

Mississippi

APRIL 2018
www.MS-SPORTSMAN.com

SPORTSMAN



EXPERT TIPS FOR

APRIL TOMS

+ MAKE OLD CALLS SOUND LIKE NEW

TAX-DAY SLABS AT THE REZ

CATCH THOSE APRIL BASS

BOGUE HOMA POST-SPAWN BASS TRICKS

YOU'LL STRUT FOR THIS GOBBLER GRUB RECIPE INSIDE

CRAPPIE 411: HOW SPAWNS BOOST FISHERY

CWD'S IMPACT: TOO SOON TO KNOW

THE COBIA ARE COMING



\$2.99 APRIL 2018



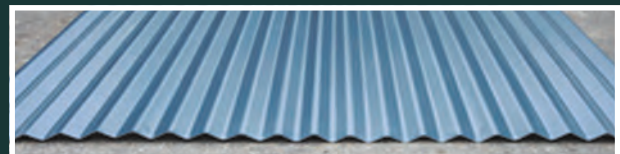
REED'S METALS, INC.

**FINANCING
AVAILABLE**

Metal Roofing & Metal Building Manufacturer

- **Metal Roofing**
- **Metal Buildings**
- **Pole Barns**

800-581-4645



www.reedsmetals.com



READY FOR A *POWER TRIP?*



Husqvarna[®]



THE POWER TO TAKE IT EASY.

Explore the outdoors, make quicker work of yardwork—or rent the power you need, from single machines to an entire fleet! Plus, we service everything we sell, and a whole lot more. So come see us today.

BenNelsonGolfCars.com

**Visit us in Biloxi: 9231 West Oaklawn Road
M-F 8am-5pm · Sat 9am-1pm | 228.369.3015**

**BEN
NELSON**
Golf & Outdoor

VISIT US IN GLUCKSTADT. OPENING MARCH 2018

Take a Power Trip to our newest location in Gluckstadt, just off I-55!
243 Industrial Drive North | M-F 8am-5pm · Sat 9am-2pm | 601.664.7117

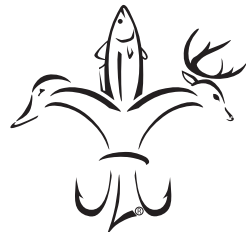


35
Taxes or **Slabs**

30
Calling
old calls!

Mississippi
CONTENTS

Volume 20 | Number 4 | April 2018



Mississippi
SPORTSMAN
www.MS-SPORTSMAN.com

PUBLISHER: Tony Taylor
ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER: Mark Boyd
MANAGING EDITOR: Bobby Cleveland
 bobbyc7754@yahoo.com, 601.506.0739
EDITOR: Dan Kibler
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT: Alicia LaFont
PRODUCTION DIRECTOR: Jeff Caldwell
ASSISTANT PRODUCTION MANAGER:
 Desiree P. Lewis
ART DIRECTOR: Rodney Anouilh
GRAPHIC DESIGNERS:
 Jeff Cashio, Kevin Orgeron, Alissa Zeringue
CONTROLLER: Juanita Guidry
SALES DIRECTOR: Tony Taylor
 504.416.7621/tonyt@lasmag.com
ADVERTISING SALES:
 Mark Hilzlim (National Sales), Jay Forrest, Asa
 Faulkner, Brent Comardelle, Mark Boyd, Greg
 Webb, Peter Church, Ron Dorsey, Bret Holden
CONTRIBUTORS:
 David A. Brown, Andy Crawford, Jerry Dilsaver,
 Paul Elias, David Hawkins, Bill Garbo, Phillip
 Gentry, Michael O. Giles, Chris Ginn, Dan
 Kibler, Tommy Kirkland, Sammy Romano, Hal
 Schramm, Don Shoopman
CIRCULATION DIRECTOR:
 Ricky Naquin 985.859.7744/rickyn@lasmag.com
CIRCULATION FIELD MANAGER:
 Tim Stiglets 601.434.1526/timstiglets@comcast.net

ADVERTISING INQUIRIES:
 Contact Tony Taylor
 email: tonyt@lasmag.com/504.416.7621

**SUBSCRIPTIONS OR
 SUBSCRIPTION ISSUES,
 CALL 1-855-371-1546**
 Monday thru Friday, 6 am to 11 pm
 Saturday & Sunday, 8 am - 5 pm CST

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

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

Volume 20 | No 4

FEATURES:

- 16 CWD's impact? We just don't know**
 Mississippi's first case of the fatal deer disease creates many questions, few answers.
 >>> By Bobby Cleveland
- 25 Tips to take that big tom** cover story
 Four expert Mississippi turkey hunters share some of the tactics they've used to fool gobblers over the years, and some basics you should never forget.
 >>> By David Hawkins
- 30 Calling old calls!**
 Don't throw out those old wingbones, boxes and slates. With a little TLC, you might have something in your vest that will fool a tom.
 >>> By Andy Douglas
- 35 April 15: Taxes or Slabs**
 Barnett Reservoir's crappie spawn peaks about the time your taxes are due. Pay Uncle Sam early so you can hit the shallows for slabs.
 >>> By Phillip Gentry
- 43 Don't miss post-spawn bass**
 When bass come off their spawning beds, they can be fickle, but they can still be caught. This bass pro has some ideas on the subject.
 >>> By Mike O. Giles
- 49 MirrOlure magic**
 Sinking, floating or suspending, this time-tested line of baits can put more fish in your boat — if you know how to use them.
 >>> By Jerry Dilsaver
- 57 Henned-up gobblers**
 Hens are a turkey hunter's worst enemy in early season. Here's how to overcome them.
 >>> By Dan Kibler

COLUMNS:

- 62 Gettin' Fresh** By Hal Schramm
- 64 Lunker Lines** By Paul Elias
- 66 Happy Trails** By Bill Garbo
- 68 Lure Review**
 By Don Shoopman
- 72 Sticks and Strings**
 By Sammy Romano
- 74 Cooking on the Wild Side**
 By Jerry Dilsaver

DEPARTMENTS:

- 6 Outdoor Update**
- 78 Field Notes**
- 85 Astro Tables**
- 86 New Products**
- 88 Tide Guide**
- 90 Advertiser Index**

ON THE COVER:



Turkey season is in full swing as April arrives, and Mississippi hunters can pick up plenty of tips on tricking gobblers, outwitting bossy hens and making old calls sound like new.
 Photo by Brian Carroll.



**ONE POWERFUL DESIGN.
TWO RELIABLE NEW OUTBOARDS.**

**90
& 75 hp
FOUR STROKES**

**THE COMPLETELY REDESIGNED F90 AND F75
MIDRANGE FOUR STROKES.**

Yamaha's all-new 90-hp and 75-hp four strokes feature SOHC designs with four valves per cylinder. This increases volumetric efficiency, and at the same time, saves weight. In fact, they're each 13 pounds lighter and have increased to 1.8L displacement. Their lighter, more powerful design creates an outstanding new F75, and makes the F90 a top performer in torque and acceleration. That's one rock-star design and two thrilling new outboards.


Learn more about the all-new Yamaha F90 and F75 four strokes at YamahaOutboards.com/F90-75.



REMEMBER to always observe all applicable boating laws. Never drink and drive. Dress properly with a USCG-approved personal flotation device and protective gear. © 2018 Yamaha Motor Corporation, U.S.A. All rights reserved. 1-800-88-YAMAHA

Reliability Starts Here.®





Outdoor
UPDATE
with
Bobby Cleveland

APRIL: TIME TO GOBBLE UP SOME FISH

TURKEY SEASON AND FISHING OPPORTUNITIES HIGHLIGHT MONTH



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.

Photos by Bobby Cleveland

For Mississippi sportsmen, April is a popular and often productive month. Hunters may only have two options — wild turkey and hogs — but fishermen have so many choices:

- Crappie are spawning, and that makes them vulnerable in the shallows.
- Bass can be found in various stages of the post-spawn period.
- Catfish are gearing up to move shallow for the spawn.

- Redear are spawning, and bluegills will join them on the full moon.
 - And the transition in the Gulf of Mexico has fishermen along the coast waiting on cobia to migrate in from Florida, speckled trout to load up on the grass beds and shell reefs, redfish to return to the marsh and for fisheries management on the state and federal levels to complete the process of setting the season on red snapper.
- But April will also be a month of

apprehension for thousands of Mississippians, as news continues to develop surrounding the February announcement that Chronic Wasting Disease had been confirmed in a free-range deer in Issaquena County.

The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks recently announced that it had received the test results of 64 deer collected Feb. 23 in the 5-mile CWD containment zone, and that all 64 were negative for CWD.



April is the peak of turkey hunting and crappie fishing in Mississippi, but there's a lot more going on.

Elsewhere in this magazine, you'll read about the state discussing its CWD plans, how hunters in the immediate area are reacting and how other CWD-positive states are helping Mississippi in formulating its response plan.

This issue also has writer Mike Giles' story with bass tips from pro angler Brock Mosley; Phillip Gentry's piece on crappie techniques for Barnett Reservoir; David Hawkins' feature on old school turkey techniques and Andy Douglas' feature on making old turkey calls sound new again.

Don't be an April fool, read on and get in the mood for a wonderful month of outdoor fun in Mississippi.

Let's go... ■

SALINITY OF RIVERS IS BIG CONCERN FOR SW ANGLERS

February and March were brutal for Mississippi's coastal fishermen, who battled weather on many fronts. They're hoping April will be better, knowing it can't be worse.

"Winds, rain and more wind... Seems like we couldn't catch a break," said Gary Thompson, an avid angler from Gulfport who struggled for about six weeks. "If it wasn't raining, it was windy. If it was raining, well, of course, it was windy, too."

"But the worst part was that we had terrible salinity in the west side of the Mississippi Sound, thanks to all the rain up north. The Pearl River was high and dumping all that freshwater into the Gulf. The Mississippi River was even worse, and will likely be for a lot of April, too."

Salinity is a key to good fishing, Thompson said.

"Hey, remember, it is saltwater we're fishing," he added, laughing.

Tommy Sutton of Columbia said that at times, he wasn't so sure that he was fishing saltwater.

"I was fishing out near Cat Island on one of the few days we had calm enough to be out there, and somehow I got some water in my mouth from the Gulf," he said. "It tasted like it had come right out of the tap in my kitchen. I then took another taste intentionally, and it wasn't salty at all. We went to the marshes to the west (Biloxi Marsh) and it was the same, and we found few areas with enough water to move around."

"Where we did fish the marsh, we did hit some redfish, including some good gap-fish keepers. Reds tolerate freshwater better

than specks. It was just enough to make us think of better fishing ahead. I think April will be good, if we can just get the Pearl settled."

April is traditionally a good month to find speckled trout in the grass beds on the south side of Cat Island, and on flats and grasses throughout the Biloxi Marsh. ■

In April, speckled trout in the Biloxi Marsh and around Cat Island's grass beds are fat on glass minnows.



Bobby Cleveland

MISSISSIPPI GETS OKAY TO SET SNAPPER SEASON

Under a plan agreed to by the five states of the northern Gulf of Mexico and federal fisheries agencies, states are being given more power in managing the red snapper fishery.

According to Matt Hill, the finfish bureau director for Mississippi's Department of Marine Resources, the agency has taken the first steps in the process by requesting an exempted fishing permit and submitting a management plan to the federal Gulf of Mexico Marine Fisheries Council.

"It was approved by the Gulf Council, and we're awaiting approval from the national marine council," Hill said. "It

includes a detailed management plan, asking for a poundage quota for both 2018 and 2019 based on historical data, how we want to set our season and how we would shut down the season if the quota was exceeded."



Federal fisheries managers will allow Mississippi to set its season for red snapper, within certain guidelines.

continues >

An agency representative said the state had requested a quota of 137,949 pounds. Final federal approval is not expected until mid April.

The next step, Hill said, would be providing the Commission on Marine Resources, the state panel that oversees DMR, with information including different season proposals, including a staff recommendation.

Hill said the new, state-based management plan was a result of a deal states reached with the U.S. Secretary of Commerce after the 2017 federal season was set at just three days. The deal allowed states to expand the 2017 season to 39 days, which in Mississippi was spread over weekends and holidays between June 1 and Labor Day in September.

"This year, we were expecting a federal recreational fishing season of zero days," Hill said. "I can't tell you how many days the Mississippi season will be at this point, or if we will have a season like we did last year open just on weekends, but we want our fishermen to have every opportunity and option they can get." ■

WATER TEMPERATURE AFFECTS SPECKS

Just as much as coastal fishermen will be checking salinity levels in April, they will also be eyeing their water-temperature gauges to get a jump on speckled trout fishing.

"Water temperature has a lot to do with trout," said guide Sonny Schindler of Bay St. Louis. "When the water temperature climbs out of the 60s and into the 70s, it's like magic — you know, like somebody flipping a switch that turns on the speckled trout.

"Trout seem to disappear on us over the winter in the Mississippi Sound and Biloxi Marsh, but then they reappear in masses as soon as the water hits 70 degrees. When I see 70 degrees, I know it's time to go hit the grass beds or go hit the marsh flats about 3 to 4 feet deep."

Schindler also has an eye out for baitfish. "I think a lot of it has to do with the sudden emergence of what we call bay-chovies, (glass minnows)," he said. "They show up in huge schools, and if you can

find one, you can bet the trout have found them, too. They gorge themselves on them, and they get fat. When you swing a trout in the boat there's a better than average chance they will spit out a few minnows on the deck. It's like they've been starving for months, and then, all of a sudden, there's this marsh full of these small nutritious fish they can eat."

At sunrise, the usual lure of choice is a topwater plug.

"You have to try it, because if there's a big trout out there, a gator trout, it will smash it," said guide Kenny Shiyou. "That's a great technique that starts in April and goes through the spring, but it's only good until the sun gets up, maybe about the first hour. There's still plenty of time to go chase keeper trout to fill the fish box after that.

"I'm always looking for the schools of baitfish, and I'm looking for sandy or shell bottoms in 3 to 4 feet of water where there is current running through a stretch of the marsh. A popping cork with plastics is usually all you need. Just pop it along as the current carries it through the fish."

Tommy Sutton of Columbia has discovered a little-known lure from Strike King that has proven deadly on big trout hanging near the bottom in the same situations.

"That Trout Magic spinner-bait that Strike King came out with a couple of years ago is exactly that, magic," he said. "That small, silver willow-leaf blade that runs along the underside of the belly of the grub provides just enough flash and vibration to evoke a reaction strike from a stubborn trout right on the bottom. And if the action is quick, it can be reeled through the school like a swimbait, to get the active fish to bite." ■



Speckled trout will invade Mississippi Sound and Biloxi Marsh when the surface water temperature climbs into the 70s.

Bobby Cleveland

more updates... >

WE BUILD FUN INTO EVERY NAUTICSTAR!



SUPER SPORT PROMO
2140 SPORT
\$26,752*

21' NauticBay with F115XB featuring the STAR Performance System hull



SUPER SPORT PROMO
2400 SPORT
\$39,421*

24' 3\"/>



SUPER SPORT PROMO
2102 LEGACY
\$34,942*

20' 3\"/>



SUPER SPORT PROMO
193SC DECK
\$26,690*

18' 9\"/>

NauticStar[®]
BOATS

Call (662) 200-4664 or visit our website or call:
NauticStarBoats.com



*Plus freight, prep, TT&L. Participating dealers—limited time offer. Does not include prop or trailer. Some photos shown with optional equipment. Some features may not be available on all models.

Factory installed with
YAMAHA



The new 15-inch size minimum on specks, combined with perfect timing of the Bonnet Carré Spillway openings, has boosted Mississippi's catch.

YEAR 1: NEW SPECK REGS ENCOURAGING

B iologists with the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources are generally pleased with the first year of the regulations that raised the minimum length for speckled trout from 13 to 15 inches in 2017.

