MARINE" logo is shown, featuring a crest with a compass and the text "EMMETT'S MARINE" and "BROOKHAVEN, MS". Below the logo, the text "EMMETT'S MARINE" is written in large, bold letters, followed by the address "354 DALE TRL NE • BROOKHAVEN, MS 39601", the phone number "(601) 833-2277", and the website "WWW.EMMETTSMARINE.COM".

fishing to offset a poor year.

"The water temperature in the marsh was still over 90 degrees the first week of September, and air temperature felt like 100 degrees almost every day in August. It was just too hot to fish for the few fish we were finding."

The fishing began to pick up in early September.

"The reds weren't in the marshes at all, but they were right on the edges, and brother, they was in there thick," Sutton said. "We were running over to the Biloxi Marsh, and instead of going deep into the marshes, we started fishing the south shore of Lake Borgne right at the north shore of the marsh, and we were pounding the reds — and good reds, too. We caught more slot reds (keepers) than bulls and rats, but we'd hook with a big bull at least once or twice a day to keep it interesting.

"What that tells me is that we're in for a great October. They are trying to get back in the marshes and when it cools down just a few degrees they will move in like crazy. I can't wait." ■

# MISSISSIPPI'S TOP 5 OCTOBER FISHING HOT SPOTS

Mississippi Sound fills up with bull redfish in October.



**W**hile October is generally the time that the outdoor focus shifts to the start of hunting season — and for good reason — it should not be forgotten that it is also a great time to go fishing. Finned creatures instinctively know that winter is approaching and start to feed heavily, and they do so in more easily accessed areas as the shallow waters finally start to cool. Here's our list of five must-visit hot spots for the month.

**1. Bull reds, Mississippi Sound:** The nearshore fishing for big redfish hits a peak in October as the bulls move up to feed on the edge of the outer marsh and the barrier islands. Huge schools of reds can change the color of the water when they are moving in search of food. It's a blast, whether you use big gear and go for numbers or go light and enjoy the line-stretching battles.

**2. Black drum, sheepshead, Gulf Coast:** Later in the month, after

a couple of cool fronts, look for loads of black drum and sheepshead to start stacking on shallow reefs and structure. Two key areas to target are the pilings of the US 90 bridges that span the openings of two big bays, Biloxi and Bay St. Louis. Pitching pieces of shrimp to the bases of those pilings can fill an ice chest of good eating "puppy drum" and sheepshead, along with a few slot redfish.

**3. Crappie, Grenada, Sardis and Enid Lakes:** The trolling action heats up in the fall on these three north Mississippi U.S. Army Corps of Engineer Flood Control impoundments. Trolling crankbaits — usually a Bandit 300 series — over the edges of the creek channels near their intersections with the riverbeds is the preferred fall method on all three lakes in October.

**4. Bass, Barnett Reservoir:** Once the shad start migrating into the shallows, the bass will follow. Usually, that movement takes place both into the

dying pads, where the shad seek cover and the bass seek shad. There may be a hundred different ways to catch bass in the pads, but none are more fun, or as productive, as running a plastic frog across the vegetation. Don't forget to check the piers in the harbors on the Madison County side of the lake. It is an overlooked pattern on Barnett, that can be very productive.

**5. Catfish, Tenn-Tom Waterway:** October is a prime catfish month on most Mississippi waters, but few can match the production of the Tenn-Tom. All of the pools offer excellent fishing, but this is a prime time to hit the upper end between the headwaters at Pickwick Lake and Bay Springs Lake. ■

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By David Hawkins

**THREE TIPS FROM THREE MISSISSIPPI DEER EXPERTS CAN TRIGGER A GREAT START TO YOUR SEASON.**

**F**all in Mississippi is a time of activating triggers. Fat doves leave their northern climes, triggered by cooler weather, a shorter photoperiod and centuries-old genetic imprinting. Whitetail does start to wean their offspring and release certain pheromones that interest bucks, who experience a rise in testosterone that causes them to shed their velvet. This, in turn, triggers groups of bachelor bucks that have been together for months to start breaking apart and thinking about procreation.

It is the first appearance of the bright, crimson leaves of the black gum, or perhaps the bright yellow of a sweet gum, even the reddening of the withering poison ivy that beckons hunters to start checking stands, clearing trails, sighting-in rifles and practicing with archery equipment. Autumn has so many triggers that make our primeval need to hunt and gather kick into high gear.

One thing shared by all hunters is eternal optimism. Anchored in anticipation, that optimism fuels an eager endeavor to eliminate all the failures from seasons past. Learning from past mistakes, hunters seek to gain every edge they can. Reading articles such as this one, hunters hope to find a panacea, a kernel of knowledge that make them better at their craft, a sliver of information that will enabling the ultimate pulling of the trigger.

**GET IN THE WOODS >**

**READY.  
SET.  
GO!**

## GET IN THE WOODS

Joshua Hawkins of Brandon is a natural-born, deer-killing machine. When he was discharged after a career in the U.S. Navy, the master chief petty officer was quizzed about his plans for civilian life. He said bluntly that he was going on a killing spree: deer, turkeys, crappie and catfish. He has done his best to live up to that pledge.

“Much of my deer hunting is on public lands,” Hawkins said. “Mississippi has fantastic public-land opportunities, thousands of acres of prime deer country for the hunter willing to get their boots dirty and commit to the long haul.”

Hawkins said hunters need to remove every variable before the season begins. Hunting starts with understanding the prey and how it reacts and interacts with people on a daily basis. It may sound a little like a Yogi-ism, but deer don’t really notice people until they do.

“Public land is under constant management, so people are walking, driving, marking timber, hunting other species and scouting for the upcoming deer season,” Hawkins said. “Most of the non-hunting humans are not too concerned about noise and scent, so the deer see and smell, and we become associated with those smells. When a deer comes across a scent in the woods, it will process the smell and either ignore it or take some evasive action. But unlike elk, antelope or other western game, they will not leave for another mountain range.”

A deer’s sense of smell is well-documented; no need to establish that. Mitigating or tricking that sense is a challenge. The scent-blocking market is filled with claims and counter claims. And to a degree, all the products have some effectiveness at covering human odor, when used according to directions.

“You can start out with scent-free clothing and the best intentions,” Hawkins said. “But a stop at a café or gas station will contaminate shoes and clothes pretty quickly. I have a dedicated plastic tub with limbs, twigs, leaves, leaf litter and earth stored in the bottom. In that, I keep my boots, coveralls, hats, mask, gloves and fanny pack and other fabric items. I also keep a spray bottle of scent neutralizer to spray inside my boots

## NEW .350 LEGEND DEALS RECOIL A BLOW

Recoil-sensitive hunters have had a limited choice of weapons for Mississippi’s primitive weapons seasons.

That has changed since Winchester has introduced the .350 Legend. The larger bores such as the .45-70 and .444 Marlin were real kickers in lightweight rifles. The .35 Whelen was a one of the latest changes, but anyone firing one in a H&R Handi-Rifle soon learns the meaning of recoil. Pistol cartridges such as the .44 mag and .357 mags have filled the need for light recoil, but at the price of limited range and anemic stopping power.

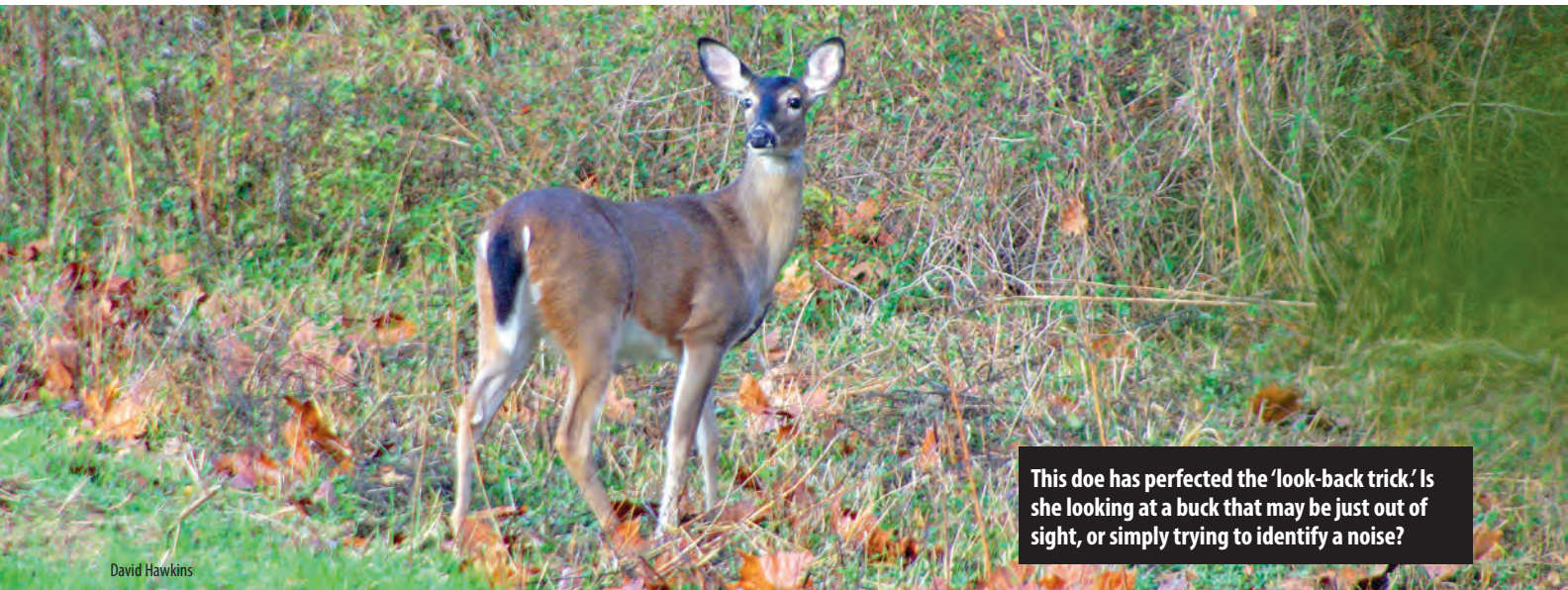
The .350 Legend is a straight-walled case — not a requirement in Mississippi but in some other states — shooting a 35-caliber bullet at killing ranges out to 250 yards, with very mild recoil. Available in AR platforms and bolt-action rifles, the makers of custom barrels for the Thompson-Center Encore and Contender rifles have started meeting the need for these new deer killers that will be easy on the shoulder.

Accuracy with standard, off-the-shelf ammo has been excellent, according to a spokesman for Match Grade Machine. The recoil is very mild, compared to most other .35 or larger

before putting them on. The action of walking causes foot odor to exit the top of the boots. From experience, I have discovered more deer crossing my path with little alarm since scent control has been a priority.”

## STUDY YOUR SUBJECT

For too many people, deer-hunting has digressed to sitting in a shooting house on a food plot and shooting deer as they feed. Of course, deer are harvested by this means every year, but deer soon learn the food plot is a dangerous place, and the bigger and older deer will become nocturnal, choosing to visit the site after shooting hours. More uncommon are the hunters who



This doe has perfected the 'look-back trick.' Is she looking at a buck that may be just out of sight, or simply trying to identify a noise?

David Hawkins



David Hawkins

**Recoil-sensitive shooters who use firearms with interchangeable barrels, now have a low-recoil option in the .350 Legend by Winchester. Here the .350 Legend (left) is compared to other popular .35 deer rounds (l-r) .35 Remington, .358 Winchester, and .35 Whelen.**

cartridges, and accuracy to more than 250 yards is excellent. Bullets range from 145 to 180 grains, with the option of 265 grains for subsonic shooters. Small-framed hunters will find the round the perfect solution to recoil. Mississippi's primitive weapons seasons are from Nov. 11-22, Dec. 2-15 and Jan. 23 -31 for all but the Southeast Zone. See the Outdoor Digest for details. ■

practice woodsmanship, learning what deer do and how they interact with their environment. Mark Golden of Taylorsville has seen many changes in deer-hunting techniques.

“Deer are creatures of their environment and genetics,” Golden said. “There are seasonal foods, such as persimmons, acorns, grasses and forbs that are better at some times of the year and unpalatable at others. Thus, a hunter must understand what food crops are available in a given woodlot and place a stand accordingly.”

On private or leased land, decades of hunters have established this pattern, and stands have been placed accordingly. Travel routes from known bedding areas to known food sources are well established, and the deer respond with regularity. No food plot is involved.

“Wind, or more accurately, air currents come into play during woods hunting,” Golden said. “A bottle of unscented talcum powder works for judging wind direction, but I prefer a few stands of cotton. The cotton fibers will hang on the current longer, and if the air is moving first one way and then another, it is easier to discern.”

Once the direction of air movement has been determined, place your blind or stand so deer will approach with the wind, or at least where wind will not blow your scent into the feeding area.

“One tip I have to offer is patience — or restraint,” Golden said. “Every hunter I know who has hunted for any amount of time has killed a deer that suffered from ‘ground shrinkage.’ Never shoot the first antlerless deer you see. Wait until another come along for comparison. More often than not, buck fawns will forage ahead of their mothers or separate themselves for the family group.”

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For the 2019-2020 season, hunters will be allowed to harvest one buck with any size antlers.

## HUNT ALL DAY

“Deer trigger on movement, then attempt to identify what they are seeing,” said Tommy Hemphill, a Rankin County resident and hunter. “They have a whole host of tricks to make you move a second time. The foot stomp, the head jerk and the 20-yard dash are what I have named a few of the more common moves. Don’t fall for the tricks and move, unless you are sure you want to shoot that deer.”

The old “look-back” trick has saved many a doe’s life during the pre-rut and rut. A doe enters a food plot, then stops feeding, takes a defensive posture and stares intently into the woods. This gives the hunter the impression a buck may be waiting in the wings before making an appearance. Sometimes there is, and sometimes there’s not. It’s a free Lotto ticket; you may get lucky, and you may not.

Hemphill advises hunters to be totally confident with your equipment. Select a deer rifle; shoot it often until bringing it to the shoulder is second nature. Keep your eyes on the deer, but never, ever make eye contact. Use the same ammo you sighted-in with when hunting. Eliminate every possible variable before you go into the field.

The one thing every hunter stressed was this: hunt during the rut. Determine when the rut is occurring by studying the charts compiled by the MDWFP, then plan your days in the woods around then.

“The rut is the most active time of the year for deer, the bucks



David Hawkins

are looking for does and the does are making themselves available,” said biologist William McKinley of the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks. “An active line of scrapes is a top choice for a stand location. Try to set up 30 to 50 yards away with a clear view of the scrape or scrapes, and then stick with it.”


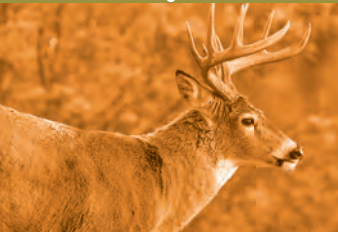



Last, surround yourself with people who hunt; learn from their experiences. If you are a complete novice, don’t be afraid to invite yourself on a hunt with a friend — or at least ask a friend to go for a walk in the woods and teach you about deer signs and conditions. Volumes have been written about deer hunting, that’s a good place to start.

The art of hunting is fading in our society, we owe those who follow to keep that art alive. ■



David Hawkins is a freelance writer living in Forest, Miss. He can be reached at [hawkins2209@att.net](mailto:hawkins2209@att.net).