"There is not anything that we can hang our hats on yet," said Matt Hill, DMR's finfish bureau director. "We were very clear from the start that this would take three to five years before we can see any impact, three years for us to see any kind of trend and five years to get impact. Our first year's data is all boots-on-the-ground stuff, talking to fishermen. It appears we had an excellent harvest. The poundage was down, but that was expected with a 2-inch change in the regulation.

"We saw an increase in mean weights of fish harvested, but when you raise it 2 inches, you're going to see that. In talking with fishermen and local charter captains,

they were all pleased with the season. We definitely had a positive response to the change. We did it the right way. We went through the process, explained it and did a lot of outreach. We had a good buy-in on the front end and that helped."

The timing of the regulation change was important, since Mississippi's coastal waters saw good spawning classes in 2014 and 2015 that were moving up through the population.

"Those strong year-classes held up the fishery," Hill said. "Those were years when there was an opening of the Bonnet Carré Spillway (from Mississippi River to Lake Pontchartrain near New Orleans). It helps push the spotted sea trout out of their preferred range in Louisiana to Mississippi water. When you get an influx like that, it brings us fish. It helps."

The good news for Mississippi is that the Bonnet Carré Spillway was opened again



Bobby Cleveland

in early March this year to alleviate flood waters coming down the Mississippi River. The diversion into Pontchartrain pushes freshwater through the lake and out the mouth of the Pearl River into the western edges of the Mississippi Sound and Biloxi Marsh, which is in Louisiana.

"We will get that influx again this year," Hill said. "The regulation change was needed, but it helps us to get lucky. The timing of the spillway openings has helped us."

Mississippi's creel limit remains 15 speckled trout per day per angler. The minimum length is 15 inches. ■

Blow Out Sale!



178 DLV 90 HP Four Stroke
\$23,500

Boats Are All New 2016 Models And Engines
Are 2018 Models Includes Galvanized And
Aluminum Trailers.

All New Warranties Apply.
Additional Models On Sale.

3663 PONTCHARTRAIN DR. • SLIDELL, LA

985-643-6668

1306 S. HAUGH AVE, STE. A • PICAYUNE, MS

601-798-4700



YAMAHA

www.cypresscove.net



"Like" us on Facebook

Big catch.
BIG SAVINGS.

You could get a discount when you combine your auto and boat policies.

GEICO  **BoatU.S.**[®]
Making Boating Better, Together[®]

geico.com | 1-800-865-4846 | Local Office

Some discounts, coverages, payment plans and features are not available in all states or all GEICO companies. Boat and PWC coverages are underwritten by GEICO Marine Insurance Company. Multi-Policy Discount available to auto insureds that have purchased a boat policy through the GEICO Marine Insurance Company. GEICO is a registered service mark of Government Employees Insurance Company, Washington, D.C. 20076; a Berkshire Hathaway Inc. subsidiary. © 2018 GEICO

The DNA of the Mississippi deer confirmed with CWD was consistent to that of a free-range, local deer.

DNA: CWD DEER WAS FREE RANGE

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE: REPORT SYSTEM LIKELY

It appears likely that Mississippi hunters will soon be required to register deer and turkey kills electronically within four days of harvest, as a bill worked its way through the legislature.

On the news of the discovery of chronic wasting disease in a deer from Issaquena County, House Bill 1390 was avoiding roadblocks that had stopped previous attempts over the past decade.

Under 1390, beginning with the 2019 turkey season, hunters will have to report any turkey or deer harvested to MDWFP within four days, via online, cell-phone or other electronic means. No physical tagging of deer would be required.

The intent of the bill is not to serve as an enforcement tool to prevent overharvest, but to give MDWFP biologists rapid harvest information. The agency will be required to present annual harvest reports to the Senate and House wildlife committees, since the legislature still had authority to set seasons and limits.

Only one other hunting/fishing bill remained alive with a month before the session ends, and it too should get support in the wake of the CWD news. H.B. 1389 would require landowners/clubs with deer enclosures to purchase permits for such structures and follow guidelines for their operation. ■

A DNA test on Mississippi's first confirmed deer with chronic wasting disease showed that the animal was likely a free-range deer, contrary to many rumors circulating in the vicinity of Issaquena and Warren counties.

Deer in that area are among the most-tested in the state, dating back to 2002, when the disease began spreading east from the Rocky Mountains. The CWD deer's DNA is consistent with the free-range deer tested from that area, according to Russ Walsh, executive director of the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks.

"They compared the genetics of that deer with known genetics they have. The results suggest the genetics match those of free-range deer.... It's a native whitetail," Walsh said. "All we can know from the analysis is he was a local deer. He was not brought in."

Walsh also said that the test shows, since

the deer appears to be free-range, that it contracted the disease from a local source. The MDWFP will continue to seek that source through continued testing and sampling.

The DNA test dispels many rumors that the deer was imported and escaped from a high-fenced deer club, but the lab results did little to dissuade the conspiracy theorists. Some even suggest the positive results were planted to drive the price of land down in the area, with the state looking to buy more property to expand the Mahannah Wildlife Management Area.

"It is crazy, what people are saying," said Jeff Terry, a landowner whose 900 acres border the 5-mile CWD containment zone. "They don't make much sense, but being somewhat panicky, people become open to conspiracies. That's why it is important for the state to be open with the public with this CWD." ■

Hunting/Fishing
SCRAPBOOK



Jerry Todd of Hickory killed this 150-inch, 16-point buck in Newton County on Dec. 21, 2017.



Louis Burroughs killed this 9-point buck in Monroe County.



Garrett Cook, 8, took this nice buck near Vicksburg this past season.



Katie Guidry killed this nice buck while hunting with her family for Christmas break.



Natalie Shaw, 13, killed this 8-point buck with a youth .247 in Marshall County.

GOT PICS? We want 'em Email images to: alicial@lasmag.com

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

VISITORS FROM THE EAST: HERE COME THE COBIA

One of April's greatest gifts to Mississippi's coastal anglers is the cobia, aka ling or lemonfish. Called "brownies" by some of its most avid pursuers, this delicious, feisty fish has been a traditional treasure on the Gulf Coast.

Each spring, they migrate up from the Caribbean to the northern Gulf Coast, eventually arriving on Mississippi's barrier islands.

"It's tied in to the vernal equinox, the first day of spring, when the moon starts pulling currents north, bringing waters up from the Florida Keys," said Capt. Robert "Earl" McDaniel of D'Iberville's Whipasnapa Charters. "Usually, the equinox is when we start hearing about them reaching Destin (Fla.), and about two weeks later, we start seeing them here. Right after we start seeing the hardheads (catfish) show up, the cobias come in. You see pecan trees start blooming, cobia are coming."

McDaniel has made the April cobia arrival part of his charter packages, although it has moved him further to the west in recent years.

"Every year in the spring, I start tracking the migration by checking the fishing reports over in Florida," he said. "They show up in Destin first, then move west off Pensacola and we're next. About two to three weeks after they start catching them in Destin, they'll start showing up here."

"When you see the dogwoods bloom and the crappie spawning up in the north Mississippi reservoirs, the cobia will be here pretty soon."

This annual migration of cobia, one of two in the Gulf — the other is from Mexico past Texas to the west side of the Mississippi River — brings the big fish here to procreate. McDaniel said the fish like to find water temperatures of 68 or 69 degrees before they get in the mood for love.

"They come here to spawn on our sandbars off the barrier islands," said McDaniel, who has noticed a slight change in the fish's behavior over the past decade. "Used to be, they'd like water anywhere from 7 to 10 feet, but after Katrina, it seems like



In April, cobia arrive in Mississippi's coastal waters for their spawn. Fishermen take advantage by chumming for the curious fish.

they are a little deeper, like 10 to 15 feet.

"I've changed a little bit in where I go now, heading more south of Chandeleur, which means a long run southwest, even though I still check my old spots around Horn Island."

His technique involves chumming, far different from Florida style.

"In Florida, like at Destin, they sight-fish spawning cobias," McDaniel said. "That's why you see all those big boats with flying bridges to close to the shoreline going back and forth. They're looking for the big brownies."

"Here, on our end, you can't do that. Our water is nowhere clear enough, so I chum and try to lure one up the chum slick to the boat. Positioning the boat is key to get the current to carry the slick to the targeted area."

The bonus is "that a lot of redfish and sharks also pick up the slick and follow it in. When I have paying customers out there, they usually want more action than what we get just from cobia. With sharks and reds, there's pretty much constant action."

"And, who doesn't like battling against a 100-pound shark?" ■

BROWNING WINS BASS OPEN ON BARNETT RESERVOIR

Perhaps Stephen Browning should consider moving to Barnett Reservoir and call the 33,000-acre lake near Jackson his home waters.

After all, it already appears that way. His victory in the March 1-3 Bassmaster Central Open on The Rez, worth \$52,000, gives him first-, second- and fifth-place finishes in three Opens on the lake. He also had a 15th in the 2017 Bassmaster Elite Series event on Barnett.

"I love coming here, and I love Barnett Reservoir," Browning said after catching 44 pounds of fish in three days of tough fishing. "I do wish we could come here one time and have good conditions, but it seems like every trip, we get rain and wind."

"It was not easy this week, either. Seemed like every day, at noon, I was

sitting there with one fish. That's how it was today in the final round, too. It was very tempting to give up about midway through the day, but that also was the turning point in my mind to stay focused, bear down and grind it out. I learned that you have to stay with it, work hard, never give up and trust that I would persevere. I did. I think that's true of everyone in every endeavor."

Browning caught the fish that pushed him to the top of the standings just 10 minutes before he had to leave to race back for check-in. His hot spots were dense growths of grass on a large spawning flat.

"The key was marking those very thick spots of grass on my GPS and then grinding it out until the fish moved in," he said. "It was the largest spawning flat on the lake, so I needed the recall of the GPS to keep me on the spots. Prespawn fish tend to be eager to bite, more aggressive. They are more committed to moving shallow, and rarely do they completely shut down when bad weather comes through an area."



Stephen Browning won the Bassmaster Central Open in Barnett Reservoir with 44 pounds over the first three days of March.

Browning used a 3/8-ounce Z-Man ChatterBait Jack Hammer, with 4-inch Z-Man DieZel MinnowZ trailer. He chose black/blue for the morning bite and switched to white during the afternoon.

Second-round leader Ken Iyobe of Japan finished second with 42-13. Brad Whatley

of Bivins, Texas, took third with 41-10, Blake Betz of Baton Rouge, La., was fourth with 40-9, and Luke Palmer of Coalgate, Okla., took fifth with 40-7. Bradley Burns of Brandon was the highest-finishing local angler in seventh with 38-13. ■

SUPERBRAID™

STRONGER - MORE ABRASION RESISTANT

NEW! Yo-Zuri SUPERBRAID™ is specially coated braid that features maximum abrasion resistance, extremely low stretch and exceptional durability. Available in Blue, Dark Green and White. 10# - 80#

STEPHEN FERRELL
Yo-Zuri Pro Staff

YO-ZURI
FISH THE BEST™
Yo-Zuri.com

CWD'S IMPACT?

By Bobby Cleveland

WE JUST DON'T KNOW

Mississippi's first case of the fatal deer disease creates many questions, few answers

"NOW IS NOT THE TIME TO PANIC."

That's how Russ Walsh opened the initial public meeting Feb. 22 after Mississippi's first case of chronic wasting disease (CWD) was confirmed in a 4½-year-old buck found dead in late January in Issaquena County.

The wildlife bureau director of the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, Parks was hoping to calm the fears of about 200 people who attended the meeting at the Natural Science Museum in Jackson.

But just minutes later, Dr. Paul Byers, the state epidemiologist for the Mississippi Department of Health, created a buzz when he repeated that his agency, based on information from the Federal Center for Disease Control, was advising that people not eat venison from a 25-mile CWD management zone that impacts six counties.

"We're not telling people you can't eat it, just advising that it be tested for CWD before you do," Byers said.

Those seemingly contradictory reports from two state experts serve as a prime example of the uncertainties the agencies and the public face after Mississippi

became the 25th state to confirm CWD.

How bad is the outbreak?

How dangerous is it for humans?

Will it have a negative impact on the business of deer hunting?

What if this?

What if that?

The answer to all, as difficult as it is to write, say or hear, is: We just don't know.

Fifty years since CWD was first detected in Colorado, it has been studied and studied and studied some more, yet we just don't know.

"Right now, all we do know is that we have one buck in Issaquena County that tested positive for CWD, and that's what we are dealing with," Walsh said. "Now is not the time to get in a fevered pitch; it is a time to be vigilant. We have been expecting this, knowing sooner or later CWD would reach Mississippi. We had a plan in place, and on Feb. 9, within hours of getting the lab tests back, it was implemented."

One thing is clear: deer hunting, at least in the immediate vicinity of Issaquena and Warren counties, won't be the same, especially in the next few years.



The discovery of the state's first case of chronic wasting disease in a deer from Issaquena County in late January creates more questions of concern than experts have answers.

AT LEAST WE'RE NOT FIRST

There are two kinds of states: those that have CWD and those that will.

Biologists say that in one respect, Mississippi is lucky — lucky that it was the 25th state added to a growing list, which also includes three Canadian provinces. Others, like Arkansas, where it was confirmed in 2016, have experience responding to CWD and can be very helpful as biologists here continue building a response plan.

That is important since the MDWFP response plan, in its infancy, is very fluid and will evolve in many different directions.

"We have already met with Mississippi and Louisiana (within two weeks of the Issaquena County confirmation), and have shared information with them," said Cory Gray, director of the Research, Evaluation and Compliance Division of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. "They are where we were two years ago and they are right that it's a step-by-step process. They are in the very first step.

"I use an example of equating it to a doctor's visit. First, you get your blood work, and let's say it comes back out of normal. Then you do more testing and eventually develop a treatment plan for whatever ailment it is."

Gray was Arkansas's deer-project coordinator in Arkansas when the disease appeared there, and he was later appointed to lead the Research, Evaluation and Compliance Division that was created to lead the response to CWD.

Gray hopes the next round of testing — which Mississippi officials said would include sampling 60 deer from the 5-mile containment zone — goes better for Mississippi than it did for Arkansas after it found an elk and a doe deer infected within weeks of each other in 2016.

"We planned to test 300 animals in the core area (northwest Arkansas)," Gray said. "We were at 266 when we stopped; we'd found a 23-percent rate of infection, and we knew we had a major problem. We stopped testing and began planning. I hope they don't find that level of prevalence."

Gray said public information is vital.

"I can't emphasize enough how important it is to keep the public informed and part of the process," Gray said. "We communicated, communicated and communicated. During the sampling, we had weekly

meetings kind of like town hall meetings in the core area. We promised them we would keep in touch. We held statewide meetings.

"We held 23 or 24 public meetings, trying to communicate. One of the first things we were told by other states with CWD is that we had to have the support of Arkansans. If we don't have the support, we're fools. Some say we have over-communicated, but we didn't, and we did it with a measured response. We didn't want to come across as panicky, and we didn't want to appear secretive. Our public has been responsive and helpful. That's key."

Walsh agreed, saying that the MDWFP's plan includes plenty of public interaction through meetings, social media, radio and news releases.

"This is just the first of what I expect to be many meetings, and not just in the immediate area of impact," he said. "We have to keep our guard up statewide."

WHAT IS CWD?

At the first meeting in Jackson, Walsh and staff spent



Courtesy Arkansas Game and Fish Commission

This doe was the first whitetail discovered with CWD in Arkansas. It walked up to a wildlife check station with a typical CWD symptom — heavy, thick salivation.

a lot of time explaining CWD.

Chronic Wasting Disease is a transmissible neurological disease of deer, elk and other cervids. It produces small lesions in the brains of infected animals. It is





characterized by loss of body condition, behavioral abnormalities and always death. It is similar to mad cow disease in cattle and scrapie in sheep.

Infectious agents of CWD are neither bacteria nor viruses, but are hypothesized to be prions, infectious proteins without associated nucleic acids.

“Prions are not alive, like a virus or a bacteria,” said William McKinley, the MDWFP’s deer coordinator. “They are resilient to enzymes, chemicals, detergents and time. They are shed through saliva, feces, urine, blood and decaying carcasses, but tests show it is not always passed in birth. Once infected, a deer can begin (dropping infectious prions) in six months. The incubation period is usually 12 to 16 months but can be as long as 60 months, and during that time the animal will otherwise appear normal.

“However, once the deer becomes symptomatic, the process is fast, and it will soon die. The mortality rate is 100 percent.”

Although CWD is a contagious, fatal disease among deer and elk, most — but

not all — research and statistics suggest that humans, cattle and other domestic livestock are resistant to natural transmission.

ASSESSING THE INFECTION RATE

After CWD was confirmed within a mile of the Steel Bayou Water Structure in Issaquena County, the MDWFP immediately established a 25-mile CWD Management Zone. The core zone, a 5-mile circle with the center at the spot the deer was found, is called the containment zone. The 10-mile circle is the high-risk zone. The 25-mile ring is the buffer zone.

McKinley said the agency spent the first few weeks scouring the 5-mile zone, getting approval and signatures to allow MCWFP agents access to private land to collect samples. They got full compliance.

Walsh announced on Feb. 27 that the agency had taken the 60 deer from the containment zone.

“We have shipped those off to be tested, and some others that we collected that

were reported to be sick deer, and we expect the results back within the next few weeks,” he said. “As we receive those results back over the next weeks they will help us in decision making as to how we move forward in our response efforts.”

At the Feb. 22 meeting, McKinley said that “finding even one more CWD positive deer would expand our containment zone.”

As each case is found, if any, a new management map will be created with a new 5-mile containment zone drawn around each case, with new high-risk and buffer areas.

“Honestly, we were expecting that eventually we would get a case of CWD, but we never expected it where it happened,” McKinley said. “Since 2002, we have sampled 13,227 deer from all 82 counties. The county with the most samples is Issaquena. No. 2 is (its neighbor) Sharkey. Those samples had always been negative until this one.

“We have sampled deer that were harvested (Mahannah WMA is in the zone), taken to taxidermists, deer that were

JEFF REGISTER BUILDING & TRUSS



40' x 60' x 12' Installed
Roof Only, Closed Gables \$7,642*
Roof Only, Open Gables \$6,850*

30' x 40' x 10' Installed
Roof Only, Open Gables \$3,950*

registerbarns.com

228-678-0971-Office
228-234-9115-Cell
228-234-7241-Cell

2611 26th Ave. • Gulfport, MS
Second location in Highland Home, AL

*prices do not include taxes and delivery



Wildlife Management Solutions, Inc.
Specializing in Wildlife Management Products
Seed • Feed • Fertilizer
Chemical • Wildlife Trees • Boss Buck™ Feeders

**Look for our
WMS Seed Blends
in stores across
AL, FL, LA, & MS**



**Check out our website,
Friend us on Facebook,
or Call us for
a Dealer near you!**

productsforwildlifemanagement.com
14281 Hwy 11 South • Eutaw, AL 35462
1-877-400-8089
seedsources@bellsouth.net

reported to be ill and from road kills. One thing we learned from other states in CWD areas is that road kills are good samples because many times, the symptoms of CWD put them in the road.”

In late February, the Mississippi River was rising and expected to flood most of the containment zone and much of the high-risk zone, which could present other problems.

“They’ll need boats,” Jeff Terry said on Feb. 25. “My land is adjacent to the 5-mile area. I can throw a rock from my property line and land it in the zone. I’m already getting hundreds of deer in my fields, and most of them are coming up out of the 5-mile area.

“I volunteered my property and my walk-in cooler, but I have yet to hear back. I guess that’s because I’m outside the core zone. With this flood water, it’s already moving deer.”

TO TEST OR NOT TO TEST

Terry is one hunter/landowner who wants his deer tested, whether they are visitors coming from inside the containment zone or his resident deer.

Testing is expensive, though not on a case-by-case basis. There are two tests. One, called Elisa, is \$20 and takes less than 24 hours for the sample to be tested. The other, called IHC, is more conclusive, costs \$30 and takes two to three weeks to complete.

“A lot of times, we use the \$20 test, and if it shows any sign of abnormality, we order the second \$30 test, which is more conclusive,” Arkansas’s Gray said. “We use a facility in Wisconsin, and it’s pretty easy. They have a working agreement with UPS and have cooler boxes ready. We can send as many as 400 or 500 in a batch, so shipping fees aren’t that much.

“We had a culture here of having animals checked.



Russ Walsh, MDWFP wildlife division executive director (standing, left) and representatives of several state agencies conducted a CWD public meeting Feb. 22 in Jackson.

HERE'S TO OUR CUSTOMERS...

YOU ARE THE BEST!

Thanks for 17 years of keeping us in business and we look forward to many more years of serving YOU!

GATOR TRAX

WWW.GATORTRAXBOATS.COM

One. And. DONE.



We've had mandatory checks, and the public works with us. The more deer you can sample, the better the picture."

Mississippi has never had a public, mandatory check station, and it has no certified CWD testing facility. The MDWFP uses a lab in Iowa. Mississippi State University officials at the meeting in Jackson said they have the capability to test, but not the equipment. They wouldn't guess how much it would cost to equip, man and get certification, but said it wouldn't be cheap.

"Arkansas will have one this year," Gray said. "The diagnostic lab of the Arkansas Livestock and Poultry Commission will do the testing. We've been meeting with them to discuss it, and it's been a year-long process to get the equipment and certification. We hope to be testing in-state this year, which will certainly streamline the process."

Mississippi's Department of Health, following the federal Center for Disease Control recommendation, is advising that any deer from the CWD management zone be tested before being consumed.

Of course, more than 95 percent of deer killed during the 2017-18 season were already processed and in freezers — and the bellies — of a lot of hunters in the management zone. Byers said there is no conclusive test that can be run on meat.

"Them telling me that, and seeing how close I am to the core area, that's all I needed to know," Terry said. "I had 19 deer in my freezers from our property. That's deer that were mine, my kids and others, either in sausage, ground or steaks. I loaded it all up in the back of the UTVs and hauled them out to a pit and buried them.

"Uh-uh, sorry, but no, I'm not taking any chances, especially not when my kids and grandkids are involved. I will have them tested next year; you can count on it. They say there are no cases over the years of humans being infected, but do they really know?"

HUMAN RISK?

Since the first case of CWD was confirmed in a Colorado mule deer in the late 60s, millions of hunters have killed millions of deer and elk in the states and Canadian provinces where CWD has been detected. They have dressed and eaten those animals without a single



As a doe showing signs of CWD in Missouri takes a drink from a pool next to a mineral lick, other deer in the background wait their turn. Concentration of deer around a food/water source is a concern.

Photos courtesy Missouri Department of Conservation

case of human infection.

According to the Alliance for Public Wildlife, a Canada-based wildlife conservation organization, hunting families in North America consume between 7,000 and 15,000 CWD-infected animals every year.

There have been zero verified cases of humans contracting the disease, but we just don't know if humans are completely safe.

CWD is a transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE), in the same family as two diseases known to be fatal to humans — mad cow disease and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease — and researchers and health officials have studied CWD's potential for interspecies spread.

A recent test is ominous.

In 2017, a Canadian lab did confirm the disease can spread to primates. Macaque monkeys, so close to humans that they are the standard for animal testing in regards to human impact, were fed venison from a CWD-positive deer and became symptomatic of the disease. For three years, the monkeys were fed the equivalent to what a human would eat if

he/she consumed one 7-ounce venison steak per month.

The same lab also injected CWD prions directly into test Macaques, and again, the monkeys developed the disease.

In another test, scientists rubbed the prions on the skins of Macaques, similar to how humans could be exposed while dressing infected deer. Those monkeys did not develop the disease.

Based on the results of the Macaque testing, Health Canada warns that the potential of CWD jumping species and infecting humans cannot be excluded. The USA's Center for Disease Controls seems to agree.

THE COST OF RESPONSE

Gray said Arkansas spent \$800,000 on CWD in the first year (2016) and perhaps a bit more in 2017.

"Increased testing, manpower, meetings ... it adds up," he said. "We had to buy a lot of equipment, freezers and incinerators."

Michael Bolden, head of MDWFP's financial branch, is well aware.



GOBBLE GOBBLE BANG!



"I DIDN'T COME THIS FAR TO MISS!"[®]

www.hevishot.com

CWD



“Yes, it’s going to be expensive, but we will have to do what we have to do,” he said. “When you talk about adding \$800,000 to our annual wildlife budget, that is a big percentage. We have to think about where it will come from, how other programs will be impacted.”

That is one of the concerns that CWD raises, McKinley said, along with the impact on hunting heritage, affecting the deer population and management, potential of human health concerns.

In addition to being an important recreation and part of the heritage of hundreds of thousands of Mississippians, deer hunting is big business. It is estimated to have a \$1.5 billion impact on our economy.

“You take this area over here in the 5- and 10-mile zones, and it is huge,” Terry said. “I’m worried about this area over here, and the impact it will have financially. There are a lot of small businesses over here that depend on hunters. There are landowners over here who depend on leasing their land to hunters. If we lose that, we will suffer.”

POTENTIAL IMPACT

Iowa County in Wisconsin serves as the worst-case scenario and was used by McKinley at the first public meeting.

“They began testing deer there as soon as CWD was found in 2002,” he said. “The spread of the disease has been increasing on a steady curve ever since and now has reached 50 percent of the buck population. That’s half of the bucks, and they won’t reach maturity. Now they are seeing positive tests in 33 percent of the does, too.”

Knowing the mortality rate and the incubation rate, the impact is obvious. Few deer are reaching maturity, meaning finding a trophy buck is difficult, and with fewer deer, the population will drop.

“That means few bucks make it past 2½ years old,” Terry said. “Two reasons people deer hunt — trophy bucks and venison for the freezer — and CWD can take them both away. No more trophy bucks, and who wants to eat venison when the odds aren’t good they are infected? Who wants to lease land knowing that? This could devastate our area over here in the Issaquena, Warren and Sharkey (counties) area.”

It could, but then it might not, just another uncertainty.

“Colorado has had CWD since 1967 and while it is devastating the mule deer, which seem most vulnerable, thousands of people are paying thousands of dollars every year to go there and hunt,” said Jim Turner of Vicksburg, who attended the Jackson meeting.

“Nothing has hurt them. Nobody has gotten sick.”

Well, not yet, anyway. ■

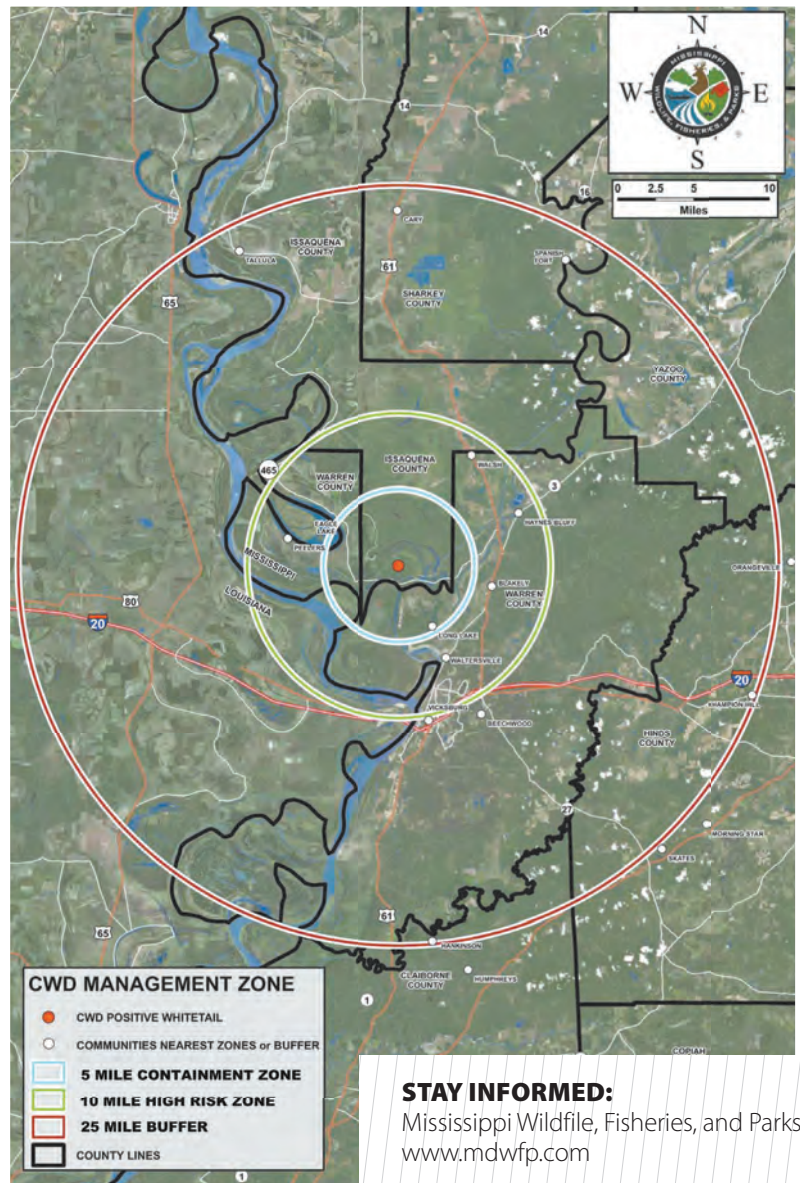


Bobby Cleveland has covered sports in Mississippi for over 40 years. A native of Hattiesburg and graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi, Cleveland lives on Ross Barnett Reservoir near Jackson with his wife Pam.



Jeff Terry, a landowner and hunter whose property in Issaquena County borders the 5-mile containment zone, heeded the Department of Health’s warning and loaded up venison from 19 deer and destroyed it. “Not taking any chances with my children and grandchildren,” he said.

Photo courtesy Jeff Terry



STAY INFORMED:

Mississippi Wildfile, Fisheries, and Parks
www.mdwfp.com

Mississippi Sportsman
www.MS-Sportsman.com

REAL DIRTY STIHL CLEAN

STIHL®



Clear a path, then clean off the truck.



RB 400 Dirt Boss™ Pressure Washer **\$579⁹⁵**

- 25' no-kink flex hose
- 2,700 psi of water pressure at 2.7 gallons per minute
- 196 cc engine displacement
- Brass manifold pump design, stainless steel valves and ceramic coated pistons



12" Bar†

\$299⁹⁵



MSA 120 C-BQ
Battery-Powered Chain Saw

- Includes AK 20 Battery + AL 101 Charger
- STIHL Quickstop® chain brake system
- Quick Chain Adjuster
- Ematic™ Lubrication System

All prices are SSW-SRP. Available at participating dealers while supplies last. †The actual listed guide bar length can vary from the effective cutting length based on which powerhead it is installed on. ©2017 STIHL SSW18-MAG212-139400-2

STIHLdealers.com



DIXIE RV

CAMPING & OUTDOOR STORE!!



HAMMOND
Sales & Service:
866-591-2024
Located off I-12 Exit 35
10241 Destination Dr.
Hammond, LA 70403
SALES: Mon - Sat 8 am - 7 pm
SERVICE: Mon - Sat 8 am - 5 pm



Breaux Bridge
Sales & Service:
337-889-0011
Located off I-10, Exit 109
657 Enterprise Pkwy.
Breax Bridge, LA 70517

www.dixierv.com

MOMENTUM



Over **400**
Trailers, Fifth
Wheels and
Toy Haulers
On Display!

LACROSSE
by PRIME TIME MFG.



Hammond
Only

Hideout
by Hornet



Hammond
Only

Laredo



Hammond
Only

TORQUE



SENECA



GREYHAWK



Bounder



Over **100**
Motorhomes
On Display

CLASS B
WINNEBAGO
Touring Coach



"Helping You Retire One Weekend At A Time"





Just when I thought I knew all the answers to the turkey hunting test, they go and change all the questions.”