## GOOD SEASON, EXCEPT FLOOD AREAS ➤

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**READY. SET. GO!**

## EXCEPT IN FLOODED AREAS, STATE EXPECTS GOOD DEER SEASON

The Mississippi deer herd, as a whole, is in good condition, and hunters can expect a good to better harvest this season. The bag limits have been adjusted for 2019-20, so there will be added opportunities for a hunter to place venison in the freezer. Also, with antler restrictions being relaxed on one buck of the three-buck season limit, this is a great time to introduce a new, adult hunter to the sport without worrying that they will harvest an illegal buck. The second and third bucks, however must meet area restrictions.

The antlerless deer limits remain the same at five per season, except in the Southeast Zone, where the antlerless limit is two per season.

"We urge hunters to remove antlerless deer early in the season," said biologist William McKinley of the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks. "Doing so will reserve valuable mast crops for remaining deer, as well as make the doe-to-buck ratio a little more favorable when the rut comes later in the fall."

Most of Mississippi looking at a good to very good hard-mast crop, the south Delta being the exception. By mid-August, the backwater flooding was just receding, and the MDWFP was just getting into some public-land areas to perform a proper

David Hawkins



**Biologists recommend harvesting antlerless deer early in the season year. Doing so eases pressure on food sources for remaining deer and better the doe-to-buck ratio as the rut approaches.**

assessment of the habitat. Follow [www.mdwfp.com](http://www.mdwfp.com) for the latest updates. For useful information, pick up a copy of the Mississippi Outdoor Digest, 2019/2020, wherever licenses are sold.

"Feral hogs remain a problem in parts of all 82 counties," McKinley said. "During the 2017-18 seasons, Mississippi hunters reported killing more hogs than deer. Looking at the current data the 2018-19 season could be a repeat. CWD and feral hogs are two paramount threats to the deer herd."

Deer harvested in known CWD areas must be checked-in within that area. All other hunters are encouraged to submit harvested deer heads for testing. Collection points and instructions are being expanded. The more accurate the reported data, the better biologists can monitor the spread of the disease. ■

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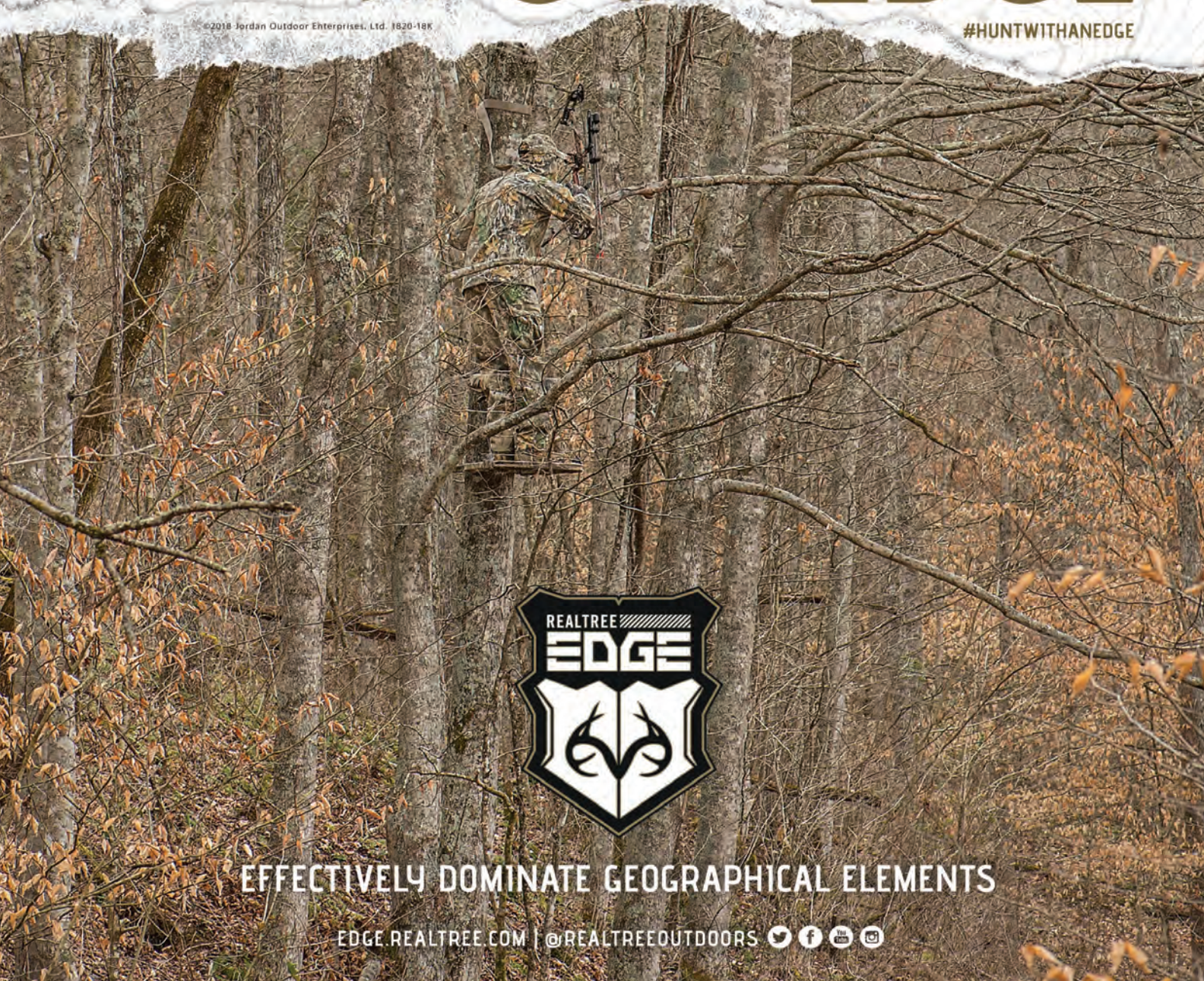
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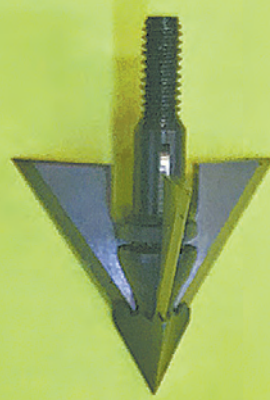
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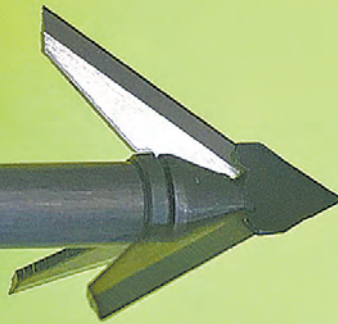


## STICKS & STRINGS

Sammy Romano



QAD's Exodus broadhead feature blades that sweep back over the arrow shaft, resulting in a short, compact head and improved arrow flight.



# WHAT'S NEW IN BROADHEADS?

DETERMINE THE STYLE THAT BEST FITS YOUR PURPOSES, THEN CHECK THESE OUT

**L**ike many things in today's world, modern broadheads are available in a mind-blowing array of different brands and designs. This can make choosing which to carry in your quiver this year seem nearly impossible.

If you want to start a heated argument amongst a group of bowhunters, just ask which broadheads they prefer. Bowhunters tend to be strongly opinionated when it comes to broadhead selection. The fact of the matter is, all of them will work. There is not a broadhead on the market that won't quickly dispatch an animal with proper shot placement.

By the same token however, none of them will get the job done efficiently with a marginal hit. The key is to make the best selection for your style of hunting and the game you will be pursuing.

## WHICH SUITS YOU?

The first major consideration is design. Do you want to shoot mechanical or fixed-blade heads? Which cutting diameter will work best? How many blades should your broadhead have? All of these are important considerations when choosing a broadhead.

Fixed-blade broadheads generally pen-

etrate better than mechanicals due to the fact that they don't use any kinetic-energy deploying blades. This makes them a better choice for larger game such as elk, bear or moose. Their drawback is they are less forgiving of tuning issues and sloppy form. Either problem can cause their point of impact to vary drastically.

Mechanical heads often offer field tip-like accuracy and larger cutting diameters, but the trade-off can be reduced penetration.

The number of blades is a personal preference. More blades mean more cutting surface, but the trade-off again is reduced penetration. A good rule of thumb is that as the size of the animal being hunted increases, the number of blades should decrease.

The next major consideration is brand choice. Choose a brand that is reputable and known for producing sharp, durable blades. This is no place to cut corners, since your broadhead is the product that is ultimately killing the game you are targeting. Although some designs are unique to one brand, you often have a choice of several brands when making a purchase. Choose a brand that you have confidence in. Here are but a few of the many notable broadheads on the market this year.

## MUZZY

The folks at Muzzy have been producing quality broadheads since 1984, and they have unveiled a new design this year with the MUZZY ONE. This fixed, 3-blade broadhead is machined from a solid piece of stainless steel. It is available in 100-grain only and features a 1½-inch cutting diameter. This follows a shift across the market in recent years to simplistic, one-piece heads, but adds Muzzy's notorious sharpness.

## TROPHY RIDGE

Trophy Ridge has long been known for its high-quality, mechanical broadheads, and its newest offering under the SIK brand builds on that tradition. The SIK SK2 rear-deploy broadhead features one-of-a-kind, 2.1-inch offset blades. This results in an oval-shaped, 2.1-inch entry wound for devastating damage and massive blood trails. This wound is also



Sammy Romano is a life-long hunter who has worked in the archery industry for more than 24 years. His expertise includes compounds and crossbows. He can be reached at samboka31@aol.com.

New broadheads for 2019 include (clockwise from top left): the MUZZY ONE, Grim Reaper's Carni-Four, QAD's Exodus, SK2 from Trophy Ridge and Rage Hypodermic.

much less likely to clot in the event of a marginal hit. The SK2 is available in 100-grain only. It offers new Fliteloc technology and is also rated for crossbows up to 410 feet per second.

## QUALITY ARCHERY DESIGNS

QAD has long been known for their award-winning arrow rests, but in recent years, its Exodus broadheads have been gaining notoriety. These offer the unique Blade Over Shaft Technology where the blades sweep back over the arrow shaft, creating a short, compact head. This results in better arrow flight, while maintaining extreme penetration and a large cutting diameter. With a cutting diameter of 1¼ inches and .040-inch thick blades, this broadhead is a solid offering. Blades are also fully replaceable. These broadheads are offered in both a solid and swept blade.

## GRIM REAPER

The folks at Grim Reaper manufacture a huge array of different designs, but they are perhaps best known for their over-the-top mechanical broadheads. A few years ago, they debuted a new, 4-blade design with the Carni-Four broadhead. This design results in a huge, square wound channel that leads to massive blood trails and resists clotting. This year, they have expanded the technology to include the Whitetail Extreme, a 125-grain head that offers an even larger cutting diameter. The Pro-Series broadheads, which includes the Carni-Four and Whitetail Extreme, feature extended tips to prevent deflection on angled shots. I have personally hunted with the Carni-Four and can attest that it is lethal.

## RAGE

Rage revolutionized the broadhead market many years ago by bringing slip-cam technology to the forefront. Their newest broadheads are the Rage Hypodermic NC (No Collar) and



Hypodermic NC Crossbow. These new designs do not require a shock collar to retain the blades. This makes installing them on your arrows easier. The rear-deploy design limits the amount of penetration lost to blade deployment.

## SUMMARY

As you can see here, is no shortage of quality broadheads on today's market.

There is a design for nearly any hunting situation you can imagine. Stop by your local bow shop today and check out some of these products. ■

## APEX PREDATOR

Joshua Chauvin

The author has captured several hunts on trail camera video.

# TRAIL CAMERA VIDEO BENEFITS

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PM

**T**hrough the years, I have started setting my trail cameras in video mode more often. There was just too much left to the imagination that typical trail-camera photos did not show.

Who won the duel of those sparring bucks? Was that really all of the deer in the bachelor pack? Did they have a set of massive antlers pushing the doe? Now there's no wondering. All of those passing animals missed in pictures are captured when video mode is turned on.

Last season, I got a clip of a buck shaking off water after a storm. One evening, a deer and coyote were eating persimmons under the same tree, together. Sometimes deer dance and jump on their back legs like kangaroos.

Watching sleeping animals stir with nightmares is fun, too. After having so many close encounters with these same bucks, I bet they are sometimes dreaming of me.

I've had bucks with locked antlers in pictures, but always wondered what those tussles really looked like. Last season, I captured several exciting videos of battling bucks.

Even better, there is always the chance for filming ground action of the hunt. I've had several archery and pistol hunts that I was able to capture the shot on trail camera video.

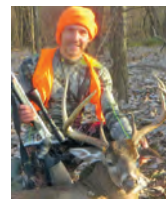
On one hunt, I witnessed a hot doe and small rutting buck pass in front my trail camera twice. On the first sighting, they were jogging, with the buck about 20 yards behind. Later in the hunt, the doe came back, slowly feeding with the same buck walking behind her with his nose to the ground.

I was excited to check those trail-camera photos, but to my astonishment, there was only blank photos followed by a set of a lone doe feeding. The less-than-one-second trigger was still too slow for a running doe, and that five-

picture set had finished by the time the buck ran through a few seconds later. Then, on the second pass, the camera delay didn't reset in time to snap any pictures of the buck. These photos showed none of the prime rut action that was actually taking place. After that entertaining hunt, I began setting cameras to take videos. As expected, many more does with bucks in tow began showing up in the clips.

## MORE DETAILS

Often, a picture makes distinguishing the size of horns a tough task; whereas a video will show many antler positions to



*Joshua Chauvin is a health-focused ultramarathon runner who goes on solo manual-powered public land adventures focusing on hunting big game and large fish by using challenging methods and weapons. He enjoys self-filming and sharing the tactics and details from his expeditions to help others learn from his unique techniques.*

better determine spread, beam length, point totals, mass and unique characteristics. Also, estimating a deer's age and weight is easier with more angles of the neck and body to view.

I like setting cameras in video mode near food sources. These clips show exactly which deer are stopping for lengthy periods to have a meal or just casually passing through. Sometimes, it's only non-target animals creating all the leftover chewed forage.

## SEASONAL PHASES

During the early season, when bucks tend to move very little, I look to set cameras near the community rub patch. The woods may seem void of fresh rubs, but there is usually a group of mini-hookings, 10 yards in diameter, that bucks create near their bedding areas. This is where I get the majority of bachelor packs on film. However, a picture will often hide the biggest buck staying in the back of the pack.

During the rut, it's amazing to see a set of big horns moving through several seconds after a running doe tripped the trigger. Usually, these few seconds were just long enough for the buck to be completely missing if the camera took a photo. These chase-filled rut videos often help pin down the best dates to be in the stand for future years.

I find the best place to set trail cameras during the rut is under licking branches with large community scrapes where several deer trails connect. Sometimes, I get more than a dozen different bucks tending one scrape. I avoid setting cameras on any small scrape along a single path.

During the pre-rut, the bucks check out these the scrapes often to see if any early does are in heat. Since pre-rut bucks tend to slowly follow does by 20 to 40 yards, I'll have my camera set for taking longer clips.

Want to know if the buck you're after isn't already in the taxidermy shop? Keep the camera in video mode

throughout the end of the season. During the post-rut, bucks keep coming to these large community scrapes and licking branches to see if any does are in heat and which bucks still need to be fought with. They rarely pass by without creating an action-filled video.