The quote from some unknown, worn-out soul, and likely delivered after a long, unsuccessful trek through timber, rings true for all turkey hunters, veteran and novice alike. This is a sport for which there is no end to learning.

For that reason, we have asked two world champion call-makers and two Grand Slam hunters to share their opinions on what Mississippi sportsmen can do to score on these cagey birds.

LISTEN AND LEARN

“Whether a beginner or an expert, the first thing I’ll tell every turkey hunter is to get into the woods as often as possible and listen,” said Preston Pittman, the Hattiesburg native, former world-champion caller, successful call-maker and a still-being-educated turkey hunter.

“Listen to the owls, the crows, the redbirds, the squirrels and the deer. What sounds are they making? When the turkeys start to cluck and yelp, how does the world around them change? There should be no change. You are in the natural world, and all the sounds you need to make should be in the pitch and tenor of the real world if you are to be successful.”

Late in the day, when the hens go to roost, listen to the sounds they make on the roost. These are the sounds of the flock saying “Good night, John Boy. Good night, Mama. Good night sister.” It is a sound turkeys make when all is well with their world.

TIPS TO TAKE THAT **BIG TOM**

By David Hawkins

Four expert Mississippi turkey hunters share some of the tactics they’ve used to fool gobblers over the years, and some basics you should never forget.



David Hawkins



The next morning, listen to the music of the waking dawn. Allow the hens to be the first to stir. They'll yawn and stretch, cluck and purr, and have a good look around. This is what a gobbler is listening for.

Then, listen to how the gobbler reacts and how the hens respond to him. That is how you want your call to sound. Hens want to make just enough noise to get noticed by the gobbler. Once he answers, they want to go meet him, take care of a little business and then go to nest.

When several hens do this, the gobbler is referred to as being "henned up."

That is when he is toughest to kill, because the chances of getting that gobbler away from that harem for a hen he can't see — you — are slim to none.



But what will work is to keep calling and see if there is a subordinate bird, maybe a 2- or 3-year-old tom, in the area looking to pick off a hen from the boss bird, while he is busy with the flock.

Continue to call softly and keep your eyes moving, because this subordinate bird has likely experienced the ire of the dominate gobbler and is not looking for another fight. The subordinate birds usually approach in silence, knowing that gobbling is a sure way to attract the boss.

A decoy can play well in this scenario, maybe even a squatting hen and a jake decoy, placed close to each other.

Once the boss has serviced his harem, he will look for other hens he might have heard but missed. It could be 9 or 10 a.m., or it could be 2 or 3 in the



ABOVE: J. H. Watley took this gobbler calling sparsely on a afternoon hunt when the boss tom's harem had left him for their nests. **LEFT:** Most mature gobblers have an impressive set of spurs, with at least a hint of hook. The boss bird will use them to keep subordinate birds in place.

David Hawkins

afternoon. Pittman loves to find a boss gobbler after his harem is gone, knowing that if the hunter can get the old bird to gobble, there's a good chance the bird will play the game. It doesn't mean a sure kill, but it does give the hunter a game.

Decoys work well, especially a jake/hen or gobbler/hen sets, since the boss bird will not like finding another gobbler in his territory.

ONE OF A THOUSAND SETS

Hunters are wise to glass fields where gobblers are known to visit and strut, but finding one creates problems. Open-field toms can be tricky, since a bird in space can see a long, long way. It forces a hunter to form a strategy. Decoys can help, but setting them up without being

seen is critical. The decoy(s) must be set out of the tom's line of sight, but be in line with a spot to which he can move. Using topography helps.

Once done, another veteran hunter recommends softly yelping to get his attention, hoping it hears the call and comes to investigate what he calls his "take-away" set.

"This set works well for me," said Josh Hawkins of Pelahatchie. "I place one or two hens a few feet apart and use a Funky Chicken (a Flex Tone gobbler) about 5 feet away. A jealous gobbler can't resist the set.

"I'll use a kee-kee call, once, or maybe twice, to get the big bird's attention, then a few purrs and clucks before putting the call down. It's easy to overcall at this point."

Hawkins' formed the plan by putting himself inside the mind of a turkey.

"The hen has a suitor, and both parties are ready and willing," he said. "In real life, she will not keep yelping and risk attracting a predator. If the gobbler doesn't respond, just try to hunt him another day. Never tip your hand, or he will forever associate this set with danger."

Hawkins, a retired Navy chief, likes to hunt early mornings to locate birds, then early afternoon to do the finesse calling around the take-away set. He uses different decoys and spacing and sometimes places the set in the edge of the woods adjoining the field. Changing the look of the decoys adds an air of reality.



In placing a decoy set, think of how the hunt is likely to go. Sit to the side of where you believe the gobbler will approach, putting you out of his line-of-sight focus on the faux hens.

David Hawkins

OLD-SCHOOL TECHNIQUES UP NEXT ➤

HUNTING LAND FOR SALE

ART MOTT
Agent, Land Specialist
Southern Mississippi
(601) 757-8602

BRAD FARRIS
Agent, Land Specialist
West Central Mississippi
(601) 506-1304

CHIPPER GIBB
Agent, Land Specialist
West Central Mississippi
(601) 248-8984

LARRY STEWART
Agent, Land Specialist
Southern Louisiana
(985) 320-9112

**\$2.3
BILLION
& 615,000
ACRES**
sold company
wide in the last
5 years

**CONTACT AN AGENT TO LEARN
MORE ABOUT BUYING AND
SELLING HUNTING, RANCH,
FARMLAND AND TIMBERLAND**

WHITETAIL PROPERTIES REAL ESTATE
HUNTING | RANCH | FARM | TIMBER

WHITETAILPROPERTIES.COM

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



OLD-SCHOOL TECHNIQUES

Paul Meek of Morton is an old-school call-maker and turkey hunter. He prefers “the old ways of turkey hunting.”

Simply put, he means calling a gobbler to within 40 yards and making the kill something to remember.

“There are a lot of shotguns now that will allow a hunter to take a safe shot on a bird at 50 or even 60 yards,” Meek said. “But is that really the essence of turkey hunting, or has the sport become all about turkey killing? When I started turkey hunting there were a few 3-inch chambered guns around, and unless you could afford a Cutts Compensator, that gun was fix-choked to factory full.”

“We had to pattern the gun and load to determine just how close we had to be to the bird before shooting. Then, we practiced calling to beat the old bird at his own game and get him within that range.”

Meek has been true to a promise he made himself decades ago, refusing to move his call-making operation overseas. He still makes calls in his shop in Morton, tuning each one himself and discarding any he thinks don't make the cut.

“Some people call it woodcraft, this going back to the old ways of doing



Josh Hawkins checks the pattern his Mossberg delivered at 40 yards. Several loads and shot sizes all patterned well enough to drop a bird.

David Hawkins

things when it was more challenging,” Meek said. “I'm not ashamed to be old-fashioned. As a retailer, I have a shop full of the newest camo, ammo and accessories. I have access to the latest and greatest of everything, but I like to beat an old tom at his game, and while all those latest gadgets are fine for some, I like to play it simple.”

Meek listens to hunters, both veteran and amateur, at outdoor shows, and he has heard so many say they have stopped shooting birds and prefer to call birds into range for others to shoot.

“Maybe this is the ‘coming full circle’ we

hear people talk about,” Meek said. “I still shoot a few birds, but not like I once did. Getting the three-bird limit is no longer as important as the thrill of the chase and getting inside the bird's head. My focus right now is to give back to the sport. If I can recruit just one new turkey hunter, I have had a good season and career.”

GOOD JUDGE OF 'OLD SCHOOL'

The late, great, always colorful baseball pitcher Dizzy Dean had a saying: “If you can do it, it ain't bragging!”

Fresh scratching and fresh droppings indicate turkeys are using an area on a regular basis. Near this location would be a great place to start a morning or afternoon hunt.



In 2017, Jim Smith of Brandon logged his 500th turkey into his personal hunting journal. A former chief justice of the Mississippi Supreme Court, Smith is a turkey purist. He is not a braggart but has as much right to brag as any in the sport.

"Turkey hunting is my passion, my No. 1 sport," Smith said. "I am the first to admit I'm old school in my approach to hunting. I've had the privilege to travel to many states where turkeys live.

"Each subspecies has its own unique characteristics. Learning those differences and the adaptations a hunter has to make in order to harvest one is part of the challenge."

Smith says the fundamental secret to success is getting to know the quarry, learning its habitats and how it thinks. This will take many hours in the field, listening and watching.

In short, he said a hunter has to think like a turkey.

"I call very little and I don't hoot, holler and whistle to get a bird to gobble," Smith said. "An owl or crow will do that job for me. Don't get too impatient and try to push the process; allow the bird to wake up on his own terms.

"Next, don't start yelping before he flies down. I never call to a bird on a limb. Older birds will stay on the limb and want the hens to come to him. Calling too soon will cause the gobble to remain on the roost, looking for the hen he hears."

When the gobbler flies down, Smith advises against over-reacting.

"Once the bird is on the ground and has acknowledged your calling, be quiet and sit still," Smith said. "It may take just a few minutes or much longer, but he will work his way to where he heard you calling."

Smith recounts one hunt when one bird dispelled a couple of turkey myths. He could tell by the gobbling that

the bird was closing the gap. He advised his hunting partner to sit tight and be quiet. The gobbler left a pair of hens — Myth No. 1, you can't call one away from hens — and took flight just long enough to cross a canal — Myth No. 2, birds won't cross obstacles. The hunters had to wait more than 30 minutes, but the bird came in silently.

"Easterns are the hardest to hunt; as they get older, they get smarter," Smith said. "I once did what so many hunters are guilty of doing: locking my entire season into the pursuit of one cagey gobbler. I hunted this bird for eight years. It took me two years to understand he could not be called.

"I then patterned his movements and ambushed him in a bottleneck along a creek he would take between the roost and his favorite feeding fields. To my knowledge, this bird never answered my call, or that of another hunter." ■



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

PROPERTIES FOR SALE IN MS & LA

AMITE COUNTY		• 82 Acres.....\$3,950/AC	• 275 Acres.....\$2,350/AC
• 23 Acres.....\$3,476/AC	• 25.52 Acres.....\$2,500/AC	HINDS COUNTY	• 423 Acres.....\$3,850/AC
• 40 Acres & Home.....\$205,000	• 40 Acres & Home.....\$370,000	• 92 Acres.....\$3,700/AC	• 335 Acres.....\$2,950/AC
• 51.85 Acres.....\$5,303/AC	• 99 Acres.....\$3,787/AC	• 184 Acres.....\$2,700/AC	• 467 Acres.....\$2,795/AC
• 115 Acres.....\$3,750/AC	• 125 Acres.....\$4,300/AC	JASPER COUNTY	TALLAHATCHIE COUNTY
• 127.5 Acres.....\$4,200/AC	• 151 Acres.....\$4,200/AC	• 114 Acres.....\$1,400/AC	• 27 Acres.....\$2,962/AC
• 200 Acres & Camp.....\$1,120,000	• 209 Acres.....\$3,348/AC	• 69.5 Acres.....\$2,500/AC	WALTHALL COUNTY
• 278.5 Acres.....\$4,000/AC	• 360 Acres & Home.....\$3,500,000	• 58.5 Acres.....\$3,418/AC	• 15 Acres.....\$3,500/AC
• 1305 Acres & Home.....\$7,500,000		• 40 Acres.....\$2,500/AC	• 38.78 Acres.....\$2,307/AC
		• 38.5 Acres.....\$2,077/AC	• 50 Acres & Camp.....\$204,000
ATTALA COUNTY		JEFFERSON COUNTY	• 386 Acres & Home.....\$1,495,000
• 540.5 Acres.....\$950/AC		• 722 Acres w/2 houses.....\$2,100,000	• 34 Acres.....\$3,808/AC
CALHOUN COUNTY		• 2260 Acres & Lodge.....\$8,300,000	• 160 Acres.....\$2,181/AC
• 75 Acres.....\$1,599/AC		JONES COUNTY	• 80 Acres.....\$2,250/AC
CLARKE COUNTY		• 21 Acres.....\$2,000/AC	WAYNE COUNTY
• 800 Acres & Lodge.....\$3,375/AC		KEMPER COUNTY	• 120 Acres.....\$1,500/AC
• 185 Acres & Camp.....\$550,000		• 40 Acres.....\$6,000/AC	• 220 Acres.....\$2,050/AC
• 40 Acres.....\$2,025/AC		LAMAR COUNTY	• 39.5 Acres.....\$1,974/AC
• 132 Acres.....\$2,651/AC		• 20 Acres.....\$11,250/AC	WILKINSON COUNTY
• 135 Acres.....\$2,651/AC		• 35 Acres.....\$8,750/AC	• 153 Acres.....\$3,790/AC
CLAIBORNE COUNTY		LAWRENCE COUNTY	• 26 Acres & Lodge.....\$425,000
• 222 Acres.....\$3,148/AC		• 52 Acres.....\$2,115/AC	LOUISIANA
• 176 Acres.....\$3,181/AC		• 710 Acres & Camp.....\$1,225,000	<i>Bienville</i>
COPIAH COUNTY		LINCOLN COUNTY	• 89.78 Acres.....\$2,449/AC
• 166 Acres.....\$2,289/AC		• 87.49 Acres.....\$2,857/AC	<i>Bossier</i>
• 339 Acres.....\$2,651/AC		MADISON COUNTY	• 76 Acres.....\$4,500/AC
COVINGTON COUNTY		• Home & 116 Acres.....\$3,250,000	• 120 Acres.....\$3,958/AC
• 40 Acres.....\$2,950/AC		MARION COUNTY	• 272 Acres.....\$4,600/AC
• 162 Acres Cabin & River.....\$4,650/AC		• 84.56 Acres.....\$2,944/AC	<i>Caddo</i>
FORREST COUNTY		• 113 Acres.....\$2,876/AC	• 170 Acres.....\$4,600/AC
• 30 Acres.....\$5,833/AC		• 14.5 Acres.....\$3,813/AC	• 32 Acres.....\$3,437/AC
• 80 Acres river front.....\$2,850/AC		• 40 Acres.....\$2,800/AC	• 20 Acres.....\$4,000/AC
• 80 Acres.....\$3,125/AC		PEARL RIVER COUNTY	• 17 Acres.....\$4,000/AC
• 123 Acres.....\$2,500/AC		• 303 Acres.....\$3,500/AC	<i>Desoto</i>
FRANKLIN COUNTY		PIKE COUNTY	• 55 Acres.....\$2,600/AC
• 15 Acres.....\$3,200/AC		• 10 Acres & Home.....\$189,000	• 51 Acres.....\$3,200/AC
• 277 Acres.....\$2,775/AC		• 24.87 Acres.....\$3,397/AC	• 40 Acres.....\$2,800/AC
GRENEADA COUNTY		• 28 Acres.....\$4,625/AC	<i>East Baton Rouge</i>
• 160 Acres.....\$4,000/AC		• 31.57 Acres.....\$4,497/AC	• 239 Acres.....\$3,999,000
HARRISON COUNTY		• 40 Acres.....\$2,475/AC	<i>East Feliciana</i>
• 81.3 Acres.....\$4,500/AC		• 48 Acres.....\$3,227/AC	• 64 Acres & Camp.....\$349,000
• 243 Acres.....\$4,900/AC		• 48.13 Acres.....\$39,067/AC	• 479 Acres.....\$2,290,000
• 129 Acres.....\$3,900/AC		• 58 Acres.....\$2,637/AC	<i>West Feliciana</i>
• 47 Acres.....\$4,100/AC		• 77 Acres.....\$5,181/AC	• 113 Acres & Lodge.....\$1,125,000
		• 80 Acres & Home.....\$219,000	<i>Sabine</i>
		• 132 Acres.....\$2,401/AC	• 21 Acres.....\$3,500/AC
		• 135 Acres.....\$2,350/AC	• Home on Toledo Bend.....\$550,000
		• 140 Acres.....\$2,350/AC	<i>Webster</i>
			• 958 Acres.....\$1,252/AC
			• 55 Acres.....\$3,400/AC
			• 113 Acres.....\$3,200/AC
			<i>Washington</i>
			• 150 Acres.....\$3,993/AC




Gibson Realty & Land Company

(601) 250-0017

8 AGENT/OFFICE LOCATIONS IN LOUISIANA AND MISSISSIPPI
www.gibsonrealtyms.com
 No One Knows The Country Like We Do

#1 United Country Office
 Internationally 2008,
 2009, 2010, 2011, 2013,
 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017

CALLING

DON'T THROW OUT THOSE OLD WINGBONES, BOXES AND SLATES. WITH A LITTLE T.L.C., YOU MIGHT HAVE SOMETHING IN YOUR TURKEY VEST THAT WILL GOAD A GOBBLER INTO MAKING A FATAL MISTAKE.  By Andy Douglas

During a recent hunt in the Homochitto hardwoods of Franklin County, my hunting partner, Shane McCullough, and I weren't having any luck luring in a tom. We heard several on the limb, but they were quickly joined by hens and went silent.

By mid-morning, I had given up and asked Shane if he was ready to go. He didn't say anything but instead reached in his vest and pulled out an old wingbone call. He ran it once, and a tom hammered back with an earth-shattering exclamation from less than a hundred yards away. Shane hit it again, and the rest was history — the tom strutted straight in, Shane smacked him at 25 yards and I captured it all on video.

I have an old wingbone call, but it wasn't doing any good tucked away in a box with other old calls. When I got home, I dumped out that box.

I've spent a fortune over the years and laid them aside and, over time, forgotten them.

I bet you're the same way; you've probably accumulated a good stash of turkey calls; anyone that's hunted a few years will. How many have you laid to the side? You should consider doing what I decided to do — clean and condition them — practice and put them back to use.

Most old calls can't be bought off the shelf anymore, especially the classics. Paul Meek, a master call-maker, said, "When I think about old turkey calls, what that comes to mind is Raymond and Era Chisholm's trough call and Ben Lee's Super Hen. Then, you can't forget about the original Fool Proof by M.L. Lynch."

Here are a few old calls to consider that can give you the edge on educated toms that have "heard it all."

OLD BOX CALLS UP NEXT >

OLD CALLS!





OLD BOX CALLS

Most old box calls were made from tight-grain cedar or walnut and were double-sided. The Lynch World Champion and Ben Lee Twin Hen are boxes many hunters may have laid aside.

Some even older box calls were homemade. If you've inherited one of these, consider yourself lucky. You have a real treasure. Old boxes won't go bad if they've been kept from moisture, but they may need a little maintenance.

SLATE POT CALLS

There's nothing like old slate sitting in a seasoned wood pot. Older slate pots weren't mass-produced but were made like today's custom calls, featuring good wood and good slate.

Any striker that accompanied older slates should be of excellent quality, but if you want to get a different sound out of an older slate, mix it up with different strikers. Try it with strikers you already have stashed. You can buy other strikers: laminates, exotic woods, or carbon. It may surprise you at the new sound you can get from old slate.

TROUGH CALLS

Trough calls are friction calls and have a strip — usually slate, aluminum, or copper — that sits in a wooden trough. Many older ones came with a corn-cob striker.

Like the pot calls, you can swap out the strikers to get a lot of different tones and pitches. These calls are excellent for close-in hen talk, like cluck and purrs. They're also good for yelping, cackling, and can't be beat for excited cuts.

TUBE CALLS

Some old tube calls were homemade from small, metal-cylinder snuff cans.



- Box calls, slate pot calls, trough calls, wingbones, scratch boxes and old strikers are candidates for some repair and refitting if you've put them aside over the years.

A half-moon shaped opening is cut in the lid and a piece of latex is stretched across the opening, held in place by a rubber band. It's a simple call with a great sound.

These calls are great for yelping and cutting. The volume produced from these little jewels is unbelievable. A tube

can reproduce most of the sounds that a turkey makes—even the gobble.

Call-makers like the late Kenny Morgan used this design and produced wood versions like The Morgan Call. Tube calls are still made today.

WINGBONES UP NEXT >



FRICITION CALL

conditioning and maintenance

All friction calls — box, trough, pot or scratch box — will need a little tender, loving care (T.L.C.) from time to time. A scour pad such as Brillo or Scotch-Brite, 120- and 320-grit sandpaper, and some box-call chalk is what's needed to get started.

Anthony Foster of Primos Calls detailed a few steps to rejuvenating an older call.

"The best way to tune up the sound on a box call without changing the shape of the calling surface is to start with a Brillo pad," he said.

Clean the box sides and lid thoroughly with the pad. If you don't get the sound you want, then go over it lightly with the sandpaper.

"On the box, 320-grit would be the roughest you'd want to use, and not a lot of pressure," Foster said. "The lid is a lot easier and can take a heavier grit like 120. You will sand it across the lid and against the grain. Reapply chalk, and you're good to go."

Pot calls and trough calls are easier to condition than boxes. Clean the slate surfaces with the scour pad: that's usually all it takes. Surfaces other than slate may take light sanding with fine-grit sandpaper. Clean striker tips with the scour pad first; if more work is needed, try 220-grit sandpaper and maintain the shape of the tip.

Scratch boxes should be conditioned in the same manner as box calls. Clean them and chalk them first before sanding. They're a little more fragile than boxes; if you sand, go lightly.

"If you are not sure what to do and want to avoid mistakes, reach out to a call-maker and let them walk you through it the first time," Foster said. ■



Cleaning with a scour pad such as Brillo or Scotch-Brite is how hunters should start, with fine-grit sandpaper in reserve. This will ensure that the shape of the calling surface is unchanged.

Andy Douglas



0% A.P.R. FINANCING FOR 84 MONTHS*

OR \$500 CUSTOMER INSTANT REBATE**



L2501

Crain Tractor

508 Hwy 98 Bypass
Columbia, Mississippi 39429
(601) 736-4527 • www.craintractor.com

*20% Down, 0% A.P.R. financing for up to 84 months on purchases of select new Kubota L Series equipment from participating dealers' in-stock inventory is available to qualified purchasers through Kubota Credit Corporation, U.S.A.; subject to credit approval. Example: 84 monthly payments of \$11.90 per \$1,000 financed. **Customer instant rebates of \$500 are available on qualifying cash or standard rate finance purchases of new Kubota Standard L Series equipment from participating dealers' stock inventory. Rebate is not available with 0% A.P.R. or other promotional financing. Some exceptions apply. Offers expires 3/31/18. See us or go to KubotaUSA.com for more information. Optional equipment may be shown.

KubotaUSA.com

 © Kubota Tractor Corporation © 2018

CALLING OLD CALLS!



☉ Gobblers will often respond to calls they're not used to hearing, thinking it's a hen visiting his area — one good reason to break out and clean up old calls.

WINGBONES

The wingbone is the oldest turkey call man has used. The National Wild Turkey Federation said it's the original turkey call used by Native Americans to put turkey dinners over the fire. NWTf's Winchester Museum houses the oldest-known wingbone call, one dating back 4,000 years. The wingbone was the most common turkey call used until the 1960s, when other calls became popular.

The wingbone is great for yelping. Once mastered, hunters are able to cackle, cut, cluck, purr and kee-kee. It has a sound that's distinct, and its pitch is unique. It's a great locator call; most times a gobbler can't resist answering, especially the first time he hears it.

SCRATCH BOX

Small in size, simple in design, the scratch box, aka coffin box, delivers the best cluck out of any calls. It's hard to tell the difference between the cluck of a scratch box and the real thing. It also gives a solid yelp. The pitch depends on

the type wood it's made from. Cedar, the most common, gives a high pitch, while walnut will give a deeper yelp.

These two-piece calls are usually a rectangular shaped hollow wood chamber with striker lip and a solid wood striker piece. Every scratch box has its own unique sound. They can still be found, but your old-time ones will have the classic sounds from the good old aged wood.

Break out all your old calls and scatter them across the floor and get down to business. Clean 'em up, chalk 'em up, and practice, practice, practice. There's no need to leave these old calls in retirement. Bring them back to life for some hot turkey hunting action.

You may find that you've developed better calling skills since some of these calls



were set aside. You could discover that your best call has been sitting idle for too long. Just a heads-up: you may need a turkey hunting vest with more pockets. ■



Andy Douglas is an outdoor writer and photographer from Brookhaven. A native of Lincoln County, he's chased deer, turkeys, bass and most anything else the past 35 years. He can be contacted at andydouglas.outdoors@yahoo.com

REAL DIRTY STIHL CLEAN

Clear a path, then clean off the truck.

\$579⁹⁵

**RB 400 Dirt Boss™
Pressure Washer**

- 25' no-kink flex hose
- 2,700 psi of water pressure at 2.7 gallons per minute
- 196 cc engine displacement

\$299⁹⁵

**MSA 120 C-BQ Battery
-Powered Chain Saw**

- Includes AK 20 Battery + AL 101 Charger
- STIHL Quickstop® chain brake system
- Quick Chain Adjuster

All prices are SSW-SRP Available at participating dealers while supplies last. †The actual listed guide bar length can vary from the effective cutting length based on which powerhead it is installed on. ©2017 STIHL SSW18-MAG142-139400-1

STIHLdealers.com

BOBBY LYNN'S

Marina

NEW LOCATION

209 Moore Rd.
Leeville, LA 70357

985-396-2678
985-398-0480

www.bobbylynns.com

Private and Affordable
Waterfront Campsites

CALL NOW

Take Old LA 1 Exit across
the toll bridge

- Waterfront Cabins
- Waterfront RV sites
- Dry boat Storage
- Dockside ethanol free fuel
- Boat Hoist
- Boat launch
- Wet slips for boats up to 60'
- Houseboat slips
- Guided inshore fishing trips



By Phillip Gentry

APRIL 15: TAXES OR SLABS?

Barnett Reservoir's crappie spawn peaks about the time your taxes are due. Pay Uncle Sam early so you can hit the shallows for slabs.

Most people mark April 15 on their calendars as a reminder that their income-tax returns are due.

Crappie fishermen on Ross Barnett Reservoir have another reason to circle that date. Veteran angler Hugh Krutz of Brandon said that,

historically, the spawn is going peak either on April 15 or within a day or two of it.

"If you're going to take a day off from work, that's the day you want," Krutz said.

Now that you know when and why, it's time to figure out how.

>



Phillip Gentry

Krutz said three major tactics dominate how the lion's share of anglers attempt to catch crappie this month; the decision on which to use is a matter of personal preference. All will catch fish, and each has strengths and weaknesses.

JIGGING THE GRASS

A jig pole and a single, 1/16-ounce jig is about as old-school Mississippi crappie fishing as it gets. Krutz said the best method for catching spawning crappie is to dive in to the miles and miles of shoreline covered in what he terms "reed grass" and fish the deepest, darkest holes you can find in water depths of between 18 inches to 2 feet deep. Don't be afraid to reach as far into the reeds as possible.

"This lake gets a lot of fishing pressure in the spring, so you can bet the outside edge of the grass has been fished hard," Krutz said. "Put the jig in the hardest spot to get to, and you're more likely to find fish."

Krutz said there is no topographical equation to solve in figuring out where crappie will spawn when it comes to grass.

Since males are guarding the nests, they make up the majority of the catch rate when jigging. Contrary to popular belief, males do not hollow out nests on the bottom. Crappie eggs are sticky and adhere to the grass or any woody cover.

"Regardless, crappie aren't fond of soft, mushy bottoms, so any area that has cover over a gravel or sand bottom is more likely to hold spawning fish at Barnett," Krutz said.

TIGHT-LINING THE LEDGES

Targeting bigger females before, between and after their multiple sprints into the shallows to push out their eggs means fishing deeper.

For trolling anglers, the first drops outside the edge of the grass beds are prime tight-line trolling areas where the target water depth is less than 4 feet. For this type of spider rigging, Krutz will often use a single jig on each line that weighs between 1/16- and 1/8-ounce. For bigger fish, he will even move up to a 1/4-ounce jig, but admits he misses bites when targeting only bigger fish.

"If I'm targeting water deeper than 3 or 4 feet, I can go back to my double-hook minnow rigs weighted with a 3/8-ounce egg weight," Krutz said. "You don't need a lot of weight at that depth."

Unlike single-pole jigging in the grass, tight-line trolling targets fish moving to and from the grass areas. These fish are more likely to be bigger females that move in to lay eggs multiple times during the spawn and then move out to hold in deeper water.

"If we've had any rain, the water levels will rise, and there'll be some current in the lake," Krutz said. "Crappie won't fight the current and will more likely hold in the eddy behind some type of cover. A lot of times that cover will be the long stretch of riprap that forms the Highway 43 bridge."

LONG-LINING THE FLATS

Guide Brad Chappell of Ridgeland decided to try long-line trolling for crappie after seeing the technique's success.

continues on page 38



Hugh Krutz (left) is a master of tight-line trolling for crappie, targeting fish moving from the grass mats or other spawning cover to deeper water.

Phillip Gentry



DESTINATION INFORMATION

HOW TO GET THERE — Barnett Reservoir, or The Rez, is about 10 miles northeast of Jackson on the Pearl River. It straddles the border between Madison and Rankin counties. Close to 30 public boat ramps line the lake's shoreline. The most popular during the crappie spawn is Goshen Springs Landing on the southeast side of the Highway 43 bridge. It provides access to both the upper river and main-lake areas, as does Brown's Landing near the intersection of Highway 43 and the Natchez Trace. Madison, Rankin and Fannin landings, plus Pelathatchie State Park, provides access to the lower lake.

WHEN TO GO — The entire month of April is crappie heaven on Ross Barnett. Local fishermen point to April 15 as the peak of the spawn.

TACTICS/TECHNIQUES — Single-pole jigging is the most-popular tactic during the spawn, dipping jigs and minnows around grass and stumps. Many anglers use tight-line and long-line trolling to target fish before they move to the beds.

ACCOMMODATIONS — Ridgeland Tourism Commission, 601-605-5252, www.visitridgeland.com. The Pearl River Valley Water Supply District, the state agency that oversees Barnett Reservoir, offers full-service campgrounds in all major fishing areas (www.therez.ms).

GUIDES/FISHING INFO — Brad Chappell, Brad Chappell's Guide Service, 601-317-6681; Tommy's Trading Post, Brandon, 601-829-1903, www.tommystradingpost.com. See also Guides and Charters in Classifieds.

MAPS — GPS Nautical Charts, www.gpsnauticalcharts.com.

Phillip Gentry

Old-school Mississippi crappie fishing means using a jig pole to search for crappie in the grass and is still a top producer for slabs this month. An 11- or 12-footer will allow anglers to reach deeper into the vegetation to get to fish others miss.

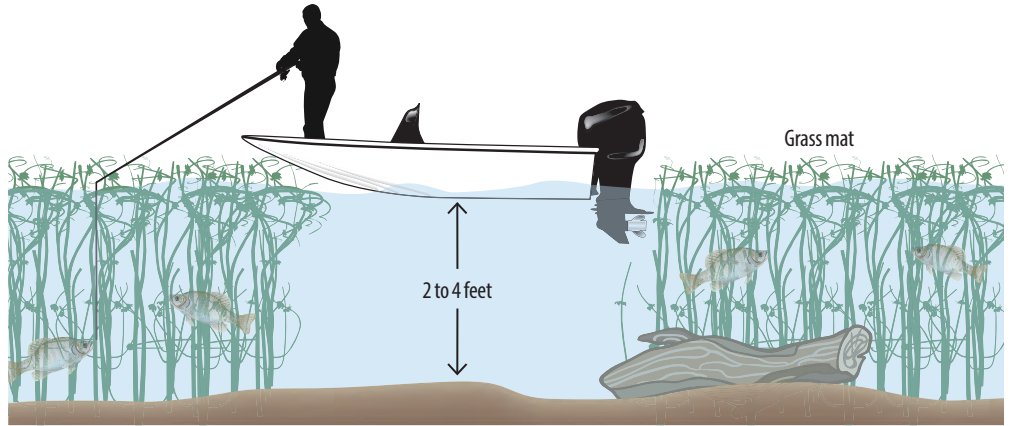
The edges of grass mats may look tempting to fish, but the majority of spawning slabs will be deep under mats of grass.