## WOUNDED ANIMALS

After successfully harvesting dozens of public-land deer, unfortunately, a few shots resulted in lost animals despite my best tracking attempts. By using trail-camera videos, I was happy to see two deer from those tragic occurrences still alive weeks later.

A nice 8-point that ducked into a higher shot from my 160 feet-per-second recurve arrow was seen on video feeding

## CAUGHT ON VIDEO:

Go to [LouisianaSportsman.com/trail-camera-video-benefits](http://LouisianaSportsman.com/trail-camera-video-benefits) for a video that features more than 170 different Louisiana public-land bucks from the many different WMAs the author hunts.

weeks later. On another hunt, my arrow passed through a buck on both sides the rib cage from a 10-yard broadside shot. At the time, I couldn't believe I couldn't find that deer, but footage of the buck a month later proved "no man's land" does exist. The next year, trail-camera footage showed the same buck with a scar, sporting a non-typical rack.

continues >

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continued

## OTHER GAME

Besides deer, it's always fun to see all of the other animals in action, especially predators hunting game. One video has bobcats stalking as a pair.

With their playful personalities, bears make for some exciting videos to watch — when they aren't busy destroying your camera.

Most trail-camera picture sets miss many hogs that are passing by. A video of that same sounder may show dozens of hogs in one group. Watching big boars use their tusks to bite and break tree limbs is just as entertaining as bucks making scrapes and rubs on film. And these massive hogs love to fight, so if a trail camera has audio in video mode, expect grunting, roaring and high-pitched squeals.



## VIDEO SETTING TIPS

I try to check cameras in video mode more often. I select locations where less small brush is in the trigger range, since videos take up more memory. One windy day can quickly fill up a memory card or drain batteries with false triggers.

Be sure to check the trigger speed of video mode. Many cameras have a fast, less-than-1-second delay, yet videos can lag nearly three seconds to begin. If the camera is slower for videos, I set it on an angle to the game trails.

Many of the scenes happen at night, so having a blacked-out camera that has no red lights is important for letting the animals go upon their way undisturbed to keep coming back. My last trail-camera article detailed how I buy all my blacked-out cameras for around \$30 and self-paint them. It can be found here: <https://www.louisianasportsman.com/columns/apex-predator/use-paint-brushes-to-stealth-up-trail-cameras/>

Give video mode a try this season when you set out your trail cameras. There's a good chance you'll give up on those simple snapshots once you see movie clips of all the action. ■



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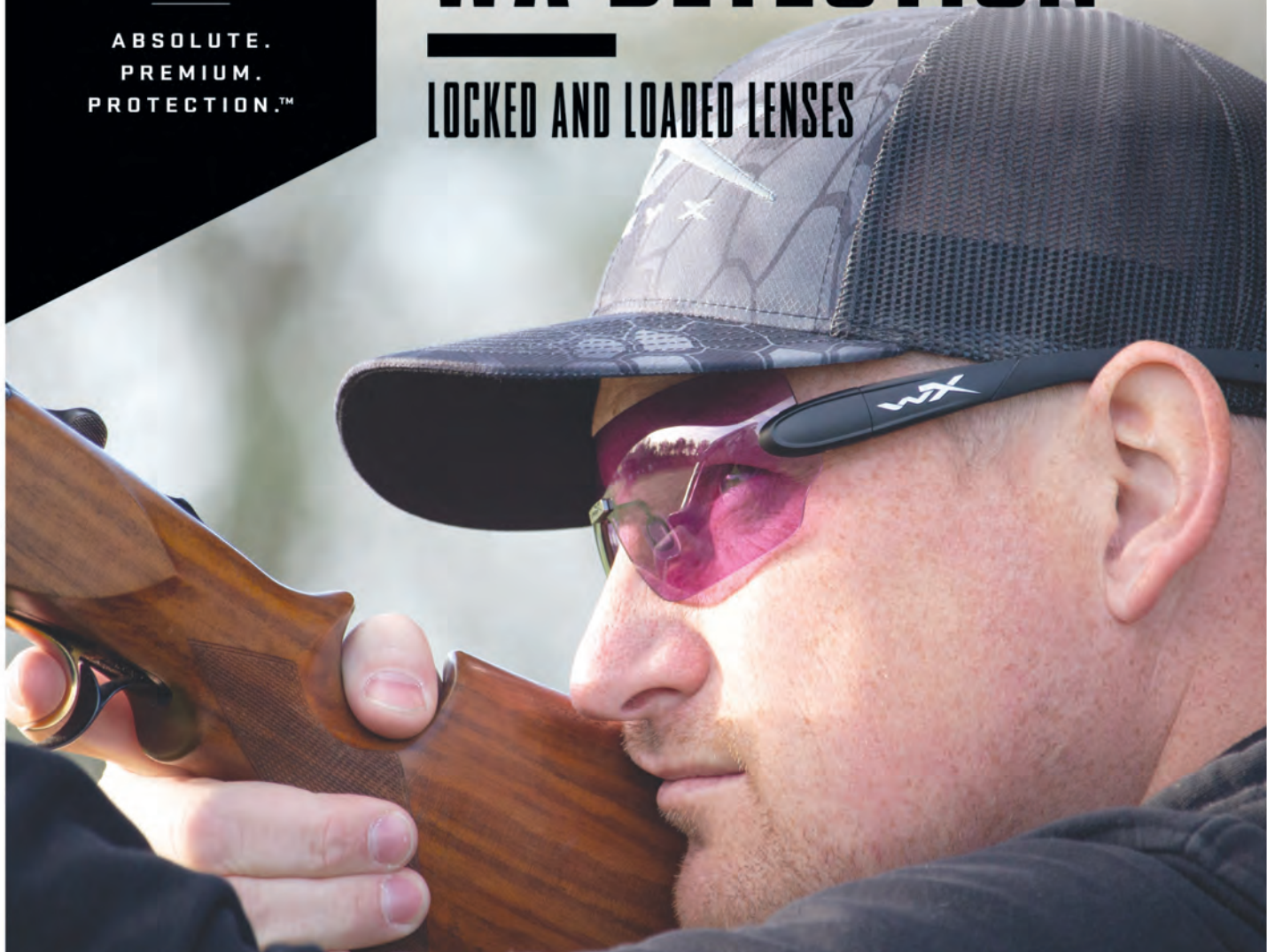
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**W**ith September rolling into October, it's time to put away summer things like beach chairs and pool toys and break out fall gear — like football-stadium chairs and that big finger that says your team is No. 1.

If you are a crappie fisherman, you might be tempted to back the boat into the garage and get out the archery tackle or deer rifle, but doing so may cost you in terms of some of the best fishing you'll see all year. The weather is pleasant, without all the continuous winds and cold fronts; the crowds are gone — owing to college football and deer season cranking up —

and the fish are hungry.

Fall fishing for crappie is similar to finding and catching crappie in the spring, only in reverse. The biggest difference is that crappie are not interested in spawning but are moving from the deep water where they spent the summer to shallower water to find favorable water temperatures, better oxygen content and most important, food.

Accordingly, in the fall, three patterns really shine, capitalize on finding crappie at transition points as well as moving between areas in the search for baitfish.

**TIGHT-LINE HEAVY COVER >**

## THE SECRET IS OUT. CATCHING SLAB CRAPPIE IS NOT JUST A SPRINGTIME EVENT.

By Phillip Gentry

# 3 PATTERNS FOR FALL CRAPPIE



## **1 TIGHT-LINE HEAVY COVER**

As a pro angler, Tim Blackley from Hornbeak, Tenn., fishes many lakes across northern Mississippi. He understands what it takes to consistently catch big crappie

“I regularly fish several of the north Mississippi and Alabama lakes, and crappie on all of these lakes are doing just about the same thing,” Blackley said. “They have come off their summer pattern, moved out of the deep water and are feeding up pretty hard getting ready for colder weather. About all of the crappie we’ve caught were keying on bait-fish, but to consistently catch fish, we’ve had to be right in some type of cover.”

Blackley said the average depth he finds the majority of crappie is 10 to 14 feet. As water temperatures drop into the upper 60s, he said crappie will move shallower with the cooler nights. That movement will continue for several weeks until the water cools to around 60 degrees. Then, he said, when the water hits the high 50s, fish will turn around and head back to deeper water for the winter.

Blackley and his tournament partner, Jackie Van Cleave, are well known for tight-lining for crappie, and fall is no exception.

“We’ll definitely be tight-lining, using double-hook minnow rigs — the Capps and Coleman rigs,” he said. “However, unlike the spring when we’ll move along some type of channel break and might troll at a faster clip, we’re just jumping from spot to spot. Because crappie are so tight to cover, once we locate structure — brush tops, standing timber, or any type of heavy cover we can find — in that 10- to 14-foot range, we don’t move around much.”

Blackley said crappie are interested in filling their bellies as fast as they can, so using bigger baits is often a key to getting them to bite.

“Bigger baits seem to work better,” he said. “That means we might be using medium minnows on a straight Eagle Claw 214 light-wire hook, but we also thread a Strike King tube skirt straight on the hook and then tip that with the minnow.”

Blackley and Van Cleave will use a ½-ounce weight on the double rigs for fishing deeper water, and they prefer a slightly stiffer rod for this type of fishing: 14-foot B’n’M Pro Staff Trolling rods.

“This is a pretty stiff rod that will help get you out of trouble when fishing tight to heavy cover,” he said. “You’re going to get hung up a lot.”

A bit of final advice. The double rigs are tied to 10-pound monofilament; that way, when they get a hang up, the light-wire hook will pull out, and they don’t have to re-tie as often.

**TROLL CRANKBAITS >**



Delta angler Brad Taylor catches plenty of oxbow crappie through the fall on crankbaits.

Lure color is especially important in fall crappie fishing because of the differences and changes in water color across a body of water.



## DECIPHERING WATER COLOR

Fall fishing for crappie can be a time of feast or famine, as water temperatures begin to drop and other factors — lake levels, water flows and baitfish migrations — come into focus.

One thing that many crappie anglers may overlook is the color of the water, or more specifically, the clarity of the water.

Kent Driscoll, a Mississippi-based crappie pro, said water color often dictates how active crappie will be, how tight they'll hold to cover, and what bait colors they're most likely to hit.

"It's kind of the reverse of the spring, when crappie are anxious for warmer water to flow in" said Driscoll, a pro staffer for B'n'M Poles. "In the fall, the main body water is practically dead; it's hot, there's no oxygen and water washing in from a creek is like a fresh breeze on a hot day."

Driscoll said crappie view water color as a form of cover. Fish tend to venture further out, and more importantly, further up, away from brush piles and tree tops, and they will actually suspend pretty shallow. That makes them easier pickings for crappie anglers.

The old adage of bright colors for bright days and dark colors for dark days isn't always the best in conditions where water color varies throughout a body of water. Driscoll does like pink, red and chartreuse, and there are days when a jighead with a built in spinner blade is worth its weight in gold.

To find what the fish prefer, Driscoll says you have to show it to them. He also has to consider that the muddy water he's seeking will have a definite effect on what jig colors crappie are going to hit.

"I'll fish all different bright colors and jighead/body combinations until I catch a fish," he said. "Then, I might run two of that color or combination. Before long, I've got the day's color combination down to just one, two or maybe three, and the catch rates are getting better as I hone in on what they want." ■

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## **2 TROLL CRANKBAITS**

Usually by the first of October, most crappie anglers will be getting ready those crankbait rods that filled the livewell so often during the summer and digging that hot-pink crankbait out of the carpet. Tournament pro Brad Taylor agrees that it may be a little cold to hang out at the pool or on the beach, but who said it's too cold to catch crappie on crankbaits?

"They work just as good during the fall and winter, too," said Taylor, past president of the Magnolia Crappie Club. "I love to fish them in October and November in the oxbow lakes near my home in Greenville.

"It's a suspended-fish tactic, not just a summertime tactic."

He said that Mississippi Delta crappie spend much of the fall suspended, chasing migrating shad and moving between specific structure locations. It's the same pattern that works in the summer, except summer crappie are suspending in the thermocline to avoid the heat and bottom predators.

"I know a lot of guys still troll with their big outboard or a small, gas kicker motor," Taylor said, "but for me, the most important piece of crankbaiting gear is a Minn Kota electric trolling motor.

"I have an 80-pound thrust auto-pilot that has the i-Pilot control system. (Auto pilot) is the greatest thing ever invented for pulling crankbaits. It handles all the steering and boat control. You just set it and forget it," he said.

Even in cooler water, Taylor said that the target trolling speed is between 1.4 and 1.9 mph on the GPS. Taylor will stagger the lines on his rods at 70 feet on the shortest rod and go 70, 80, and 90 feet on one side and 80, 90, 110 feet on the other.

He also likes to make a lot of turns while trolling when he first starts looking for fish. That helps him find the right depth.

Trolling at speeds approaching 2 miles per hour, crappie don't have much time to be finicky over fall crankbaits.



Phillip Gentry

# 3 SINGLE-POLE JIGGING

Brad Whitehead, a guide on Pickwick Lake, has seen the world of crappie fishing move from cane poles to multi-rod spider-rigging to trolling high-dollar crankbaits. He believes all of these methods have a time and place, but one thing he has noticed on his home lake is that a lot of anglers simply overlook single-pole jigging for crappie when they move into their fall pattern.

“Most people think of jigging brush that’s in 4 to 10 feet of water,” he said. “They can see the brush, and they hit every side of it, and they can really control where that bait goes. Why not do the same thing in water that might be 15 or even 20 feet deep?”

For this type of deep-water jigging, Whitehead uses the same pole he would pick for spider-rigging, but a shorter version. Using an 8- or 10-foot graphite jig pole, he will go to one of the brush tops he has marked on his graph and do a little scanning to make sure somebody is home.

“I don’t rely solely on the graph,” he said. “I will mark the high spot on a brush top that has fish on it, and I’ll take a buoy and throw it off to the side — never on top of the brush. That gives me a visual reference, and I can jig fish just like I would anywhere else.”



Blackley said using bigger baits is one of the keys to catching bigger fish.

Phillip Gentry

Whitehead believes he can get away with a shorter pole, even in Pickwick’s clear water, because the fish are deeper and don’t spook as easily. He also generates the feel he gets from using a lighter bait in 4 to 6 feet of water by using a bigger and heavier bait in the deeper water.

“I’ve been using this bait called a Crappie Magnet. It’s a little bigger profile bait. It’s 2¾ inches long, and I rig it on a ¼-ounce jighead,” he said. “That gives me good feel with an 8-foot pole. Sometimes, the fish will just get heavy on the line, and other times they’ll try to take the rod out of your hand.” ■



Phillip Gentry is a veteran outdoor writer who catches everything that swims but specializes in crappie, catfish and striped bass.

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## BEST TIME FOR MONSTER CATS

As soon as the leaves start falling and the temperatures start dropping in October the blue cats start heading to their deep honey holes, and the fall and winter bite begins.

“The water usually starts cooling in October, but when it gets below 50 degrees, the big cats move to the deep holes,” Crosby said. “We typically bottom-bounce in October and November and catch good numbers of catfish — with an occasional monster cat. I’ll set my I-Pilot trolling motor on .3 mph, and we’ll slowly drift downriver, bouncing our bait just off the bottom.”

Drifting and bottom-bouncing is a fun technique, and you can drift for miles without a bite and then load the boat in one place. The fish move from day to day; you might catch them 20 to 30 feet deep one day and 70 to 80 feet deep the next day, depending upon the current.