“When the bite is on, just look for the concentration of boats in the area around the bridges,” Chappell said. “The majority will be spider-rigging live bait, which I love to see. I’ll be dodging in and out around those guys and catching a lot more fish because I’m covering so much ground.”

When crappie are spawning, long-lining targets the males that have yet to move up on the nest and the females that are moving in and out from the nest to deeper water. Targeting shallow flats with sporadic submerged cover and water depths less than 4 to 5 feet often produce the best results.

“I discovered that it takes a while to dial in on what works,” Chappell said. “The biggest element that I found was consistency. You have to use the same jigheads, same bodies, and same setup on all of your rods while you’re trolling.”

To set up a boat for long-line trolling,



Chappell recommends using a variable-speed trolling motor that will allow changes in the boat speed in increments as small as .1 mph. A rod-holder rack, each containing up to four holders, is attached to the rear of the boat. Chappell runs identical trolling rods from the rear of the boat.

While the amount of line out has a lesser effect on trolling depth than jig weight and boat speed, Chappell said “a

good, long cast” to be the best judge of line distance. ■



Phillip Gentry is a freelance outdoor writer and photographer who says that if it swims, walks, hops, flies or crawls he's usually not too far behind.

SPRING SPECIALS

NOW EXTENDED THROUGH APRIL!



NauticStar **G3** Boats

★★★★★
5-Star Gold Certified Yamaha Service Center
with over 75 years combined experience
“In Business Since 1960”

www.sevencsmarine.net
378 Reynoir St. • Biloxi • 228-435-3389



YAMAHA



THE PROS AND CONS OF CURRENT

Long is the debate over exactly how current, whether wind- or water-generated, has on crappie fishing.

Some fishermen say crappie avoid current like the plague, so they only fish in areas where there isn't a ripple to be found.

Others swear crappie don't mind current, and, as evidence, recount times when they caught fish in blustery winds or drastically rising or falling water.

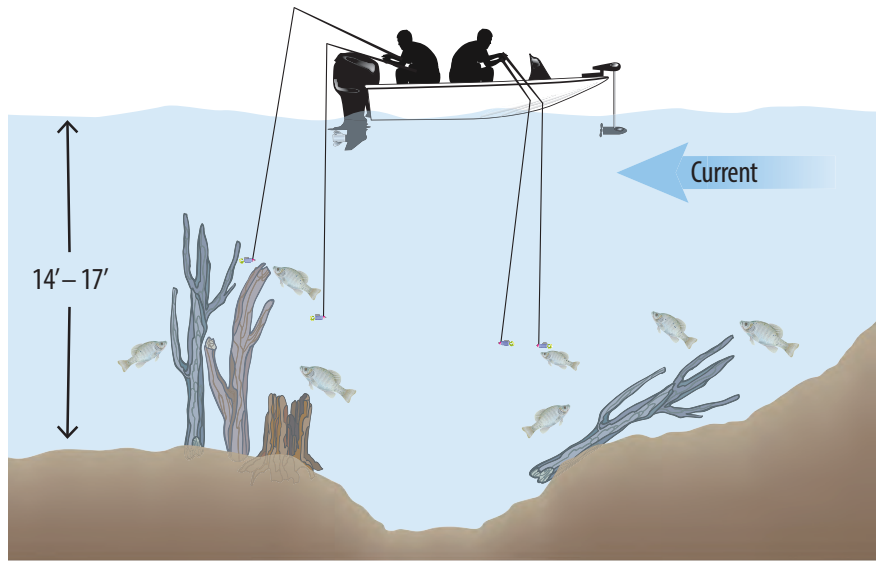
In areas of modest or temporary current, crappie will often use any available structure to break the flow and provide both rest and an ambush point. Areas with current also have higher levels of dissolved oxygen.

Moving water may tend to fall on the cooler side, and cooler or fresher water, as in runoff, may hold more oxygen. Both baitfish and gamefish are drawn to areas holding more dissolved oxygen. The debate often branches out, including which direction the angler should present baits when dealing with current.

One school of thought indicates that crappie always face into the current in order to minimize their profile. By facing into current, crappie can detect any possible prey that is blown in by the current.

The opposing thought involves boat control over deciphering the fish's actual preference. By fishing into the current, the boat can be inched forward, thereby placing the baits into the lee of the oncoming current and staying in the strike zone longer than for a boat that is pushed rapidly through the holding area by the prevailing current.

Of course, trolling crappie anglers may differ in their presentations from anglers who work a single bait with a single pole.



GO CRAPPIE. GO CATFISH.

CATCH 'EM DEEP

POW-R-TROLLER
Dense graphite, heavy action, rear-mounted rod collar, EVA grip, stainless steel guides, arbor-style gold tip eyelet.

CATCH 'EM BIG

SILVER CAT MAGNUM 75
1-piece backbone, cork handle, steel and aluminum rigged.

WHEREVER YOU GO, B'N'M HAS BEEN THERE.

BNM POLE COMPANY • P.O. BOX 231, WEST POINT, MS 39773
BNMPOLES.COM • 800-647-6363 • FACEBOOK.COM/BNMPOLES

ROD HOLDERS KEY TO STALKING CRAPPIE
UP NEXT

ROD HOLDERS KEY TO STALKING CRAPPIE

Driftmaster Rodholders, a division of Black River Tools, is the manufacturer of some of the most-innovative rod holders designed specifically for spider-rigging for crappie: the Crappie Stalker system.

Unlike a T-bar system where up to four rods are tied together in a one-piece rack, Crappie Stalkers are designed to totally isolate rods and eliminate rod movement caused by an adjacent rod.

Adjusting one rod on a T-bar system can cause the others to move, which ends up spooking fish or making it difficult to detect a bite. Crappie Stalker rod holders secures each rod in its own T-bar, eliminating movement of one rod while adjusting another.

Less spooked fish means more strikes. The system is available with V-shaped

rod holders or the original U-shaped holders.

An additional benefit is that the T-bar components allow unlimited adjustment in any direction. This low-profile design allows the rod holder to be folded down close the boat's deck when not in use, freeing up more deck space for travel.

"This is one of the aspects of crappie fishing that was suggested by my pro-staff," said David Baynard, the president of Driftmaster (www.driftmaster.com). "These guys fish year-round all over the country

Driftmaster's line of crappie rod holders make setting the hook using long rods much easier.



Phillip Gentry

and pointed out that when one rod in a conventional system gets a bite or gets hung up in heavy cover, it's nearly impossible to detect bites on the other rods.

"This system allows separation of each rod in its completely independent rack. No more bouncing rods and missing fish." ■

PHOENIX
2018 PHOENIX 721 PRO XP

X18PRO XP180 H20 BAY XP20CC

YAMAHA

PHOENIX WIND-CUTLIP VERANDA

Bryan's MARINE JOIN US ON

4899 HWY 84 WEST VIDALIA, LA 71373
318-336-9009
www.BryansMarine.com
Mon - Fri 8 am - 5 pm • Sat 8 am - 12 noon
Family Owned & Operated Mississippi-Louisiana's Boating Headquarters Since 1986

Buras, Venice, Empire
SOUTHERN EXPOSURE
Inland Fishing Charters LLC

Southern Exposure Fishing!

Destination of choice, offering excellence in all-inclusive coastal fishing excursions and southern hospitality.

If you are looking for the finest coastal fishing and the BEST in southern hospitality, then **BOOK NOW** with Southern Exposure Inland Fishing Charters!

Centrally located in the heart of the best fishing destinations in SE Louisiana, (Buras, Venice, and Empire), Southern Exposure will provide you with Top Rated guides that will expose you to the best coastal fishing this country has to offer.

Call today! (504) 250-9887
southernexposurefishing.com
fish@southernexposurefishing.com

STAY COOL STAY PROTECTED

STAY OUT
THERE



Solar Shade™ ZERO Long Sleeve Shirt



Who needs shade when you have OMNI-SHADE™ SUN DEFLECTOR?

Little sun-deflecting dots are applied to the outside of an Omni-Shade™ garment to deflect sunlight away from the body, so you feel cooler and stay protected.





Berryland Campers

HOLDEN

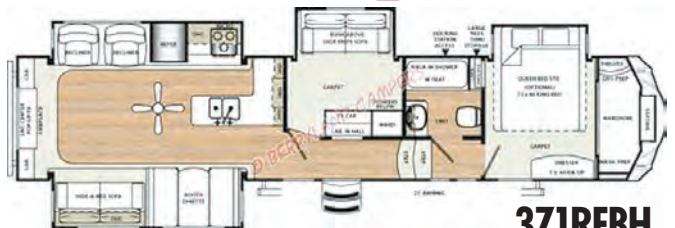


4 GREAT BUNKHOUSE FLOORPLANS

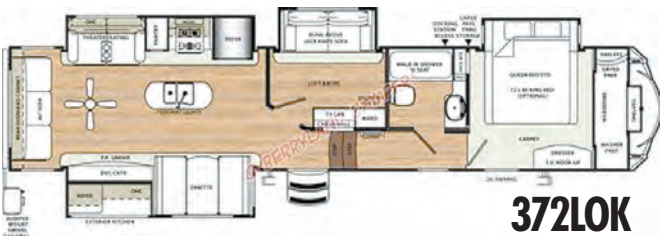
STARTING AT \$44,990



365SAQ



371REBH



372LOK



383RBLOK

MesaRidge SALEM

ROCKWOOD

HOLDEN, LA • Exit 29

TOLL FREE 1-877-567-7079

www.berrylandcampers.com/holden



WORK and PLAY

DON'T FORGET THOSE POST-SPAWN BASS

By Mike O. Giles

WHEN BASS COME OFF THEIR SPAWNING BEDS, THEY CAN BE FICKLE, BUT THEY CAN STILL BE CAUGHT. THIS BASS PRO HAS SOME IDEAS ON THE SUBJECT.



Brock Mosley

Brock Mosley had cast a swim jig across a shallow flat and was working it through the pads stems, when

Wham!

The retrieve came to an abrupt stop when a bass crushed the jig and bore down like a nuclear sub, cruising through the vegetation.

Mosley, a bass pro from Collinsville, snapped his rod back and promptly stopped the bass in its path and quickly pried it from the water.

Mosley, who fishes on the Bassmaster Elite circuit, said that finding an area with a shad spawn was a key to catching that bass,

and others like it, during the post-spawn, a time when most anglers struggle to figure out the pattern.

"We might have some bass spawning throughout the month of April, and then there will be others who are post-spawn and are resting up," he said. "Later, they'll feed aggressively as they try to replenish their strength after going through the spawning process.

"On Ross Barnett or Okatibbee, I try to get on the lake at the crack of dawn and look for the white birds. They'll tell you where the shad are spawning. That's a key way to find the spawning areas."

Spawning shad provide an easy meal for ravenous bass trying to gorge themselves after going through the rigors of the spawn.

Simply put, find the shad spawn and find the bass.

VERSATILITY PAYS

April's post-spawn fishing is a time when anglers need to be versatile, ready to react to different patterns.

"Sometimes you go for quantity and I ask myself, 'How I can catch a limit?'" Mosley said. "When the water is colder, you just can't fish fast no matter how fast you like to fish. If the water is below 50 degrees, the bass are not aggressive and chasing lures."

That's when Mosley slows down and works more deliberately, and, after finding bass, he lets the fish dictate what to throw, how fast to work it and how much water to cover.

>

POST-SPAWN BASS

"The shad spawns only last an hour or two after the crack of dawn, but they provide a great early morning bite," Mosley said. "After I find an area where the shad are spawning, I'll throw a Pop-R, walking bait, Chatterbait or a white swim jig with a Net Bait Paca Slim, until I determine what they want."

Normally, pro anglers want to cover as much water as possible and catch active bass, but Mosley never goes into an event locked down on one technique. Being open minded and versatile allows him to stay in tune with the fish and adjust in real time, not after the fact.

"I think the younger anglers have grown up learning so many different techniques and become very versatile and that gives us a competitive advantage in tournaments," Mosley said. "If you only master one or two fishing techniques, then you're going to miss some real good opportunities. You've got to be versatile to be successful."

"Sometimes we fish to win, and sometimes we fish for a limit of bass to get points. If I'm fishing for a limit, I'll try to catch as many as I can and then look for big fish. But if I'm fishing to win, I'll concentrate on catching quality bass if I can find a pattern or area that has them."

SEARCH BAITS

If you're fishing for fun, you can decide whether you want to target big bass or numbers of bass, but you must be able to fish several different lures in different situations.

"I'll have several rods rigged so that I can find out what they want without wasting time changing lures," Mosley said. "I'll fish a swimbait on a 7-foot-2 Spiralite rod, which is a very versatile rod. I'll also have a spinnerbait tied on, a chatterbait and a white SPRO Frog."

Mosley searches for the bass until he finds out what they want and then hones in on them with the lure that appears to be working the best. He's quick to change gears if things slow down or fish quit biting.

"Usually, after the spawn is over, there will be some lily pads growing by late April, and I'll start out with a few frogs and see if they're in the pads and active,"



As an Elite Series angler, Brock Mosley has to be ready for all patterns at all times, like pitching a lure under a dock.

Brock Mosley

Mosley said. "If they are hitting the frog, then you can really have fun catching quality bass."

Rat-L-Traps and other lipless crankbaits are also shad imitators and a preferred lure for Mosley around post-spawn bass.

"When it's cold, I'll work the Trap like a worm, and as the water warms, I'll yo-yo it," said Mosley, who fishes a crawfish color early in the spring and a chrome/blue back year-round. "During the early spring, I'll burn it and get reaction bites, too. There's really not a bad way to fish a Trap if you have shad in the lake."

"Another of my favorite search baits is a buzzbait," Mosley said. "I'll use a 7-foot Spiralite cranking rod that allows the fish to get the bait so that you can get a solid

hookset."

Not only is a buzzbait a good search bait, it's also a great big-bass lure, and Mosley has caught his share of lunkers on them.

continues on page 46

PRO TIP: LIGHT THE DECK

Brock Mosley's Phoenix bass boat is outfitted by Tricked Out Marine, which installed LED lighting that has become invaluable to him during early morning tournaments and fishing outings.

"The LED lighting has really helped me get my gear and equipment situated before daylight," Mosley said. "The lighting is bright enough to see what you're doing to get ready for the day."



LED lighting on Brock Mosley's bass boat helps him get on the water at daylight, a tremendous advantage during the shad spawn.

Mike Giles

NEW

PowerBait[®] MaxScent



CATCH 45% More Fish!*



Catch More Fish[™]



Look for the PowerBait MaxScent at your local retailer

berkley-fishing.com

* On average based on controlled field testing across multiple species as compared to original PowerBait[®]. Results may vary.

POST-SPAWN BASS

continued from page 44

PUNCHING POSTSPAWN FISH

Bass are not always active immediately after the spawn, especially bigger females.

"A lot of times the bass will be in a post-spawn funk; they'll back off and rest," Mosley said. "When they're ready to feed again, they'll be fun to catch on the offshore ledges, but until then, it can be tough. Last year, during the Elite Series tournament on Barnett, they were done spawning but not offshore yet, so it was tough."

Mosley went to something in which he had confidence: a punching rig.

"I want to use the smallest punching rig I can get by with, like a 1-ounce rig in a dark color like black and blue, something in my comfort zone that I have confidence in," he said. "When the chips

Author Mike Giles displays a nice bass he caught while using some of Brock Mosley's swim jig techniques.

are down on Barnett, that punching rig can make a big difference."

Pickwick Lake is a training ground for Mississippi anglers wanting to gain some experience chasing and catching smallmouth bass. Mosley said that when he's trying to catch post-spawn smallies, he likes to hit ledges, submerged points and drops.