“We’ll catch a bunch bottom-bouncing in the early fall, but we’ll hit those deep holes, too, so we can keep tabs on the big cats,” Crosby said. “After they start moving into the holes, the fun begins, and (it) usually runs through the winter until the spring floods begin.

“The colder, the better as far as catching monster blues. Most people are deer hunting and duck hunting, and we have the river to ourselves. That’s when it gets crazy and big cats are caught often.”

## HEAVY DUTY GEAR A MUST

“There’s no place comparable to the Mississippi River when it comes to catching a monster cat,” Crosby said. “The Mississippi River is so big that there are areas that never get fished, and we release the ones we catch, so there’s a big supply of catfish to be caught. But the most-important factor after learning where to fish is to have the proper equipment.”

Crosby’s two most-important pieces of equipment are his depth finder and his i-Pilot, which interface and allow him to stay on a spot or keep the boat in line.

“We’ll graph a good fish, and then we’ll anchor and start fishing for him,” he said. “And we’ll usually get bit pretty quickly if they’re feeding, but locating them with the graph is the most important part of the equation on a river this big.”

Most people are not outfitted to handle catfish ranging from 18 to 70 pounds in deep, swift water, so Crosby supplies all of equipment, tackle, and bait.

“We have tough reels filed with 60- to 80-pound braided line on heavy B’n’M catfish rods,” he said. “We’ll use a 50-pound mono leader with a 30-pound leader and a 6- to 8-ounce bell sinker to hold it down. The braided line is imperative, but you must have lighter leaders for the weight, so you won’t lose the fish or the whole rig if the weight hangs on trash.”

“When we’re bottom-bouncing, we’ll use a lighter rod and quality reel with lighter weights.”

## WHERE TO FIND HUGE BLUES

“My personal best is a 75-pound blue cat, but we’ve caught several 80-pounders and 90-pounders,” Crosby said. “The Mississippi state record is 95 pounds; it’s just begging to be broken, and you can be sure there’s more than one swimming around in there.”

The lower Mississippi River has a great reputation for big fish, and there’s less fishing pressure from Greenville south to Vicksburg and Port Gibson. Crosby is very familiar with that por-



tion of the river.

“You need to go with somebody who knows the river and who can show you where they are and how to catch them,” he said. “Otherwise, it will take years to learn the river and how to find them.

“When we’re bottom-bouncing, we look for certain types of banks, and we fish like we do when bass fishing,” Crosby said. “We’ll bump, bump, bump that weight just off the bottom, and the big cats will strike, and you have to set the hook just like you do when you’re ledge-fishing for bass. If you don’t have your timing down, you’ll miss them.”

“On a great day, we’ll catch 20 to 25 blues in the 15- to 25-pound range, with one or two big fish in the 30- to 50-pound range,” said Crosby. “Just last week, I took a couple of guys bottom-bouncing, and they caught a 31-pounder doing that and earlier, we caught a 60 pounder.”

**DEEP SCOUR HOLES, EDDIES >**

Dan Shelton caught this 65-pound Mississippi River blue catfish fishing with Bob Crosby.



This Mississippi River blue, caught by Jere Smith, weighed 62 pounds. There are bigger fish out there.

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# YAMAHA

## DEEP SCOUR HOLES, EDDIES

My favorite technique is hole-fishing, although I enjoy catching them bottom-bouncing as well. As in most types of fishing, 80% of the fish are in 20% of the water, and that's where a guide like Crosby comes into play. He knows where to look, and by being on the water regularly, he can keep up with their whereabouts on a weekly basis. That's invaluable.

"You've got to know when to stop, how long to fish and when to leave a hole," Crosby said. "We'll hit a series of holes sometimes 4 to 5 miles apart and fish them until we find them. Sometimes, we'll give them 20 to 30 minutes and then head to the next hole. If they are there and ready to eat, they bit quick."

Crosby knows where the deep scour holes are, and big cats will usually hit pretty quickly after he get's set up and puts the lines out. Scour holes are places where the swift water scours

Mike Giles shows off a 50-pounder blue catfish he caught fishing the Mississippi River with Bob Crosby earlier this year.



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the bottom and washes out deep holes below rock dikes, jetties and along deep banks. Crosby keeps up with the changing river levels and constantly checks his holes.

"Sometimes, we'll hit a couple holes and not catch a thing, and then on the next hole catch four or five as fast as you can get your bait in the water," he said.

On another trip to the river with Crosby, we caught five cats in the 17- to 20-pound range on one hole, with the biggest being an 80-pounder that bottomed out the scales — the largest freshwater fish I'd ever seen caught on a rod and reel. ■

For more information on catching monster catfish, contact Bob Crosby at 601-953-5767, or check out his website online at <https://www.bluecatguideservice.com>.



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



# Wildlife Q&A

It's been two years of tremendous change and challenge for the experts who manage Mississippi's wildlife and game species. Here's how the state's biologists view what's ahead.

■ By Bobby Cleveland

**T**he past two years have been an intriguing and challenging period for the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks, and for sportsmen in the Magnolia State.

Consider:

- An outbreak of chronic wasting disease in two different regions of the state.
- A somewhat controversial purchase of land in the South Delta for a new Wildlife Management Area.
- A 10-month backwater flood event in the South Delta.
- The state's first mandatory harvest-reporting system for turkeys.

Combined, those events, plus other factors, have led to many changes in the way Mississippi hunters will approach seasons, especially for white-tailed deer in the CWD and flood-impacted regions, and the way the MDWFP manages wildlife.

With that in mind, *Mississippi Sportsman* conducted a question-and-answer session about the state of wildlife in the Magnolia State with the executive director of MDWFP's wildlife division, Russ Walsh, and his staff providing the answers.

The following is the text of that interview.

**MS:**

**While it's still too early to tell the long-term impacts of the South Delta flooding, what approach is MDWFP taking in that area as it relates to wildlife and hunting?**

**MDWFP:**

The impacts of the 2019 flooding in the South Delta will take years to fully appreciate. MDWFP will be working with hunters, land managers and conservation partners ... to collect data to garner a full understanding of the impacts on wildlife.

**MS:**

**Are there any clear impacts already being noticed in deer?**

**MDWFP:**

For white-tailed deer, antler growth and body condition were negatively affected. This was particularly evident in areas where they were isolated, like levees, and (where) food resources were depleted. The concentration of deer for an extended period would have created an opportunity for CWD to spread. Testing via hunter-harvested samples will be critically important in the coming seasons to determine whether CWD did, in fact, spread.

**MS:**

**We've seen a switch to a more-regional management of wildlife, especially white-tailed deer. Can you discuss the reasoning, its immediate impacts, how it has helped in CWD management, and long-term goal of this approach?**

**MDWFP:**

Given Mississippi's wide range of soil productivity, variations in deer populations and breeding dates, Mississippi established deer zones more than a decade ago. Given the aforementioned factors, deer zones allow for better management of the resource at regional scales. In the last year, CWD management zones were established in response to detecting CWD in multiple locations. These zones have

additional regulations, such as carcass-transport restrictions and feeding bans in an effort to reduce the spread and prevalence of the disease.

**MS:**

**There are some changes in deer limits for 2019-20, including allowing one buck of any antler size, plus an increase in does in most areas? Were those changes based on biology, hunter opportunity or both, and why?**

**MDWFP:**

Research indicates CWD transmission in white-tailed deer occurs from direct contact with infectious material, for example saliva, feces, urine, etc. These interactions, whether direct or indirect, are amplified as deer density increases. Thus, reducing deer density is partially achieved by increasing female harvest.

In Mississippi, 73 percent of the CWD-positive deer were males. The higher percentage in males is consistent with other states' findings. Based on this data, it is sound to allow removal of males in all age classes to reduce buck density. Additionally, removing yearling males may slow dispersal of CWD because they disperse over long distances and could transmit infectious prions to other areas.

The concentration of deer into areas of higher elevation during flooding depleted food resources and created a situation where CWD could easily spread.



MDWFP



**MS:**

The 2019 spring turkey season was the first to include the Game Check harvest reporting system. Obviously, it's early, but how did it go and what possibilities/benefits have MDWFP seen in the first few months?

**MDWFP:**

A total of 8,780 unique users reported 12,627 turkey harvests to Game Check during the 2019 spring season. On average, hunters who reported were 39 years of age. Approximately 7% of reports were submitted on behalf of youth hunters under the age of 16. Nonresidents accounted for 9.5% of all reported turkey harvests. Twelve percent came from public land.

Most of the hunters who utilized the Game Check system only reported one bird, while about 9.7% attained a seasonal bag limit of three gobblers. The vast majority of birds reported were mature (2 years or older). Only 3% had less than a 6-inch beard, and only 5% had less than half-inch spurs.

Game Track was also useful on tracking the timing of harvest. The opening day of the regular season saw the highest harvest, 773 birds reported. About 50% of the birds reported were harvested by March 30.

Mississippi hunters bought in to the Game Check harvest reporting system during this spring's turkey season.



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**CONTINUES >**

Mississippi duck hunters will get to hunt later in January this season because of changes in the USFWS framework.

**MS:**

Over the past two years, there have radical changes in the migratory bird frameworks process from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The benefits for hunters are obvious, but what has meant for MDWFP?

**MDWFP:**

One of the most-significant recent changes in the migratory game bird hunting season-setting process has been the timing of season selections. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service worked with state wildlife agency partners to establish a process for continuing to use biological data to set hunting regulations, while also providing federal frameworks for states to select their seasons earlier in the year. Starting with the 2016-17 migratory game bird hunting seasons, final federal frameworks began being published annually in early spring instead of the previous time line of late summer. This new time line has allowed the Commission on Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks to select and approve all hunting seasons for the state during the spring. Having all seasons set in the spring allows the MDWFP to publicize seasons earlier and also allows Mississippi hunters a chance to make their hunting plans earlier.

Another significant change made recently regarding migratory game bird hunting season frameworks was a change in the federally allowed closing date for duck seasons. The MDWFP



Ann Taylor

worked closely with the USFWS through the Mississippi Flyway Council to change the duck season framework closing date from the last Sunday in January to Jan. 31. Late January is often a very important time for Mississippi duck hunters. Depending on how the calendar falls each year, this change will allow for up to six days of late January duck hunting that would not have been available previously.

**CONTINUES >**

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**MS:**

**What is the MDWFP doing to recruit more hunters?**

**MDWFP:**

We are continually working to engage new hunters and fishermen. Examples of activities include:

- Provide funding and help coordinate a Youth Waterfowl Hunting and Education Camp each year to engage youth who do not currently waterfowl hunt;
- Allow special youth hunt days on WMAs for multiple game species;
- MDWFP staff assisting with several partner organizations' youth events each year.

MDWFP will be hosting two mentor deer hunts this deer season on WMAs to engage adults who do not hunt.

**MS:**

**Last year's completed purchase of the new Steele Bayou WMA in the South Delta was a major coup for public hunting in Mississippi. What will it add to the future for Mississippi Sportsman, and just how important is opening new public access opportunities?**

**MDWFP:**

The Mississippi River Alluvial Plain is a nearly 24 million-acre region with bottomland hardwood forest as the dominant natural plant community. The productive soil of the Mississippi River floodplain led to large-scale clearing of the once vast expanse of these forests. The largest remnants of the bottomland forests were primarily kept intact as national forests and wildlife refuges. However, some private holdings, such as the Anderson-Tully Company lands, are more substantial and provide critical areas for wildlife species dependent on bottomland systems.

The acquisition of this tract will ensure an intact bottomland hardwood forest in perpetuity for the benefit of many wildlife species. This WMA will be vital in maintaining a long legacy of outdoor recreation for sportsmen and women.

**MS:**

**The fee for a Mississippi Sportsman License rising to \$45 had to be welcome news for the agency and its Wildlife and Fisheries management staffs. What are the immediate benefits for the Wildlife Bureau in terms of revenue and what it provides?**

**MDWFP:**

Court decisions have established that wildlife are to be held by the government in public trust for the citizenry. This basis is the foundation for state and federal wildlife agencies that exist



Obtaining and opening the Steele Bayou WMA will give Mississippi's public-land hunters more opportunities to harvest white-tailed deer.

today. Hunting and fishing license dollars are the primary funding source for these agencies and wildlife conservation efforts. The MDWFP Wildlife Bureau cooperatively manages 55 Wildlife Management Areas and provides technical guidance on public and private lands.

Further, our different species program staffs make wildlife management decisions based upon current population data and sound scientific research. Hunting licenses and Pittman-Robertson funds are critical for continuing the vital conservation efforts to manage the public trust. ■



**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.



**HIGH SCHOOL FRESHMAN  
FROM WEST MONROE GETS  
A TASTE OF WHAT A BASS  
PRO'S LIFE IS LIKE IN VIDEO/  
FILMING ADVENTURES.**

■ By Kinny Haddox

# LIGHTS, CAMERA, BASS ACTION

# AT FIRST GLANCE, MACK GREEN LOOKS AND SOUNDS LIKE ANY REGULAR 14-YEAR-OLD, HIGH-SCHOOL STUDENT.

**BELOW:** High school freshman Mack Green gets to follow the action in the Guntersville BASS Elite tournament. **INSET:** One benefit of being good with the video camera is a front row "seat" at BASS Elite Series events that Chris Zaldain fishes.

Like a lot of young people who love to fish, he dreams of being on the water, in the middle of the competitive action of professional bass tournaments.

But Green's dream isn't just to be behind the steering wheel of a big bass rig or up front with his foot on the trolling motor. He's found a quicker way into the game. For now, his dream is to be behind the controls of his drone, video and still cameras, recording the action on the BASS Elite tour from the bank, a photo boat or the nearest weigh-in.

A freshman at West Monroe High School, Green is living that dream. A humble, well-mannered young man, he has found his way into the middle of big-time bass fishing — not with a rod and reel, but with his camera.

He has teamed up with Chris Zaldain, a BASS Elite pro from Texas, to film Zaldain and help him keep his social-media sites up to date. He has traveled with Zaldain, stayed with his family on the road and followed him in tournaments.

It's not just a dream come true for Mack, but a huge bonus for Zaldain. Mack was on hand at Lake Guntersville to capture the action as Zaldain finished second in an Elite Series tournament and won \$25,000. He not only filmed the action but did a documentary on the travel to the tournament.

"The fishing industry is starving for guys like him, and here he is, killing it as a high schooler," Zaldain said.

Green has not only impressed tournament anglers, but he has garnered the hard-earned attention of the BASS media folks

as well. A video and story about him was posted online on the BASS website.

How many 14-year-olds can say that? Or any fishermen for that matter?

Green has grown up fishing with his father, Jon, and he loves to be out on the water with a rod in hand. But a few years ago, he developed the desire to learn more about photography and videography. He started picking up more and more equipment and decided that it would be cool to video some of their fishing trips. At first, the purpose was to watch the videos, learn from them and become better anglers.



A camera isn't the only thing Mack Green can handle. Here he is with pro angler Tyler Stewart, enjoying a trip on Caney Lake.



That has developed quickly into an awesome opportunity that has even allowed him to travel to several tournaments, fish with some of the best anglers around his hometown area and even become more excited about his future possibilities as an outdoor videographer.

"I have been fortunate to hook up with some really good people," Green said. "One day, I got to go out with Tyler Stewart (an FLW bass pro) and do a photo shoot. He's cool. Then I got with local pro fisherman Todd Risinger and did some video work for him. He fishes a lot of tournaments."