He targets smallmouths on a Spiralite Defiant SDS72MF 7-foot-2 rod and Ardent Apex Elite spinning reel with 15-pound Seaguar line, drop-shotting a Net Bait contour worm with a ¼-ounce weight. ■



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



Mike Giles

Non-Current Sales Event!!!

215 XTS



NauticStar
BOATS

2140 Sport



Huge Indoor
Showroom!!!

Save
BIG!!!

Skeeter SX 210



SX 210



NEW
Location

dockside
marine



YAMAHA

63116 Hwy 10 Bogalusa, LA 70427
Phone: (985) 732-7600

dockside-marine.com

SCOUTING NEW WATER: IT'S FOR THE BIRDS

When bass pro Brock Mosley hits new water for the first time, he scouts — for birds.

"When I'm going to a new lake in April, I'm going to spend some of my practice time driving the boat around the lake just looking for birds," Mosley said. "The birds will tell the secret about where the shad are, especially when they're spawning."

Spending time covering water and finding those white birds and shad will give an angler more time to actually fish and determine what type of bass might be in the area. When time is at a premium for the pro angler or the weekend warrior, even a little time saved may mean the difference between a check and live well full of bass or going home empty handed.

"After you find an area with those birds, the shad are really easy to see," Mosley said. "You'll see them flicking the water and flipping up on the pads and grass. Once you find them, you need to take advantage of the shad spawn because it won't last all day. Only a couple hours and it will be over." ■



After finding spawning shad on Lake Okatibbee, John Temple caught this spawned-out female largemouth.

Mike Giles



HAVOC BOATS

Wreakin' Havoc

TOHATSU
Outboards



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

THE COOLEST SHIRT YOU'LL EVER OWN.

SPORTSMAN COOL BREEZE

NEW COLORS AND STYLES NOW AVAILABLE



AMERICA'S #1 RATED PERFORMANCE FISHING SHIRT

- Quick-Dry Moisture Support
- 50+ Sun Protection
- Anti-Microbial/Odor Control
- Vented for Superior Breathability



SPORTSMANGEAR.COM

New colors & options available online



Sinking, floating or suspending, this time-tested line of baits can put more fish in your boat — if you know how to use them.

Make mine a **MirrOlure**

By Jerry Dilsaver



Fish can be caught any number of ways, but MirrOlures hold a special place with a number of saltwater fishermen, especially those who spend time in inshore waters.

If anyone knows these lures, it's Lee Parsons, a veteran guide whose peers have often referred to him as the "MirrOlure Guru." He's not only proficient in their use, but he's got an innate knowledge that allows him to rattle off model numbers and colors better than most folks remember what they had for breakfast.

But as far as basics go, it's a matter of picking the correct style and size for the task at hand, be it speckled trout, redfish, Spanish mackerel or anything else with fins.

"The shape, size and weight are the important factors in choosing any lure, especially a MirrOlure," Parsons said. "We've always heard to match the hatch,

and it's really that simple. The shape and size are used to match the bait the fish are feeding on at that particular time, and the weight gets it to the right level in the water column.

"Don't get me wrong, color is important, too ... but the size and shape will be recognized by the fish first," Parsons said. "Once you've got that matched, you can worry about color. Sometimes, color doesn't appear as important, and they will hit several colors. However, trout sometimes can get real finicky and only hit one color. I've even seen their preferred color change while I was fishing."

Two of Parsons' favorite lures are the MirrOdine 17 or 27MR. The 17 size is for earlier in the year when baitfish are small, and the 27MR becomes a better option as the bait grows. He likes greens and golds in clear water; when the water is cloudy, he switches to a lure with silver sides that will flash and help the lure get noticed.

Early in the fall trout season, Parsons uses mainly the 52M and Catch 2000 models. When the fall mullet migration begins, he uses the Catch 2000 because it suspends in 3 feet or less water, which is usually where the mullet are and where the predators are stalking them. The Catch 2000 also casts a little farther, which can be helpful at times, especially when fish are skittish.

When the bait moves deeper, Parsons switches to the 52M or 52MR Series — the "R" designates a rattle in the body of the lure — which sink faster. The TT Series profile looks similar to the 52M Series, but it has a wider profile that helps it sink a little deeper when fished against a current.

continues on page 60 >

Redfish are a favorite target for many inshore fishermen, like guide Mark Dickson, and topwater MirrOlures are usually the ticket to draw their strikes.



TIP!

Lee Parsons said 99.9 percent of the strikes he gets when he's fishing a MirrOlure is when the lure is not moving.

"When you think you're fishing slow enough, slow down some more. This is an old man's lure, and you need to fish it that way."

**NO NEED FOR SPEED;
SLOW IS GOOD**

Lee Parsons emphasizes that many fishermen fish too fast, especially with stickbaits like MirrOlures. His retrieve includes plenty of twitches and pauses, with current providing most of the forward movement. The idea is not to see how much water can be covered, but to entice fish to strike.

"Most of the strikes come during the pause," Parsons said. "Some folks don't think that because they first feel the fish when they start to twitch the lure again. That fish actually hit the lure while it was paused, but the fisherman didn't feel it. Fishermen will have more success by fishing slowly and watching the line when the lure is paused. With braided line, the line will twitch slightly when a fish strikes, even if the line isn't tight. Let the lure move naturally at the speed of the current, and that tick in the line might be all the notice you get at the time of the strike."

Parsons said that with clean or smooth bottoms, he sometimes pauses long enough to allow the lure to reach the bottom and rest there momentarily. He said that, in some places, the current actually pushes it along the bottom. The idea is, a natural-looking lure moving along the bottom at current speed, maybe kicking up a little sand or mud, looks like an injured and easy-to-catch baitfish. ■

You can't retrieve a MirrOlure too slowly; most strikes come when the bait is not moving.

Jerry Dilsvaver

How deep and fast will the lures sink, and how far should you let them sink before starting the retrieve? Parsons said every model, sinking or suspending, is different.

"A 52 sinks like a rock," he said. "A 17 is a slow sinker. The best thing you can do is drop one down beside the boat and see what that particular lure does," he said. "Or you can let out a couple of feet of line and stick your rod tip down in the water and see how fast the lure sinks."

Parsons also likes the L29MR MirrOlip, a lipped diving lure with a rattle that dives to 5 or 6 feet. MirrOlure recently added the L30MR, a little smaller and a little lighter but with a larger lip. With it, Parsons said he has hit the bottom at 9 feet. One trick he uses a lot is to trail a L29MR behind his boat in the current. It will dive a little and swim very lazily unless the current is really strong, and it usually catches a fish or two on its own.

"Everyone likes catching fish on topwaters, and I'm no different," Parsons said. "I stay with smaller lures, like the Catch Jr. and MirrOmullet when the water is

calm. When the wind picks up and the water gets choppy, I switch to larger lures with a higher-pitched rattle, like the She Dog and She Pup. Sometimes, the pitch of the rattle can be everything, so if what you're throwing isn't working, try changing that first.

"I don't think color is all that important for topwaters," Parsons said. "Fish will be looking up at it, and the belly will always be dark against the sky. The most-important thing about color with topwaters is that you can see it clearly to be sure you are walking it. If the line is tangled and it isn't walking, it won't catch, so you're far better off to get it in, clear the tangle and make another cast."

Parsons doesn't fish MirrOlures for red drum except for topwaters. He said drum hit subsurface lures hard and suck them deep, which makes them difficult to release without injury.

"Red drum are lots of fun to catch on topwaters," Parsons said. "Red drum have ... to roll at least to their side to hit a surface bait. Usually you can see them rise and charge the bait as they turn on their

side to strike it. You have to wait until you feel them to set the hook, and many times they miss and are snagged outside their mouth. Even when they get the lure in their mouth, they usually only get one hook and are fairly easy to release."

Parsons said he has seen several trout swim past a bait and slap it with their tail to stun it before eating it, so when you have a missed strike, pause or move the lure very slowly, like it is stunned, and the trout may come back.

Parson likes to tie MirrOlures on using a small loop, as it gives lures the most-realistic action. His grandfather taught him the loop; he said it closely resembles the No-Slip Loop Knot.

Mark Dickson, another veteran inshore guide, uses MirrOlures the same ways that Parsons does, but also in several ways — and for several species — that might be considered somewhat unconventional.

continues on page 54 >

If a trout slaps at a MirrOlure and misses, don't move it, as the trout may return for another strike.



TIP!

When it comes to picking colors of MirrOlures, Lee Parsons said it's often not a matter of matching the color of baitfish, but of picking a color that can be easily seen in the water you're fishing. Variations in the color or stain of water you might be fishing are common. But don't confuse color and stain. Many coastal rivers have dark, tannin-stained waters, but they're clear. Ask "How far down can you see the lure?" when you drop it in the water. It's clear if you can see the lure 4 to 5 feet deep. In water that's stained, visibility can be less than a foot.

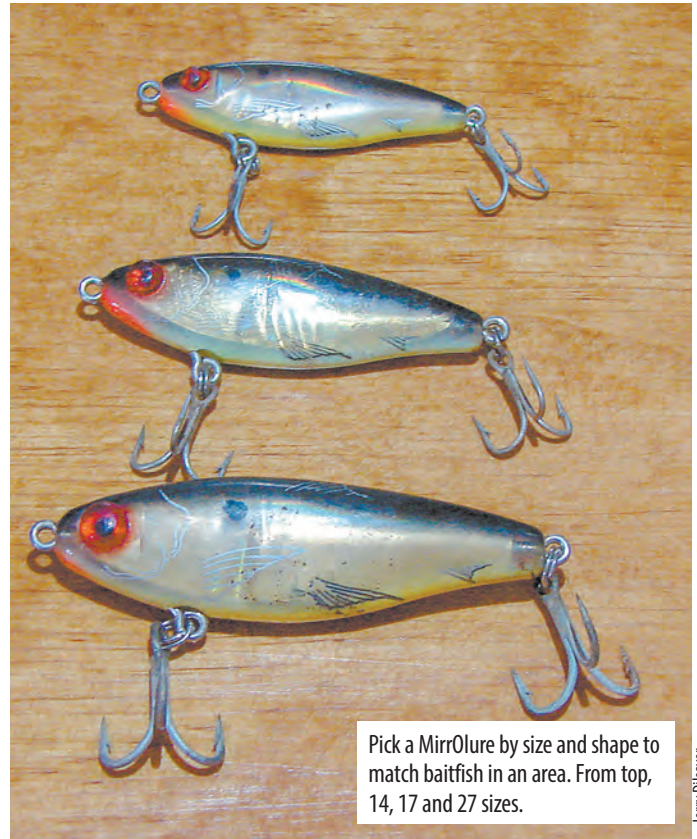
MATCH THE HATCH

Guides Lee Parsons and Mark Dickson emphasize choosing lures that are the same body shape, size and color of the dominant forage in an area. Several of the Catch 2000 lures, plus the 52M and MR, TT and MirrOmullet, have the general body shape as a mullet, and all topwater MirrOlures have mullet shapes. The different sizes allow matching the size of the mullet that trout, drum and other predators are eating.

The 9MR and 19MR MirrOglass and MirrOminnow are slender lures that resemble glass minnows and silversides. The 9MR is smaller, with the 19 MR being an inch longer and more appropriate later in the year.

The 14MR, 17MR, 18MR, 27MR and 37MR MirrOdine Series lures are shaped like small menhaden or herring. These are mainly suspending twitchbaits that sink down about 24 inches, depending on salinity. However, the 18MR, named the Heavy-Dine, and the 37MR are heavier and sink faster and deeper. There are four sizes, with the 14MR being the smallest at 2¼ inches and ¾-ounce, and the 37MR being the largest at 3¾ inches and 1 ounce. The 17MR is the most popular for speckled trout in the Carolinas at 2½ inches and ¾-ounce. The Heavy-Dine is the same size, but weighs an additional ¼-ounce to sink faster.

The Soft-Dine series are soft versions of the MirrOdine lures. The SD is the same size and weight as the 17MR and the SDXL is lightly larger than the 27MR. Soft-Dine lures sink a little deeper than the MirrOdine series. ■



Jerry Dilsaver

BLACKJACK... INSPIRED PERFORMANCE!

The new **BlackJack 256!**

BlackJack
boats

For more information
or to find a dealer near you, visit
www.blackjackboats.com



We have good populations of ladyfish in several locations, plus, there are usually good schools of bluefish, Spanish mackerel and more just outside the (inlet)," said Dickson. "One of my favorite things is to get these fish fired up and let the fishermen have at it. All of these fish are feeding on a mixture of shrimp, mullet minnows and peanut menhaden, and the action can be non-stop. We simply match the hatch for what they're feeding on, and there are MirrOlures in just the right sizes, shapes and colors, regardless of the time of the year."

Dickson positions his boat so he can cast upcurrent of riprap and docks that hold ladyfish. The MirrOlure Lumo Series, of with the smaller 14MR and 17 MR MirrOdines in the shape of a small menhaden, and the 9MR and 19 MR MirrOglass and MirrOminnow in slender, minnow shapes rarely make a pass through feeding ladyfish unscathed. Often the smaller sizes are better, but almost any size is fair game.

Another option for Dickson is to fill his baitwell full of small menhaden and anchor off the end of one of the jetties. He'll thump a few menhaden on the boat's deck to stun them, then throw them over the side. If there are any predators close by, it won't be long before they are making small explosions in the water as they attack and eat the stunned baitfish.

"Once we get the area chummed up a little with all the live baits, the feeding fish get really aggressive," he said. "They strike with abandon and will pile onto the smaller 14 and 17 size Lumo Series MirrOdines. When baits are larger in the fall, they'll hit the 27 size, too."

Monofilament or fluorocarbon leaders are fine for ladyfish, bonito and false albacore, but they don't stand a chance with the sharp teeth of bluefish and Spanish mackerel. Dickson uses a short piece of 11- or 17-pound Surflon Micro Ultra 19-strand soft wire when these toothy critters are around to make a leader for the toothy critters. This isn't one of the primary uses for MirrOlures, but MirrOdines, but they're the perfect shape and do a lot of the work themselves, naturally suspending in the strike zone, with an occasional twitch that creates action the feeding fish can't resist. ■



Guide Lee Parsons catches a lot of speckled trout on MirrOlures of different sizes, shapes and colors.



Jerry Diltsaver, a former Southern Kingfish Association national champion and USAA Angler of the Year, is a full-time freelance writer.



ABSOLUTE. PREMIUM. PROTECTION.™

Authorized Dealers

Academy Sports + Outdoors

Flowood, MS
Hattiesburg, MS
Jackson, MS

Barney's Inc.

Gulfport, MS
Tupelo, MS

Bass Pro Shops

Outdoor World
Pearl, MS

Boot Country

Hattiesburg, MS

BRV Auto

Tchula, MS

Gander Mountain

Hattiesburg, MS

The Southern Connection

Ridgeland MS

For more stores, go to our dealer locator at wileyx.com or call 800-776-7842.



ABSOLUTE.
PREMIUM.
PROTECTION.™



JACOB WHEELER



EDWIN EVERS

SHADES OF THE PROS™

Wiley X high performance fit and features help pros like Edwin Evers and Jacob Wheeler stay at the top of their game. Filter 8™ polarized lenses and removable Facial Cavity™ Seals help them see the water better while ANZI rated impact protection let's them know their eyes are always well protected.



WX KOBE

POLARIZED VENICE GOLD MIRROR (AMBER) LENS/
GLOSS HICKORY FRAME



WX NASH

POLARIZED PLATINUM FLASH (GREEN) LENS/
KRYPTEK ALTITUDE™ FRAME



WX TITAN

POLARIZED SMOKE GREY LENS/
GLOSS BLACK FRAME

WILEYX.COM
1.800.776.7842





Brookhaven Honda

YOU'LL LIKE WHAT YOU SEE, YOU'LL LOVE WHAT YOU SAVE!