Zaldain heard about Green and asked him to come to Lake Fork, and film him in the BASS Elite tournament earlier this summer.

Green couldn't say "Yes!" fast enough.

He filmed Zaldain, helped him with some social-media posts and was off and running. It wasn't long before Zaldain contacting him again and took Green to Alabama's Lake Guntersville to film another BASS tournament.

"I just can't explain how cool that was," Green said. "I mean, they came and got me, took care of my expenses, and I got to go stay out in a boat filming. I even filmed all the way over there. They are really super awesome people. In fact, everybody I've met has been really nice. I've had a great time."

There's a side of Green that wouldn't mind just loading up and doing this all the time, but there is this little thing called school that he has to take care of first. He loves the filming but knows how important his education is as well. If he starts to forget, his mom, Misty, a school teacher, will remind him. And as far

as anybody knows, missing school to shoot videos of a bass tournament probably isn't an excused absence. At least not at this point.

Green has obviously got a bright future ahead doing what he loves. If he learns enough and wants to pursue it, who knows, he may be in front of the pro bass lenses one day, not behind them. But now he's focused on the eye side of the lens.

And that's just fine with him.

Lights. Camera. Bass action! ■



**Kinny Haddox** has been writing magazine and newspaper articles about the outdoors in Louisiana for 40 years. He also publishes a daily website, [lakedarbonnelife.com](http://lakedarbonnelife.com). He and his wife, DiAnne, live on Lake D'Arbonne in Farmerville.

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## LUNKER LINES

Paul Elias

# OCTOBER IS PICKWICK TIME

AS FALL ARRIVES, TARGET HUNGRY BASS IN BACKS OF CREEKS, ON MAIN-LAKE SAND BARS WITH A VARIETY OF LURES

**P**ickwick Lake is my choice for October bass-fishing trips. Although I know where the bass will be, I'll have to cover plenty of water to find them. Bass will be roaming, and locating the shad in the creeks and pockets and on primary and secondary sandbars with mussels will be the key.

I like to fish from the dam up to the Natchez Trace Bridge and target Yellow Jacket and Bear creeks. Your best bet will be to start fishing halfway back in the creeks and fish all the way around the creeks' backs and around to the other halfway point.

Pickwick has been good to anglers this year, and you can catch three species of bass there: largemouths, smallmouths and spots. Also, Pickwick has grass, and since we probably will have had a couple of cold snaps this month, the grass should be breaking up.

I'll keep four rods on my casting deck: one rigged with a black buzzbait, one



Pygmy Frog

with a white buzzbait and two rigged with frogs.

## FISHING TOPWATER

I'll start in the mornings fishing shallow water in the back ends of creeks and pockets, casting buzzbaits, throw-

ing both black and white lures to learn which color the bass prefer. I'll fish two different types of frogs, too, to know which they like best.

At the same time, I'll be looking for bass blowing up on shad. With the lures I've got tied on, if the bass start blowing



At Pickwick Lake this month, you can catch largemouths, spots and smallmouths, often in the same places.

where the bass are holding on those bars. Where the bar comes to a point, or if there's a ditch that comes through the bar and makes a point — where baitfish will often be concentrated — those areas are the ones on which I'll key. This tactic will produce good numbers of 2-pound smallmouths, although I won't catch many big smallmouths. If the bass aren't working those secondary bars, I'll next search for pea gravel banks on the main lake.

### NED RIG, DROP-SHOT RIG

If I haven't caught the bass I want using these tactics, I'll start fishing with finesse tactics on the pea gravel on the main river banks. A Ned rig is a 1/8-ounce mushroom-shaped jig head with a Mann's Jelly Bug in green pumpkin or watermelon red slid right up against the jighead. I'll be fishing a 7-foot-4 FX Custom spinning rod with 15 pound bass braid on the reel, tied to an 8- to 10-foot leader of 10-pound fluorocarbon. This do-nothing tactic gets numbers of bites and falls slowly. Once the Jelly Bug hits the bottom, it doesn't stand up like the shaky head worm does. I'll inch it along.

I also like a drop-shot rig using a Jelly Bug in another color, but I don't fish the drop-shot rig like most people do. Instead of shaking my rod tip, I drag the weight on the bottom and let the Jelly Bug move slowly along the bottom through the pea gravel.

### WHAT YOU'LL CATCH

During the fall, I'll fish as many back ends of creeks and pockets as possible to find bass. You'll catch numbers of small bass, but you also may catch some bass weighing 4 to 5 pounds. I expect to catch 20 bass or more a day in October at Pickwick using these techniques. ■

up on shad, I should be able to reach them with a buzzbait if they're in open water and with frogs if they're in the grass.

My buzzbaits will be on 7-foot-1, heavy action FX Custom rods with a Bruin 8:1 gear reel and 23-pound White Peacock fluorocarbon line. I can fish the buzzbait fast and cover lots of water when the bass are biting aggressively.

With the frog on the same rod — but using 50-pound bass braid as the main line with a 7:1 Bruin reel — I'll slow down my retrieve. I'll fish it in places and around cover where the bass aren't as aggressive. I'll fish a black Super Frog over the top of the grass and a white Pygmy Frog, a popping frog, in the open water where the grass is breaking up. Once I begin catching bass, I'll put my Power Poles down and thoroughly fish that region of grass and broken grass.

### ALTERNATIVE LURES

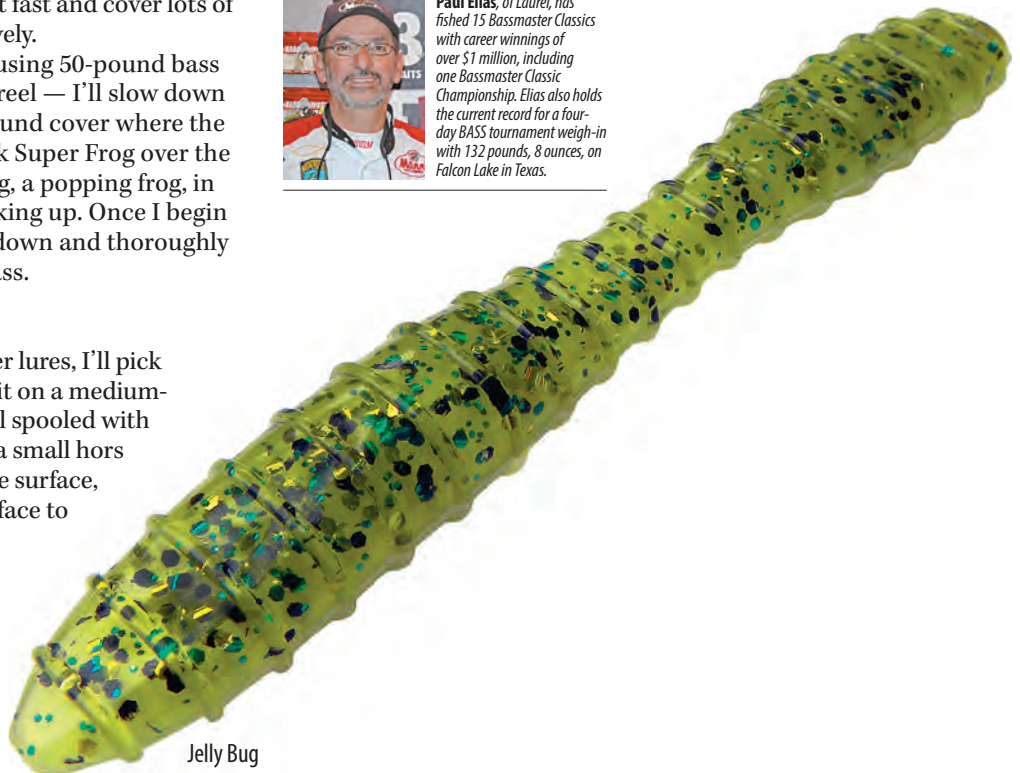
When the bass stop hitting my topwater lures, I'll pick up my Baby 1-Minus crankbait and fish it on a medium-heavy, 6-foot-8 FX Custom rod and a reel spooled with 20-pound fluorocarbon. I'm presenting a small hors d'oeuvre like the Baby 1-Minus below the surface, so the fish don't have to come to the surface to eat it.

### FISH THE CHANNEL

Numbers of bass will be holding just off Pickwick's main-river channel on the secondary bars in October. I'll start by fishing a walking bait like the Zara Spook, paralleling the grass



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.



Jelly Bug

Artificial habitat added to a Texas impoundment helped provide cover and an abundant bluegill forage for the bass, and growth rates went up.

## BASS AT HOME: STUDY SHOWS HOW MUCH ARTIFICIAL HABITAT IMPROVES BASS GROWTH RATES

Photos courtesy Mossback Fish Habitat

**N**ew reservoirs provide exceptional fishing for largemouth bass and other sportfish.

While several environmental factors contribute to the high-quality fishing, abundant and quality habitat is a primary factor.

With time, many reservoirs fill with sediment, and woody habitat deteriorates. Research by Dr. Brian Graeb and graduate students Jason Breegegan and Chance Kirkeeng at South Dakota State University offers insight into rejuvenating an aging impoundment.

The study was conducted on a 110-acre private impoundment in east Texas, managed for trophy bass. The lake was stocked with Florida-strain largemouth bass. In addition to a diversity of forage fish, bluegill, gizzard and threadfin shad, tilapia and red swamp crayfish were intensively stocked to maintain abundant forage. Grass carp were stocked to control aquatic vegetation.

The impoundment was not producing bass to the owner's satisfaction, and the owner stocked 646, 9- to 10-inch Florida

bass (about six per acre) in winter 2011-2012. The bluegill population crashed.

### IMPROVED HABITAT

Management by stocking was not working, so it was time to change course. A variety of Mossback Fish Habitat (<https://www.mossbackfish-habitat.com/>) structures were installed in shallow and deep water in fall 2014. Numerous structures were added. Thirteen percent of the shoreline had added habitat, which extended into deeper water.

The fish community was sampled by electrofishing in spring, summer and fall 2013 through 2016. Sunfish abundance was low before the addition of Mossback habitat, then increased several fold. Bass growth rates increased markedly. They were almost 5 inches longer by age 5 after the addition of the habitat structures, compared to before the habitat improvement.

### INSIGHTS

A problem with all projects that involve the addition of habitat, such as

woody materials, rocks or man-made structures, is determining whether the added cover attracts and concentrates fish or actually improves fish production and abundance. Concentrating fish is desirable if the purpose is to improve angler catch rate, but this could be an undesirable outcome if the purpose is to increase fish abundance.

In this study, the goal was to increase largemouth bass growth rates to improve trophy bass potential. The artificial habitat accomplished this by increasing the abundance of sunfish. And, because bass growth rates increased, the addition of habitat likely increased bass production. But there is more to the story.

The bluegill abundance increased after the addition of the artificial habitat. The Mossback habitat provides cover for bluegill, but it also provides abundant substrate for the aquatic invertebrates that are the food of bluegills. Bluegills, like most sportfish, live where they have food and appropriate cover.

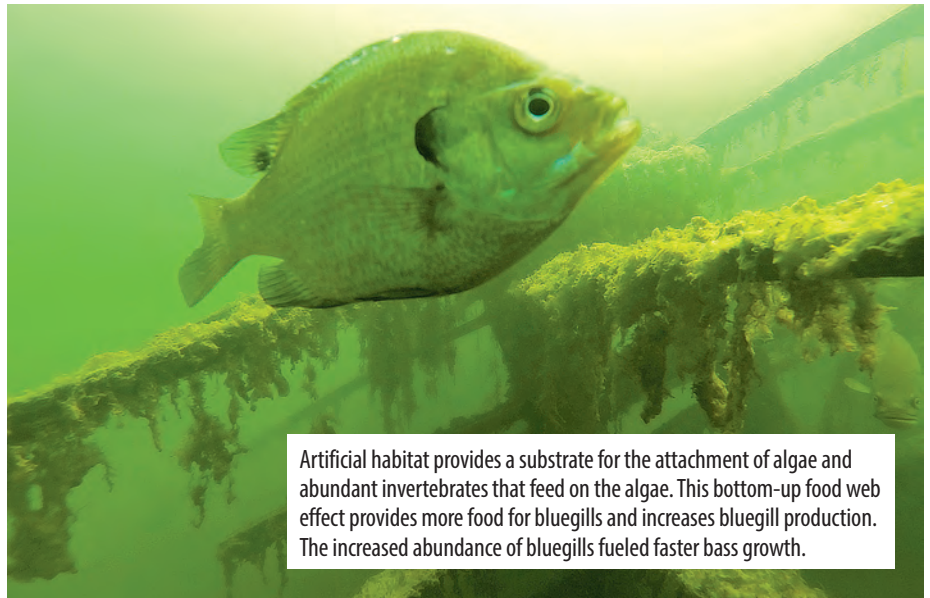
The artificial habitat was also a good habitat for bass, created an area of

abundant sunfish forage and provided favorable conditions for efficient feeding by an ambush predator. It also provided good habitat for crayfish, an important forage for bass in this impoundment. Previous research found that cover benefits bass feeding, but cover that is too dense can impair bass feeding. In this case, the cover density was desirable, and the bass could “stay at home” to benefit from the abundant forage, conserving energy that could be directed to growth.

It is important to note that the addition of habitat was extensive; 20% of the lake area had added habitat. This is a far greater amount of added habitat relative to the area of the impoundment than used in any other habitat improvement project of which I am aware.

Before this habitat improvement-effort project, the private lake was managed by stocking — intensive forage stocking and the addition of more Florida bass when the bass fishing wasn’t good bass. The forage stocking apparently did little good without habitat for the forage, and the bass stocking further depleted the forage. To make matters worse, the impoundment owner had tried to eliminate aquatic vegetation, habitat that provides cover and increases forage for bluegill.

The increases in bluegill abundance and bass growth rate were substantial. The study, although well designed and conducted, only measured short-term fish responses. Longer-term assessments are in progress. ■



Artificial habitat provides a substrate for the attachment of algae and abundant invertebrates that feed on the algae. This bottom-up food web effect provides more food for bluegills and increases bluegill production. The increased abundance of bluegills fueled faster bass growth.

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Hal Schramm is an avid angler and veteran fisheries biologist.

**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](http://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](http://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.

**HUNTING SEASONS**

SPECIES	SEASON DATES	BAG LIMIT	POSSESSION LIMIT
<b>Doves</b>	Sept. 1-Oct. 6 (n), Sept. 1-15 (s) Oct. 19-Nov. 16 (n), Oct. 5-Nov. 6 (s) Dec. 21-Jan. 14 (n), Dec. 21-Jan. 31 (s)	15	45
<b>Quail</b>	Nov. 28-March 7	8	
<b>Rabbit</b>	Oct. 12-Feb. 28	8	
<b>Squirrel (fall)</b>	Oct. 1-Feb. 28	8	
<b>Squirrel (spr)</b>	May 15-June 1	4	
<b>Raccoon</b>	July 1-Sept. 30	1 raccoons per party	
<b>Rac/Opp/Bobct</b>	Oct. 1-Oct. 31 (food/sport) Nov. 1-Feb. 28 (food/sport/pelt)	5/day, 8/party No limit	
<b>Rails</b>			
King & Clapper	Sept. 1-30, Nov. 22-Dec. 31	15	45
Sora & Virginia,	Sept. 1-30, Nov. 22-Dec. 31	25	75
<b>Gallinules</b>	Sept. 1-30, Nov. 22-Dec. 31	15	45
<b>Snipe</b>	Nov. 14 - Feb. 28	8	24
<b>Crow</b>	Nov. 2 - Feb. 28	No limit	No limit
<b>Woodcock</b>	Dec. 18 - Jan. 31	3	9
<b>Wild Turkey</b>			
Fall season	Oct. 15-Nov. 15 (selected counties)	2 per season (may be either sex)	
Spring season	March 14-May 1	1/day, 3/season, longbeards only	
Youth season	March 7-13	1/day, 3/season, bearded birds only	

**WATERFOWL SEASONS**

SPECIES	DATES	BAG LIMIT
<b>Duck</b>	Teal only: Sept. 14-30 Nov. 29-Dec. 1, Dec. 6-Jan. 31	6 6
<b>Geese</b>	Sept. 1-30	5
<b>(Canada, blue, Ross, white-fronted, brant)</b>	Nov. 11-24, Nov. 29-Jan. 1, Dec. 6-Jan. 31	Canada 3, Brant 1 Snow/blue/Ross 20 White-fronted 3
<b>Light Geese conservation</b>	Oct. 1-Nov. 10, Feb. 1-7, Feb. 9-March 31	No limit

**DEER SEASON**

ZONE	ARCHERY	PRIM WEAPON	GUNS
<b>Northeast</b>	Oct. 1-Nov. 22 Nov. 11-22 (antlerless primitive weapon) Jan. 17-31 (archery/primitive weapon)	Dec. 2-15	Nov. 23-Dec. 1 (dogs) Dec. 16-23 (no dogs) Dec. 24-Jan. 22(dogs) Nov. 9-22 (youth)
<b>East Central</b>	Oct. 1-Nov. 22 Nov. 11-22 (antlerless primitive weapon) Jan. 17-31 (archery-primitive weapon)	Dec. 2-15	Nov. 23-Dec. 1 (dogs) Dec. 16-23 (no dogs) Dec. 24-Jan. 22(dogs) Nov. 9-22 (youth)
<b>Southwest</b>	Oct. 1-Nov. 22 Nov. 11-22 (antlerless primitive weapon) Jan. 17-31 (archery-primitive weapon)	Dec. 2-15	Nov. 23-Dec. 1 (dogs) Dec. 16-23 (no dogs) Dec. 24-Jan.16(dogs) Nov. 9-Jan. 22 (youth)
<b>Southeast</b>	Oct. 15-Nov. 22 Jan. 23-31 (either-sex arch-primitive) Feb. 1-15 (archery-primitive bucks only)	Dec. 2-15	Nov. 23-Dec. 1 (dogs) Dec. 16-23 (no dogs) Dec. 24-Jan. 16(dogs) Nov. 3-Feb. 15(youth)
<b>Delta*</b>	Oct. 1-Nov. 22 (See <a href="http://www.mdwfp.com">www.mdwfp.com</a> for details on special Oct. 15-Jan. 5 South Delta Season)	Dec. 2-15	Nov. 23-Jan. 1 (dogs) Dec. 16-23 (no dogs) Dec. 24-Jan. 22(dogs) Nov. 9-22 (youth)



# Fly after those reds

**CLEAR WATER ALONG MISSISSIPPI'S GULF COAST BRINGS SIGHT-FISHING INTO FOCUS IN OCTOBER, AND THAT MEANS A FLY ROD BECOMES A REAL WEAPON FOR CATCHING REDFISH. HERE'S HOW THAT WORKS....**

By Sam Davis

**If** you're a fisherman along the Gulf Coast, you're completely and utterly aware of when October arrives; you've been counting the days to cooler temperatures, fewer boats on the water, but most important, the fall bite.

Richard Schmidt and his son, River, look forward to October as much or more than any of us. The dog days of summer are over, and inshore sight-fishing starts to heat up.

"October is the everything month: everything is coming in, everything is hungry; they're getting ready for the winter time," said the elder Schmidt who runs Richard Schmidt Fly Fishing, a guide service out of Ocean Springs.

"The biggest thing about October is that's when the water clears up in the bayous and marshes — it's easier to sight-fish. The marshes like Fort Bayou and Davis Bayou, the water clears up in there.



## “Sight-fishing for redfish is what fires me up about October.”

That’s what gets everybody around here excited; it’s the redfish. Redfish are easier to sight-fish for; they’re more forgiving. If you see a trout, if they see your line moving in the air, they’re not going to bite it.”

The Schmidts are skinny water fly-fishing specialists who use their skiff to access water into which most fishermen don’t dare venture. They don’t hesitate to pole into water 16 inches or less. If they can pole into a pond, they’re going to fish it.

“It’s better to pole instead of troll with a trolling motor, because a trolling motor will stir up mud and mess your bottom up,” Schmidt said. “With the pole, you can push along a little easier without stirring stuff up. If you have to use a trolling motor, just stay a little deeper.”

The keys to sight-fishing are clean water, elevation and a good pair of polarized sunglasses.

“It’s crucial to have elevation,” he said. “I have a platform on the front of my boat and a platform on the back of my boat. I pole off the back, and someone will be on the front. The higher they are, the better they can see.”

The higher position gives fishermen a better angle for vision to penetrate the glare on the water. The higher up, the better the vantage point.

A good pair of polarized sunglasses is also crucial.

“I use amber lenses,” said Schmidt (228-697-7873). “The brighter the lens, the better it helps brighten up the bottom. An amber lens draws more light; it doesn’t cloud anything up.”

There are plenty of shallow-water opportunities around Ocean Springs. Both Fort Bayou and Davis Bayou have shallow flats that feature miles of grass lines, points and cuts.

“They’re (redfish) always going to be around the points, and they’re always going to be around the pockets,” Schmidt said. “If you find points and pockets, you’ll find the fish.”


“Look down the grass line. Sometimes, you’ll see them easing down the grass; they’re going to be right on the marsh, but if you start seeing them off the marsh, then they’re going to follow a pattern. They’re either all going to be off the marsh, or they’re all going to be on the marsh.”

Schmidt recommends positioning the boat a comfortable casting distance away from the marsh line, keeping in mind how far away you can see a redfish cruising. If you can’t see him, you can’t cast to him.

“I stay within casting distance (50 feet) of the marsh,” he said. “Throw your fly in there; lead him. If he doesn’t eat it on the lead, that’s the great thing about fly fishing, if you make a bad cast with a spinning rod, you have to reel it all the way back up and cast again. If you make a bad cast with your fly, and you don’t like it, you can pick it back up and drop it right back on his head.”

“If they’re spooky, they’re not going to eat it if you put it right on their head; they’re going to want to be led. Most of the time in October, they’re hungry, and they’re going to eat anything, and they’re going to like it to bop right on the head.”

“Let the fish tell you how they want the fly. If the first fish eats the fly when you land it on its nose, then apply the same technique on the next fish. The bite may change throughout the day, so be conscious of how fish react to your bait each time.”



Redfish will get into skinny water ponds back in marshes where sight-fishing and using fly-fishing tackle is a perfect match.

Jeff Burleson

Productive flies for redfish will resemble something the fish are used to eating: crabs, shrimp or tiny baitfish.

The Schmidts like to keep it simple when it comes to their equipment: quality tackle that is lightweight, responsive and durable.

"I like to use 8-weight tackle, an 8-weight fly rod. The reel doesn't really matter, because they're just redfish; they're not going to spool you," Schmidt said. "I like a floating line and a short leader, about 8 feet. Usually, I buy the tapered leaders that come out of the package, tie it on with a nail knot and maybe put on a little 20-pound piece of bite tippet for the oysters.

"My favorite rod is a Sage One. It's a really light rod: it tracks easy; it casts really well. The fly line I use is Royal Wulff; it's a floating line, it has low memory and loads the rod really quick."

Schmidt favors crab flies, while his son, River, favors a different line of flies.

"I like shrimp flies," River said. "They work on almost anything, Tripletail, redfish, cobia — you name it, they eat it."

River is in his teens, but he has enough years fly fishing under his belt to be considered a veteran.

"River was 2 years old when we started playing with a little fly rod we made and got to where he could throw it just a little distance, and then I took him out to the (Biloxi Bay railroad bridge), and he caught a speckled trout right off the bat," Richard Schmidt said. "He caught his first speckled trout on a fly rod at 2."





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**S**chmidt explained that training a youngster to fly fish is easier than training an adult who has been using spinning or baitcasting tackle their entire lives.

“Everything happens fast with a spinning rod,” he said. “With a fly rod, you need to slow it down.”

“You’re loading the rod just like you do a spinning rod, but the line is what loads your (fly) rod. With a spinning rod, the weight of the lure is what loads your rod. It’s the same concept; you load the rod, then release the load. It just happens a lot slower on a fly rod.

The Schmidts are passionate about fly fishing and go every chance they get. They both enjoy the visual aspect of sight-fishing and seeing a redfish smash a fly when it lands on its nose.

“That’s what’s so fun about it,” Schmidt said.



“It’s so visual. That’s what people from up north like. It’s just like hunting. You’re hunting fish. That’s why I like it so much.”

“My favorite part is the eat,” River Schmidt said, “watching it eat the fly like they want it so bad. I like stripping it, and they want it so bad and keep missing it then they get so mad that they just — swoop — come at it and eat the heck out of it.” ■

This shrimp fly, designed to imitate a pink shrimp, will catch redfish, tripletail and even, in larger sizes, cobia.

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## **DELTA LURES LLC'S RATTLING SWIM JIG**

AFTER ALMOST A DECADE ON THE MARKET, THIS SWIM JIG IS STILL A BEST-SELLING BASS CATCHER

**F**red King and Ray LaBorde, the co-owners of Delta Lures LLC in LaPlace, really were ahead of their time when they introduced one line of artificial lures nine years ago.

The swim jig's popularity has reached epic proportions in today's bass-fishing world. That particular jig is responsible for more and more bass getting hooked and boated as bass anglers turn to them.

King and LaBorde, who started Delta Lures LLC in 2010, had a swim jig on the market within a year of producing their first product, a spinnerbait. At the time, King said, bass anglers kept asking him for a swim jig.

"I had never fished a swim jig," King said. "I knew we wanted one that came

through the grass real good, so we did a recessed line tie because it makes it a little more weedless and actually makes it look better and gives it a better appeal."

Delta's Rattling Swim Jig has been the answer for a growing number of bass anglers, including pros such as Logan Latuso of Gonzales, who used one to win the Louisiana B.A.S.S. Nation spring tournament this year at Toledo Bend. Latuso, 25, said he caught bass on it both days, including a 7.21-pound kicker in a 20.21-pound limit on the first day. He followed up with a tournament-clinching bag of 22 pounds.

Toledo Bend's bass wanted the 3/8-ounce black/blue jig he was throwing with a sapphire/blue Strike King Rage Menace Grub those two days in March.

"I personally like them a lot. Actually, I caught my two biggest bass of the year on them at Toledo Bend," Latuso said.

### **SUBTLE WORKS**

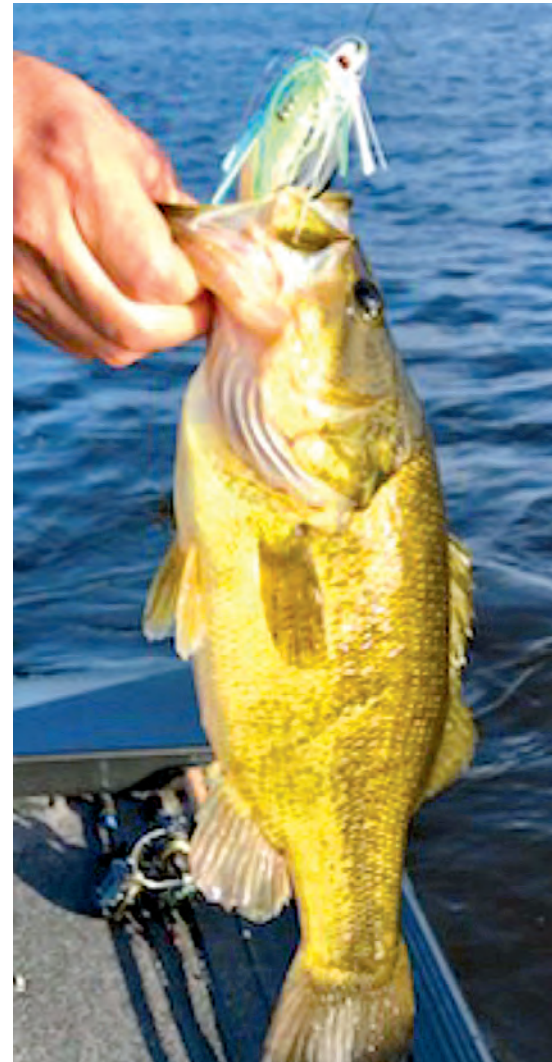
The Rattling Swim Jig is effective because it's a "subtle bait" that consistently triggers big bites, said Latuso, who retrieves it like a spinnerbait, giving it a pop every now and then to get a shake out of whatever soft plastic trailer he has on it, either a Zoom Speed Craw or Strike King Menace Bug.

King and LaBorde added a "bait keeper" to hold a soft-plastic trailer, and there's a weed guard that flexes more than others for a better hookset.

Rattling Swim Jigs also are armed with a 4/0 Mustad Ultra-Point Hook.



Recessed line ties make Delta Lure's Rattling Swim Jig much more weedless.



Swim jigs are great baits for novice bass fishermen, because they can be fished without a lot of action being imparted by the angler.

There is more to the Delta's product than can be found in most other swim jigs, according to King. For example, the Rattling Swim Jig features, true to its name, two rattle chambers.

"I'm not going to say there's not any (others), but I don't know how many people have swim jigs with rattles in them. After we started making them (with rattles), we started selling so many of them," King said.

And, as an added attraction, the head has 3D red eyes.

Rattling Swim Jigs are available in three sizes — ¼-, ⅜- and ½-ounce — and 18 colors. The most popular size is ¼-ounce. The top colors are white shad, black/blue, Delta shad and watermelon/blue/orange.

## EASY FISHING

"We've got the bait for people who are novice fishermen," he said. "Throw it out and reel it in. It's a very good bait. Throw it out and reel it in," he said. "They're getting real popular. We can see our sales increasing every year."

As for King, who never threw a swim jig before he made them, "Now I have one tied on all the time."

One of his most-productive outings with a Rattling Swim Jig was on Lake Verret while fishing with Kevin Swiber of Morgan City. They caught beaucoup bass hanging around cypress trees, he said.

"That showed how good they can be around cypress trees. You're able to get close to the trees and the knees. That's

when I started using them," he said.

There's some lagniappe for anglers who own a Rattling Swim Jig. It has been accounting for as many redfish as bass.

"Redfish love them, too," he said, fondly recalling a trip to Delacroix.

For more information on the Delta Lures LLC Rattling Swim Jig and other Delta Lures LLC products, go to [www.deltalures.com](http://www.deltalures.com). ■



**Don Shoopman** fishes for freshwater and saltwater species mostly in and around the Atchafalaya Basin and Vermilion Bay. He moved to the Sportsman's Paradise in 1976, and he and his wife June live in New Iberia. They have two grown sons.

## COOKING ON THE WILD SIDE

Jerry Dilsaver

# TACHOO & TORTILLA DUMPLINGS

CELEBRATE THE COMING OF FALL WITH THIS NEAT MEAL

Substituting tortillas cut into pieces for dumplings is a key to this unique recipe. **INSET:** Sauté the wahoo and onions lightly before adding broth and transferring to a larger pot.

**F**all has eased back in for sportsmen in the in the Deep south. Mother Nature hasn't fully recognized the change yet and is still throwing plenty of warm days, but fall arrived on Sept. 23. Cooler days should become more prominent and begin to come in groups of three to a week instead of one.

Fall means different things to different sportsmen, but all are ready to see it arrive. Some have been waiting to get a whiff of burned gunpowder and have been living for the fall. Others are already engaged in hunting deer using archery equipment.

This is a great time, when days are still warm but begin and end with cooler temperatures. Sportsmen live to be outdoors, and fall is the time when conditions are most comfortable. It's also the time when game and fish are most abundant. Take advantage of that and make an offshore trip to

get the wahoo fillets that highlight this recipe. There will be plenty left over to enjoy otherwise also.

At first glance, this month's recipe appears to be for sportsmen who enjoy excellent fall fishing, especially those who enjoy plying offshore waters were big fish swim. However, this is a great meal to carry in a wide-mouth thermos or take to the hunting club for a good warm-up meal. Just because you're hunting doesn't mean you can't enjoy good meals.

This recipe combines parts of two foods most sportsmen like. The pan-searing is a favorite way to prepare fish for many folks. Dumplings are a staple for most southern cooks; they're just typically thought of as more for chicken. This recipe combines fish with dumplings for a treat that's going to taste even better than most folks imagine. ■



# TACHOO & TORTILLA DUMPLINGS

Okay, I know you're wondering what this is all about. It's simple, really. This is my take on chicken and dumplings, using wahoo instead of chicken and flour tortillas for the dumplings. I don't really remember where the idea of using taco seasoning came from, but I expect it was having flour tortillas for dumplings. It's a simple recipe I think you'll enjoy. You may even decide to experiment using other meats as the base.

I usually use a salt-free taco seasoning my wife makes, and several will come up if you Google "salt-free taco seasoning." I wanted this to be as easy as possible, so I looked through the taco seasonings at the grocery store and found some Old El Paso taco seasoning with 25% less sodium. I use about half the package. If you like more taco flavor, simply use more, and if taco seasoning is a little strong for your tastes, or if you don't care for it, this also can be done using fajita seasoning.

I use a little liquid smoke in this, and it's just enough to notice it. I encourage experimentation with recipes, but I need to offer some caution about liquid smoke. If you want to enhance the smoke flavor, be careful and don't get carried away adding it. A little goes a long way.

The tortilla pieces make really good dumplings and are so easy to use. I credit using them to a tip a friend gave me more than 20 years ago. He stumbled across it one day while waiting on his girlfriend, and women's magazines were all he had to read to pass the time. However it happened, I appreciate the tip.

## PREPARATION:

Cut the wahoo into bite-size pieces. Chop the onion and celery. Cut 4 or 5 tortillas into pieces approximately 2 by 2 inches. Sprinkle the wahoo with taco sauce.

Spray a frying pan with the non-stick cooking spray. Lightly sauté the wahoo and onion. Add a cup of broth and simmer for 2 minutes, stirring often. Remove the wahoo and onions from the broth and pour the broth into a large pot. Add the remaining broth, cream of celery soup, celery, liquid smoke, 2 teaspoons of Sabor, salt and pepper (to taste) to the pot and bring it to a boil. Stir in the tortilla pieces while the water boils.

Simmer for 4 to 6 minutes, stirring often, until the tortilla pieces have swollen into dumplings. Reduce the heat to simmer and stir in the wahoo and onions.

Tortillas typically come in 16-ounce packages, which usually contain eight to 12 tortillas; I use four or five. Cut them into pieces that will blend with the meat and be easy to pick up with a fork or spoon. I like them in 2-inch squares, but they can be longer and thinner. Just keep them small enough the broth penetrates them throughout in just a couple of minutes of cooking.

The Texas Pete Sabor Mexican hot sauce, or something similar, is a must. This does not have a vinegar base like regular Texas Pete and many other hot sauces, and that is important when mixing with this. The vinegar-based hot sauces just don't taste right. This does; give it a try.

I believe this is a lot like spaghetti in that it tastes better after it cools and is warmed again. You can definitely tell the difference in flavor, especially in the dumplings.

This recipe makes enough for a meal for a few people. You can double the ingredients and be sure you have some to refrigerate and enjoy later. It's good enough I don't have the will power and patience to cook a batch and let it cool to reheat before eating. Give it a try; I believe you'll prepare it again. Enjoy! ■

Simmer for 4 minutes. Remove from heat and serve.

I'm a salad guy and would begin this meal with a green salad or lettuce wedge. Corn on the cob goes well with the meal and, even with the dumplings, there must be bread to sop up the last of the broth. A slice of key lime pie, with a big dollop of whipped cream, is an excellent way to finish this meal. The Texas Pete Sabor Mexican hot sauce must be on the table for those who like a bit more spice. ■

## INGREDIENTS:

1½-pound wahoo fillet  
1 medium sweet onion  
1 pack baby bell peppers, assorted colors  
1 packs fresh mushrooms  
2 zucchini squash  
2 yellow squash  
1 2-liter Dr. Pepper. (You won't use it all, but a smaller container often isn't enough.)  
Coarse ground black pepper  
Chipotle chili pepper powder (salt may be substituted)  
Texas Pete Sabor Mexican hot sauce  
Buttery flavor non-stick cooking spray.



Jerry Dilsaver



Jerry Dilsaver of Oak Island, N.C., is a freelance writer, as well as a former national king mackerel champion fisherman.

## SPECKLED TRUTH

Chris Bush

The author caught this spectacular, 30-inch speckled trout on a Sept. 1 trip. **BELOW:** Sharing his big trout with his son, Ramsey, was as special as catching the beast.

Chris Bush

# A 'DIRTY 30' SPECK FOR MY SON AND I

SURPRISE LUNKER TROUT BECAME A LIFETIME MEMORY FOR AUTHOR AND HIS 10-YEAR-OLD

**"S**ee, I told you that trout was 30 inches... she's beautiful!" My 10-year-old son said those words on a recent wade-fishing trip to Corpus Christi, Tex.

The trout he was referring to was a completely unexpected, 30-inch giant, but the expression afterwards was, for lack of a better term, inspiring.

Like most stories, this one started off fairly uneventful. Donuts and coffee broke up the monotony during the 2½-hour drive down I-37 — a nice treat, especially after a 3 a.m. wake-up call.

Unfortunately, the complacency continued once we set foot on our flat. Mosquitos buzzed in the humid, salty air, acknowledging their freedom from the area's typical, fierce wind. Aside from it being calm, bait and other birds of prey remained perched and lazy, complying with the Labor Day weekend vibe. Simply put, conditions were ideal, but the fishing was not.

Truth be told, the fishing remained tough until 10 a.m. when a mid-morning shower formed over Corpus Christi Bay. Clouds and distant thunder covered the area, but the 20-knot wind

gave us relief from an already scorching sun and, better yet, terrible fishing.

As we continued down our flat, we focused our efforts by casting to a secondary ledge in about 4 to 6 feet of water. For the most part, this ledge followed the contour of the primary grass line, with some areas having more diversity in texture. Additionally, a small break between two spoil islands gave us some much needed water flow.

## THE ADJUSTMENT

Seeing this, I decided to make an adjustment and power-finesse a Ned rig. I chose a ¼-ounce, ZMan Ned LockZ jighead and a deal-colored ZMan Finesse



TRD. For my son, I chose a slightly heavier weight, ¼-ounce, with the same tail so he could still cast easily.

Shortly after making the adjustment,



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

we were both greeted with barely legal, 15-inch trout, and my son caught a beautiful, 19-inch flounder. After making his mama happy with the flounder, he caught another half-dozen smaller fish, and I started to dial up a consistent bite with a trout from 15 to 17 inches on every tenth cast or so. Content with some action, we talked less about fishing and more about life.

As a military child — and the oldest of three — he's borne the brunt of an Air Force officer's life. In his 10 years, he's attended 6 different schools and moved almost as many times. Despite all of that, he's been perpetually optimistic.

Additionally, as the oldest, he's witnessed my passion for trophy trout and my efforts to share that passion with others through Speckled Truth. He knows about the Dirty 30 trout citation program and often hears me talk about anglers who participate. Instead of traditional "chores" like taking out the trash, he helps me pack boxes filled with Dirty 30 "rewards" and bring them to the post office.

Which is why, when I set the hook on a big trout, he saw the unmistakable thrash of a violent head shake. Less than 10 feet separated us, and he could hear the shakiness of my voice when I gave him a command. I was nervous, and he was nervous for me.

He kept shouting, "Dad, that's a Dirty 30!"

As I tried not to lose focus on fighting the fish, I answered, "No way, and please don't say it again, son!"

But he continued. "Oh my gosh, Dad! That trout is huge! I think that's a 30!"

## THE TAPE DOESN'T LIE

Finally, I landed the fish, beaching her on a nearby shore, and right by my side,

my son stood, encouraging me. I quickly got out my seamstress tape to get a few measurements, and as luck would have it, the third 30-inch trout of my angling career looked us both in the eyes.

Bringing humor to the situation, Ramsey, with perfect, comedic-like timing, said softly, "See, I told you that trout was 30 inches," then grinned sheepishly.

Reflecting days later, there was absolutely no reason that trout should've been there, let alone eaten my offering. After years of personal study, from Solunar influence to angling technique, catch-data analytics and moon phase, if I were to cherry pick a day NOT to go catch a big trout, Sept. 1 would have met all of that criteria.

## MAKE A MEMORY

However, ALL of the criteria lined up for a father and son looking to bond. Why? Because it was when we could go. Trout,

in all honesty, were the last thing that defined the day's success, but in a twist of fate, they forged it forever as a life-long memory. The untimely death of popular Louisiana guide Theophile Bourgeois was tragic, but if we've learned anything from the surrounding events, we need to enjoy the things we love with the people we love. This was one of those days.

Before the long walk back to the truck, my son walked alongside my 30-inch trout all the way until she hit deeper water. I watched in the shade of the mangrove bank and as he drew near, he finished his quote from my opening line in this article.

He said, "She's beautiful!" ■



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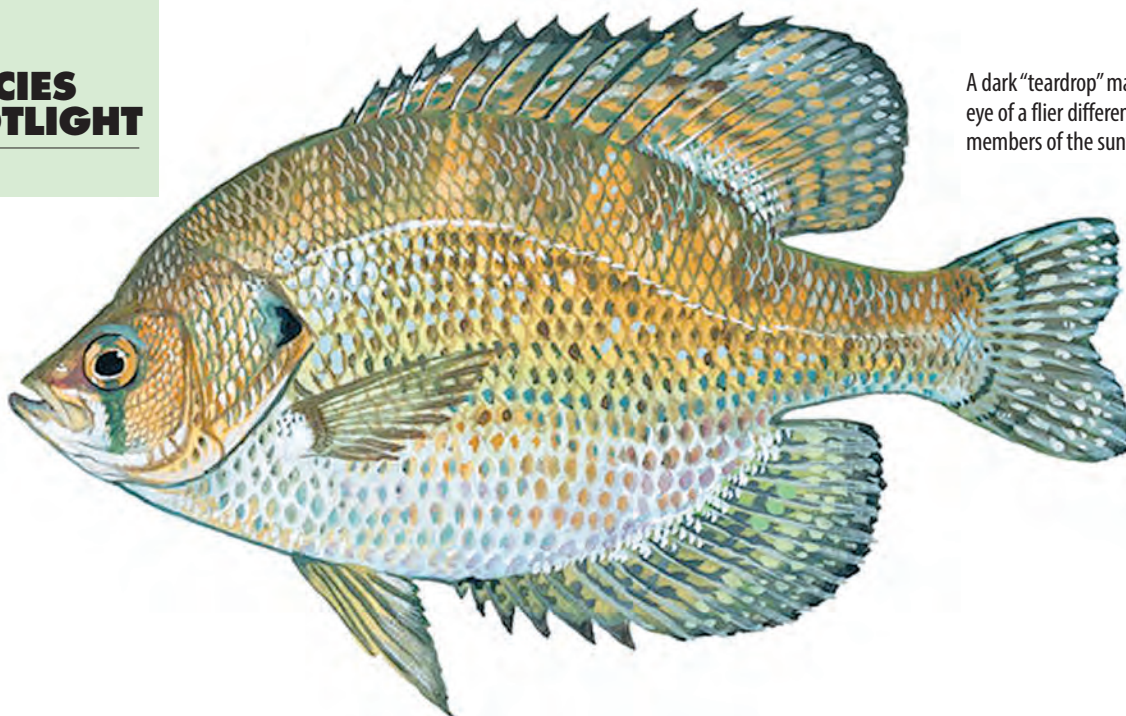
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## SPECIES SPOTLIGHT

Brian Cope



A dark “teardrop” marking below the eye of a flier differentiates it from other members of the sunfish family.

# TAKE A FLIER ON THIS BREAM

UNUSUAL FLIER BREAM IS A RARE BUT WONDERFUL ADDITION TO YOUR STRINGER

One of the lesser-known and the least occurring panfish throughout the country is one many anglers never catch or even lay eyes on. Many have never even heard of it. And of those who have caught one, many of them shrug at the sight and chalk them up as a strange looking bream.

The flier, *Centrarchus macropterus*, exists sparingly throughout America, but it can be found in big numbers in certain bodies of water.

The shape of this panfish appears somewhat round, and the upper and lower fins are almost mirror images of each other. The fish is olive green to silver in color, and the upper body has four to five short, dark vertical rows. A surefire way to identify the flier is to look for the black or green teardrop marking below its eye. A more scientific way is to count the spines on the dorsal fins. Fliers have 11 to 13 of these, more than any other species in the sunfish family.

Like bluegills, fliers have black gill covers, but they lack the black spot on the dorsal fin that distinguishes bluegill from other types of panfish. When young, however, fliers do have a dark spot that is outlined by an orange ring in a similar location, but these marks disappear as the flier ages.

As with most other panfish, the males of this species build nests, or beds, which

are often located in groups in an overlapping fashion, usually in shallow water. They spawn early in the year in comparison to other bream, usually beginning in March when the water temperature reaches 55 to 65 degrees, and they usually stop spawning by May. Females can lay up to 35,000 eggs at a time, which are fertilized, and then guarded, by males.

While these fish are able to live in a variety of water types, they prefer moderately moving water in slower streams and swamps but can live in ponds and drainage areas. They are usually caught around vegetation, and will bite crickets, worms, and small spinning lures like Beetle Spins.

Anglers rarely, if ever, specifically target fliers; they usually catch these fish while targeting bluegill, shellcracker or redbreast sunfish, but they are a welcome addition for anglers who recognize the species.

These fish are tasty table fare, and though they are similar in taste to bluegills and other panfish, most anglers who have eaten them report their meat is whiter and slightly sweeter than other bream.

Because of their shape, fliers are often misidentified as white crappie or black crappie, and many anglers never know them by any name other than “bream.” Some anglers believe they are a hybrid of crappie and bluegill, but this is not

the case.

Throughout the South, fliers (spelled “flyers” in some areas) are also known by several other names, including fly bream, flier bream, crying bream, round bream, cheeky bream and government fish.

It’s one of the smallest of all the sunfish, with an average length of 5 inches, and an average weight of 3 ounces. They can live up to five years in the wild and have been known to live up to twice as long in aquariums.

Mississippi recently added the flier to its list of state records, but the record is currently vacant. That is also true for Louisiana.

The world record flier was caught in Jackson County, Fla. in a private pond in 2015 by Twila Gates; it weighed 1 pound, 5.5 ounces.

Interestingly, the United States Navy named a Gato-class submarine the USS Flier in 1943 after the species, and the Native Fish Conservancy’s newsletter is entitled “Flier,” also in honor of the species. ■



**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.

## SHIMANO STRADIC FL

Before they even reached store shelves several weeks ago, Shimano's newly designed Stradic FL spinning reels attracted plenty of attention, winning "Best Saltwater Reel" at the ICAST tackle-trade show this past July.

The Stradic FL comes in sizes from 1000 to 5000, good for seatrout all the way to tuna and tarpon, with plenty of new technology included. The MicroModule II gear system has teeth designed to reduce vibration, its Long Stroke Spool allows anglers to cover more water, and its durable cross-carbon drag (on C3000, 4000XG

and C5000 models) is made for tough, saltwater battles. The 1000 and 2500 class reels have a 6.0:1 get ratio, the C3000 has a 6.4:1 ratio, and the 4000 class reel has a 6.2:1 gear ratio.

The FL's external design prevents saltwater intrusion, but there's no sacrificing the smooth feel when you turn the reel handle. Also, there's no anti-reverse switch, a spot where saltwater intrusion can be a problem.

Suggested retail prices are \$199-\$229.

**For more info, visit: [fish.shimano.com](http://fish.shimano.com)**



## THIESSEN'S V1 WHITETAIL CLOTHING

Thiessen's Authentic Pursuit Equipment enters the outdoor clothing market this month with gear designed primarily for deer hunters.

The new company's V1 Whitetail Clothing includes base-layer garments, lightweight, midweight and heavyweight offerings, plus rainware and accessories, targeted at hunters who want quality hunting wear at a reasonable price.

Offered in Realtree EDGE camo, the Lightweight Series

offers a button-up shirt, long-sleeve and short-sleeve T-shirts and pants. The Midweight Series offers pants, hoodie, vest and jacket. The Heavyweight Series offers pants, parka and bibs. Other features include, moisture-wicking, anti-odor treatments, WIND-DEFENSE technology and water-resistant outer shells.

Suggested retail prices are \$39.99 for Baselayer gear, \$19.99 to \$59.99 for Lightweight Series gear, \$49.99 to \$79.99 for Midweight Series gear, \$169.99-\$199.99 for Heavyweight Series gear, \$89.99-\$109.99 for rain gear and \$11.99 to \$39.99 for accessories such as beanies, caps, gloves, facemasks, gnomits and handwarmer muffs.

**For more info, visit: [thiessens.com](http://thiessens.com)**



## SKEETER'S SX2550 BAY BOAT

If you're in the market for a serious fishing boat, as well as a great boat for the family, Skeeter's new SX2550 might be just what you're looking for.

The brand new, 24½-foot model is actually available in two versions: with a robust fishing package, or a family package that comes standard with front deck cushions and a rear bench seat above the livewell for additional passenger room.

An oversized console comes standard in both versions and features a full-sized side entry door large enough to add a portable toilet, or serve as a changing room. And the bow features a 145-quart fish box with macerator,

along with a 43-gallon rear livewell. Fuel capacity for the SX2550 is 76 gallons.

**For more information or to locate the Skeeter dealer near you, visit: [skeeterboats.com](http://skeeterboats.com)**



# TOP 5 SIGHT-FISHING TIPS FOR REDS

By Patrick Bonin

## GUIDE EXPLAINS TIDES, LURES AND CASTING STRATEGIES

**W**atching Curtis LeNormand sight-cast for redfish in the marsh is kind of like watching NFL quarterbacks tear apart an opponent's secondary, deftly placing the ball into receivers' hands in stride.

It didn't matter if they were throwing a middle route over the pond, tossing a screen pass left or right along the edge of the marsh or going deep with a Hail Mary toss to a redfish trying to make a break for it — LeNormand's baitcasting outfit consistently delivered his lure within a few feet of the fish's head.

LeNormand has been sight-fishing since he was a kid, and it shows. Here are some of his top tips to help you connect with more reds in the marsh:

### FISH THE TIDES

"In the ponds, you definitely want a little more water. But you don't want it super high, because then the fish could be everywhere," said LeNormand. "You want a mid-range tide. That way, you can still get across the shallow ponds, but the fish can't get way back in the marsh."

If the tides don't cooperate on your a fishing day, LeNormand moves to Plan B.

"If you can't get in the ponds, find a (ditch) where the bait is coming out, and you know the fish have to come out at that exit point. Set up right there," he said. "Stay the end-of-your-casting-distance away from the mouth of that cut. And just wait for those fish — sometimes you might see them, sometimes you might not."

"If you can't get them to bite and it's dirty, maybe try a cork and shrimp. Just stay in the mouth of the cut a good-enough ways away so you won't spook them."

### MATCH LURES TO CONDITIONS

Depending on how fish are reacting on a particular day, don't just assume your favorite setup will automatically work again.

"The thing with spinnerbaits in that shallow water is that it sometimes makes them a little skittish," he said. "It can almost be a little too aggressive and spook them more than anything."

When less is more, LeNormand switches to a Z-Man Chatterbait or a straight H&H cocahoe on either a ¼- or ⅛-ounce jighead.

"Eighth-ounce would probably be better as far as presentation when it hits the water, but you can't cast as far," he said. "In darker water, I use darker baits. For clear water, you want some kind of sparkle, like purple/chartreuse with glitter in it — any kind of see-through bait with glitter.

"In murky water, you want to throw purple, or black/chartreuse

and white/chartreuse — a solid color. And when it's tough and the fish are finicky, you should switch to Gulp! because of the scent, especially in murky water."

### PRACTICE-CASTING SCENARIOS

"For a redfish moving left to right, you want to try to get at least a foot in front of him. Always throw past him and work it back right in front of his face and just kind of bounce it," LeNormand said. "A fish coming straight to you is the hardest one. You don't want to throw over his back. If you touch him in any way, you're not going to get him unless they're feeding in schools competing.

"If he's veering slightly left, throw on the left side. If you can, throw it about 3 feet in front of him and let it sit. When he gets to it, twitch it."

The key is to make your lure appear that it's reacting to the presence of the redfish, just like a real baitfish would do, he said.

"Anytime they're finicky, you definitely want to give them at least a foot, and sometimes maybe even 4 or 5 feet. Pull it out the mud and let it set, and let him come to your bait," he said. "Right when it gets there, twitch it. That way, the fish feels like he spooked the bait, instead of the bait looking like it's just going past."

LeNormand fishes with 20- to 30-pound Fins WindTamer braid and a 30-pound fluorocarbon leader when he's targeting reds in the marsh.

### FILL 'ER UP, NOT TOO FULL

Depending on how much water your boat draws, extra, unnecessary weight could be the difference in being able to make it to a back pond in the marsh stacked with tailing reds.

"If you're going sight-fishing, definitely keep only 10 or 15 gallons more than you think you'll need," LeNormand said. "Don't fill up your boat. More than likely, you'll be in some skinny water. You don't want too much fuel!"

### LEARN REDFISH WAKES

A pond will hopefully be teeming with activity from redfish, mullet, shrimp, pogeys and any variety of bait. As you're moving through the ponds, you have to be able to distinguish redfish and cast to them.

"Most of the time, a big — like 2 or 3 pounds — they'll push a wake like a small redfish; they can definitely trick anybody, and I've been guiding 13 years," LeNormand said. "But a redfish over 22 inches will usually push a good 'V' that you won't mistake for anything else.

"When you see a mullet and a redfish side-by-side, you'll see the difference. A redfish looks like a submarine underwater — he'll push a pretty good wake."

The speed of the wake can help you pick out redfish as well, he said.

"Mullet will usually run a little faster. They have a sporadic run, here and there, and don't stay at a steady pace," he said. "When a redfish is pushing, it's going to be a steady pace the whole time. If you see a spurt from a red, he's spooked and gone. You're probably not going to get him." ■



# NON-SLIP LOOP KNOT

IDEAL FOR LURES REQUIRING REALISTIC MOVEMENT

**If** you want your crankbait or topwater bait to have lots of side-to-side action, the non-slip loop knot can make it happen.

The loop prevents the line from binding down on the lure's eyelet, allowing plenty freedom of movement and more realistic lure action.

When you wrap the tag end around the main line five to six times, try to prevent the twists from overlapping and remember to always moisten your line before pulling it tight. ■

## WATCH ONLINE!

Watch a step-by-step video showing how to tie a non-slip loop knot by going to [LouisianaSportsman.com/nonslip-loop-knot](http://LouisianaSportsman.com/nonslip-loop-knot)

### NON-SLIP LOOP KNOT

*(3) Pass the tag end through the loop of the overhand knot.*



### NON-SLIP LOOP KNOT

*(4) Wrap tag end around line 5 or 6 times.*



### NON-SLIP LOOP KNOT

*(1) Make an overhand knot in the line about 10 inches from the tag end.*



### NON-SLIP LOOP KNOT

*(5) Bring tag end back through overhand knot on the same side it exited.*



### NON-SLIP LOOP KNOT

*(2) Take the tag end of the line and pass it through the eye of the hook.*



### NON-SLIP LOOP KNOT

*(6) Moisten the knot and pull slowly on the tag end.*



Properly sighting-in your rifle scope can be the difference between meat in the freezer and going home empty-handed.

# SIGHT-IN YOUR RIFLE THE EASY WAY

## REDNECK BORE SIGHTING REDUCES RANGE TIME

**T**here was a time when a buddy of mine and I shot our hunting rifles pretty much year-round, so we didn't care how long it took or how many rounds we expended ensuring that our scopes were dead on.

But when our families began growing and life got in the way of our shooting time, we would inevitably find ourselves on the range the week before the season, trying to fit in a quick sight-in session.

Usually, our twin Remington 700 7mm Mags were dead on, but on those occasions when they weren't — or we decided to try out a new round — we would run round after round through our barrels until we were satisfied.

No, we weren't smart enough to buy a bore-sighting kit. Or maybe we were just too cheap. Probably the latter.

And then one of us — I honestly don't remember who — discovered an easy way to adjust the scope that provided 2- to 3-shot sight-ins.

It only works for bolt-actions, but it couldn't be easier.

First, place the rifle on sandbags or in a shooting vice and place a target at 25 yards or so.

Pull the bolt out of the rifle, look through the barrel and adjust the rifle's position until the center of the target is as close to the center of barrel as possible.

Now, without moving the rifle — that's vitally important — look through the scope and see where your crosshairs are placed. If they're not sitting on the center of the target — in other words, right where you pointed the barrel — adjust them until the aim point matches the barrel's aim point.

Now, take a shot. It should be pretty much dead on.

Make any adjustments necessary, move the target to 100 yards and squeeze off another round.

You still should be pretty much dead on — all you have to do is adjust the reticles appropriately to accommodate the distance.

Send one more round downrange to double-check your impact point.

Normally, I would move the crosshairs to an inch high at 100 yards and let it ride.

It'll be set for shots out to 300 yards after burning only two or three rounds. ■

## 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, a 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:

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- #2: **Same as #1, plus Software...** \$47.95 (plus \$6 s&h).
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2019 OCT		BEST DAYS			
		POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCL. VALUE
Tue 1					35
Wed 2					26
Thu 3					24
Fri 4					27
Sat 5					36

Sun 6					25
Mon 7					20
Tue 8					21
Wed 9					21
Thu 10					32
Fri 11					44
Sat 12					56

Sun 13					62
Mon 14					54
Tue 15					46
Wed 16					37
Thu 17					35
Fri 18					36
Sat 19					37

Sun 20					42
Mon 21					52
Tue 22					41
Wed 23					33
Thu 24					40
Fri 25					47
Sat 26					54

Sun 27					56
Mon 28					43
Tue 29					31
Wed 30					18
Thu 31					12

25 50 75  
AVERAGE

LUNAR PERIODS					
TIMES OCCURRING AT NIGHT ARE SHADED					
MOON RISE	PRIMARY MOON OVERHEAD	MOON SET	PRIMARY MOON UNDERFOOT		
10:17 am	3:08 pm - 4:34 pm	9:18 pm	2:31 am - 4:13 am		
11:25 am	4:08 pm - 5:20 pm	9:59 pm	3:33 am - 4:59 am		
12:29 pm	5:07 pm - 6:09 pm	10:45 pm	4:33 am - 5:45 am		
1:29 pm	6:04 pm - 7:00 pm	11:34 pm	5:32 am - 6:34 am		LOW
2:23 pm	6:56 pm - 7:52 pm		6:29 am - 7:25 am		HALF

3:11 pm	7:46 pm - 8:44 pm	12:26 am	7:21 am - 8:17 am		
3:54 pm	8:31 pm - 9:37 pm	1:21 am	8:11 am - 9:09 am		
4:32 pm	9:12 pm - 10:28 pm	2:17 am	8:56 am - 10:02 am		
5:05 pm	9:50 pm - 11:18 pm	3:13 am	9:37 am - 10:53 am		
5:36 pm	10:26 pm - 12:08 am	4:08 am	10:15 am - 11:43 am		Apogee
6:04 pm	10:59 pm - 12:57 am	5:04 am	10:51 am - 12:33 pm		
6:32 pm	11:32 pm - Midnight	5:59 am	11:24 am - 1:22 pm		

7:00 pm	Midnight - 1:48 am	6:54 am	11:57 am - 2:13 pm		FULL
7:29 pm	12:06 am - 2:36 am	7:50 am	12:31 pm - 3:01 pm		
8:00 pm	12:41 am - 3:27 am	8:47 am	1:06 pm - 3:52 pm		
8:35 pm	1:19 am - 4:19 am	9:46 am	1:44 pm - 4:44 pm		
9:14 pm	2:01 am - 5:13 am	10:45 am	2:26 pm - 5:38 pm		
10:00 pm	2:46 am - 6:08 am	11:45 am	3:11 pm - 6:33 pm		
10:51 pm	3:36 am - 7:06 am	12:45 pm	4:01 pm - 7:31 pm		HIGH

11:50 pm	4:31 am - 8:01 am	1:41 pm	4:56 pm - 8:26 pm		
	5:28 am - 8:58 am	2:33 pm	5:53 pm - 9:23 pm		HALF
12:54 am	6:30 am - 9:50 am	3:21 pm	6:55 pm - 10:15 pm		
2:01 am	7:33 am - 10:39 am	4:03 pm	7:58 pm - 11:04 pm		
3:11 am	8:36 am - 11:26 am	4:42 pm	9:01 pm - 11:51 pm		
4:21 am	9:39 am - 12:11 pm	5:19 pm	10:04 pm - 12:36 am		
5:32 am	10:42 am - 12:54 pm	5:55 pm	11:07 pm - Midnight		Perigee

6:43 am	11:45 am - 1:37 pm	6:31 pm	Midnight - 1:19 am		NEW
7:53 am	12:48 pm - 2:20 pm	7:09 pm	12:10 am - 2:02 am		
9:03 am	1:51 pm - 3:07 pm	7:49 pm	1:13 am - 2:45 am		
10:11 am	2:51 pm - 3:57 pm	8:34 pm	2:16 am - 3:32 am		
11:15 am	3:51 pm - 4:49 pm	9:23 pm	3:16 am - 4:22 am		

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.

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