**2016 PIONEER
1000**
SXS10M3



5 AVAILABLE

MSRP\$13,999*
SALE.....\$10,697

**2017 PIONEER™
500**
SXS500M2H



5 AVAILABLE

MSRP \$8,999
MSRP\$8,999*
SALE.....\$7,597

**2017 PIONEER™
700**
SXS700M2



5 AVAILABLE

MSRP\$10,499*
SALE.....\$8,697

**2017 RANCHER®
DCT IRS TRX
420 FA5**
4x4 Automatic
Shift



5 AVAILABLE

MSRP\$7,399*
SALE.....\$5,997

**2017 RINCON®
TRX 680 FA**
4x4 Automatic
Transmission



5 AVAILABLE

MSRP\$9,399*
SALE.....\$7,797

**2018 RANCHER®
TRX 420 FM1**
4x4 Manual Shift



5 AVAILABLE

**FOR OUR BEST PRICE
TEXT 420FM1 TO 68398**

**2017
RANCHER®
TRX 420 TM1**
2x4 Manual
Shift



5 AVAILABLE

MSRP\$5,349*
SALE.....\$4,197

**2017 RANCHER® 420
TRX 420 FA 2**



5 AVAILABLE

MSRP\$7,599*
SALE.....\$6,197

**2017
FOREMAN®
500**
TRX 500 FM1
4x4 Manual
Shift



5 AVAILABLE

MSRP\$7,299*
SALE.....\$5,597

Brookhaven Honda

8-5 Mon.-Fri. • 8-2 Sat.

1-866-546-6328 • 1-601-833-6041
www.brookhavenhonda.com

**EXIT 40 OFF I-55 IN BROOKHAVEN, MS
NEXT TO HOME DEPOT**

honda.com RECOMMENDED ONLY FOR RIDERS 16 YEARS AND OLDER. BE A RESPONSIBLE RIDER. REMEMBER, ATVs CAN BE HAZARDOUS TO OPERATE. FOR YOUR SAFETY, ALWAYS WEAR A HELMET, EYE PROTECTION AND PROTECTIVE CLOTHING, AND NEVER RIDE ON PAVED SURFACES OR PUBLIC ROADS. KEEP IN MIND THAT RIDING DOESN'T MIX WITH DRUGS OR ALCOHOL. Honda RECOMMENDS THAT ALL ATV RIDERS TAKE A TRAINING COURSE AND READ THEIR OWNER'S MANUAL THOROUGHLY. For rider training information or to sign up for a rider training course, call the ATV Safety Institute at 1-800-887-2887. FourTrax Foreman®, Rubicon™, Rincon™ and GPS2app™ are trademarks of Honda Motor Co., Ltd. PIONEER IS ONLY FOR DRIVERS 16 YEARS AND OLDER. MULTI-PURPOSE UTILITY VEHICLES CAN BE HAZARDOUS TO OPERATE. FOR YOUR SAFETY, BE RESPONSIBLE. ALWAYS WEAR A HELMET, EYE PROTECTION AND APPROPRIATE CLOTHING. ALWAYS WEAR YOUR SEAT BELT, AND KEEP THE SIDE NETS AND DOORS CLOSED. AVOID EXCESSIVE SPEEDS AND BE CAREFUL ON DIFFICULT TERRAIN. ALL MUV DRIVERS SHOULD WATCH THE SAFETY VIDEO (MULTIPURPOSE UTILITY VEHICLES: A GUIDE TO SAFE OPERATION) AND READ THE OWNER'S MANUAL BEFORE OPERATING THE VEHICLE. NEVER DRIVE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF DRUGS OR ALCOHOL, ON PUBLIC ROADS OR WITH MORE THAN ONE PASSENGER. DRIVER AND PASSENGER MUST BE TALL ENOUGH FOR SEAT BELT TO FIT PROPERLY AND TO BRACE THEMSELVES WITH BOTH FEET FIRMLY ON THE FLOOR. PASSENGER MUST BE ABLE TO GRASP THE HAND HOLD WITH THE SEAT BELT ON AND BOTH FEET ON THE FLOOR. RESPECT THE ENVIRONMENT WHEN DRIVING. Pioneer is a trademark of Honda Motor Co., Ltd. *Manufacturer Suggested Retail Price (or MMSRP) excludes destination charge. Visit www.powersports.honda.com to view applicable destination charge amount.

A man in camouflage gear, including a cap and jacket, is holding a large turkey. The turkey's tail feathers are fanned out, and its head is visible at the bottom. The background shows a wooded area with trees and a path.

By Dan Kibler

HENNED AGAIN? THERE'S HOPE!

Try these four tricks when you're having trouble getting a gobbler to pay attention to you and not his live girlfriends.

Sitting on a flat rock,

tucked in against the base of a big tree on the slope down the end of a long ridge, the hunter heard exactly what he wanted to hear in response to his first calls as dawn broke.

With two creeks draining the side of a hill meeting about 100 yards to his right and spilling between his hill and one directly across from him, he looked up to his right as he heard a long gobble from a turkey obviously roosted on the side of a hill over one of the creek beds.

The gobbler belted out two more responses over the next five minutes, then the stillness of the April morning was interrupted again — this time by something the hunter didn't want to hear: the plaintive three-note yelp of an unseen hen turkey.

The gobbler responded, the hen yelped again, and the next gobble obviously came from the ground. The hen headed on a straighter line than any plumber has ever plumbed, right up the creek bottom to the gobbler, and within five minutes, everything was quiet.

Quietly, the hunter cursed to himself, "Henned again!"

He was doubtless not the only one who said those two terrible words during the first week of the 2016 turkey season. It's a common lament among the crowd that's driven to rise at 4 a.m. in order to get into the woods before pitch-black gives way to dawn.

For the first week or two of the season, losing a gobbler to the romantic babbling of a hen is probably the excuse heard most when turkey hunters sit down for lunch in diners or pull up a stool to cut hoop cheese and baloney in country stores and discuss what went wrong that morning.

Early on, turkey hunters understand they have competition when they try to reverse the natural order and mimic the vocalizations of a hen turkey to call a gobbler within shotgun range. It's not supposed to work that way; the tom gobblers, and the hen rushes in his direction, yelping and clucking out sweet nothings the entire time.

The competition is from the gaggle of hens in the woods who haven't been bred or finished laying their clutches of eggs. They want to keep company with the neighborhood bully until their natural urges turn from reproducing to protecting their eggs. And there aren't many hunters alive who can call a gobbler to them while a live hen is promising him things that would make a gigolo blush.

Two top turkey hunters have laid out four strategies that might help hunters bring a henned-up gobbler within range of that 12-gauge load of copper-plated No. 4s. Here they are:

Come back later. Marshall Collette, a veteran turkey hunter who is a member of the Mossy Oak and Quaker Boy pro staffs, knows that even a caller who has won numerous calling com-



Using a realistic gobbler decoy can cause a gobbler with hens to lose its mind and run into what he thinks is a fight.

Steve Gullledge

petitions has little or no chance of bringing a big gobbler under the gun when he's occupied with hens. His first idea is, leave him alone and come back later.

"Ninety-five percent of the time, when I know a gobbler I'm working has hens, I'll walk away and come back to the area

later," he said. "I'll try to go find another gobbler, and then, later in the morning or around mid-day, when the hens have left him to sit on their nests, he'll come back to the same area where he found them that morning. I've seen that happen a lot.

"So I want to come back to that place later in the morning, about 10 o'clock or so, and sit down and call again, hoping he's coming back. The other thing is, there's so much commotion in that area first thing in the morning, you may have another gobbler come in later to hang around and see what's up."

Come back the next day. Heath Rayfield, a long-time guide, said to pay careful attention to what the turkeys do, then come back and get in their way the next morning.

"Nine out of 10 times, turkeys will be in a little routine: where they roost, where they fly down and where they go," Rayfield said. "And it doesn't vary much

from day to day.

"If I see him in the morning with hens, and they're up in the woods, I'll pay attention to everything, pattern them, then the next morning, I'll come back and try to get tight to him, get in between him and the hens.

"I want to go in the woods at pitch-black dark and go in super, super quiet," he said. "I want to be sitting within range of where I think he's going to hit the ground. If I can put a decoy out in the dark without bothering him, I'll put out a hen decoy."

Call the hens in your direction. This one most hunters can try, and once in a while, it will work, according to Rayfield and Collette.

"I want to challenge that old, boss hen that's in a group with the gobbler," Rayfield said "I want to get mouthy

continued on page 60

Wait them out: Great hunting is on the way

What's the biological reason for gobblers to get "henned up" early during the annual spring turkey season? Charles Ruth, a biologist who works with turkeys in South Carolina, explained that it's just a natural thing.

"When a gobbler gobbles, he's doing that to attract hens, and you've got hens out there that have a physiological desire to be bred and will come to him," Ruth said. "When you've got plenty of hens out there, they've got power in numbers. They'll go to him, and he won't come to you."

Once bred, Ruth said, a hen will lay an egg every day for 12 to 14 days. During that time, she's still got something ingrained that's drawing her to the gobbler. But the more eggs she lays, the more her desire to breed wanes.

"Let her get bred and initiate a nest and start laying, and once her attraction is drawn from the physiological need to breed to the physiological need to sit on her nest, she'll start to be out of the picture more. She'll stay in the vicinity of that nest more. As she starts getting closer to finishing her clutch, she'll

spend more time there. Then, she'll go on the nest and forget him.

"They're not all on the same schedule, but if you've got a gobbler who's got a certain number of hens with him, once they start to lay, and as they continue to incubate those eggs a little more, it opens things up for hunters. As fewer hens remain, a gobbler is going to be more likely to be called to the gun." ■

The closer a hen turkey gets to finishing laying her clutch of eggs and sitting on her nest full-time, the better chance you have of calling a gobbler into shotgun range.



A gobbler showing off for a hen is unlikely to leave and head off in the direction of any hen calls from birds that he can't see.

when she gets mouthy. I want to mock exactly the way she calls. She may come my way, looking for a fight, and if she does, he'll come with her."

Collette said he normally works a gobbler that's dropped off the roost with typical hen yelps and clucks. If one hen in the group fires up, he'll respond with "aggressive cuts and hen yelps, even a few aggressive purrs.

"You're trying to see if you can piss her off, see if you can get that cranky, old hen to come in for a fight. The rest of the hens will follow her at a distance, and he'll come trailing along with them."

Fan his flames. Rayfield said over the past couple of seasons, while filming hunts, he's changed his mind and decided that using decoys, or even just a full turkey fan, can get a gobbler that's with hens riled up to the point of throwing off his natural caution and barging in for a fight.

"I've almost gotten to where I don't mind having hens around a gobbler as long as I can see 'em, especially if they're in a field," he said. "Now, I don't do this on public land, but I keep a gobbler fan, and if I've got him in a field, I'll belly crawl out in the field with the fan up. Nine times out of 10, if he sees that fan, he'll come charging in, and when I say charging, I mean charging. Last year, I killed two gobblers at three and four steps. One was out in a field, in a low spot, and I used a little roll in the land to crawl out, then stuck the fan up to where he could see it, and he came right in. The other one, I was lying down in a logging road with the fan, and he came 200 yards right down the road to me.

"If I'm in hilly terrain, in the woods, I'll try to use the terrain and get to where I can put out a couple of decoys so he'll see them when he walks past. I'll put out a hen and a strutter, and I'll gobble at him two or three times, then shut up. When he hears you gobble at him, he'll perk up and look to see what's there. If he sees that strutter, he thinks it's there to steal his hens, and he'll come on in.

"One thing I've learned is, don't go cheap on decoys. Spend a little extra money and get the real deal, one that looks the most realistic." ■



Dan Kibler is a veteran outdoor writer who has been covering outdoors issues full-time since 1985.



Rick Small

PARISH TRACTOR

One of the
LARGEST
Kubota dealers in
NORTH AMERICA



Z122RKW-42

\$81 0% APR
for 48 months

POPLARVILLE
601-795-4521
1602 S. Main St

HATTIESBURG
601-264-5877
7061 Hwy 49



www.parishtractor.com



(1) \$0 Down, 0% A.P.R. financing for up to 48 months on purchases of select new Kubota Z122RKW-42 equipment from participating dealers' in-stock inventory is available to qualified purchasers through Kubota Credit Corporation, U.S.A.; subject to credit approval. Some exceptions apply. Example: 48 monthly payments of \$20.83 per \$1,000 financed. Offer expires 6/30/18. See us or go to KubotaUSA.com for more information. (2) Payments of \$81 per month on new Z122RKW-42 based on sales price of \$3899 at \$0 down, 0% A.P.R. for 48 months. Financing available from Kubota Credit Corporation, U.S.A.; subject to credit approval. Payments do not include implements, freight, delivery, or taxes where applicable. Some exceptions apply. Offer expires 06/30/2018. See dealership for details.

GETTIN' FRESH

Hal Schramm

Jigging is an effective way to catch crappies in flood-control reservoirs. Notice, in the background, the absence of cover needed for successful crappie spawning.



SURVIVING WINTER

GETTING THROUGH THE COLD MONTHS IS A TEST THAT YOUNG CRAPPIE HAVE TO PASS TO ADD TO A DYNAMIC FISHERY

Good crappie fishing often depends on a strong year-class: an abundance of fish produced in a given year.

When those fish grow to a size of interest to anglers — what biologists call “recruit to the fishery” — the result is fast action, filled limits and full coolers. Fast growth and limited harvest often equates to super slabs for the next several years.

SPAWN IMPORTANCE

Although crappie will spawn along the barren shorelines of Mississippi's flood-control reservoirs, greater survival of spawned fry usually occurs when high water in the spring floods shoreline vegetation in the main lake and lowland vegetation growing on the flood plains uplake, and in major creek arms where the rivers and smaller tributaries enter the lake.

I explained last month that Mississippi's flood-control reservoirs — Arkabutla, Sardis, Enid and Grenada — were built to

reduce flooding in the lower Yazoo Basin. To accomplish this purpose, they are drawn down in the fall and kept at low levels through winter and spring to allow for storage of runoff from the upper Yazoo Basin. The prescribed seasonal changes in water levels are called the “rule curve.” Unfortunately, fulfilling their flood-control purpose results in water levels not always conducive to strong crappie spawns.

In some years, downstream flooding or heavy rains in the Yazoo Basin result in the reservoirs having high water early in the year. These years typically feature a strong spawn, according to Keith Meals, a veteran fisheries biologist for the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks who oversees fisheries in the flood-control reservoirs.

JUDGMENT DAY

A weak spawn will never produce a strong year-class, but Meals makes it

very clear that a strong spawn does not always produce a strong year-class. In all fisheries, winter is an invisible killer of young fish.

Young crappies are limited in the size of forage they can eat. Winter is a season of dwindling food supply as the number of small, young forage fish declines and the survivors become too large to eat. Invertebrates also are an important food resource for young crappies. Many of these invertebrates, especially aquatic insect larvae that have summer-to-summer life cycles, are abundant but small. Further, fall drawdowns on flood-control reservoirs massively reduce the numbers and habitat of aquatic insects. Larger crappies have ample energy reserves in their own bodies to endure lean times, but a long, cold winter takes a toll on small crappie that have little to eat and few energy reserves to draw on.

High overwinter mortality is common in many fisheries, but according to

Meals, young crappies in flood-control reservoirs face another threat: rapid water withdrawals. In a normal fall, water is slowly discharged to lower the lake levels to winter pool to provide flood storage capacity. An exceptionally wet fall or winter refills the reservoir and necessitates high discharge to restore the capacity. With the gates wide open, water and fish — including crappie — leave the reservoir.

Young crappie are weak swimmers compared to their older and larger kin. Cold water lowers their swimming ability and further increases their vulnerability to getting caught in the discharge. Monitoring some years ago substantiated that losses of young crappie can be high.

Not knowing what future precipitation will be, or how many young crappie will be caught if high winter discharges occur, Meals always withholds judgment on the strength of a year class until the spring after the fish were spawned.

Are high, winter discharges common? Let's say they are not unusual. This year, for example, heavy rains in the Coldwater River basin in early January raised Arkabutla Lake well above the winter pool specified by the rule curve. The discharge gates were opened to



Dan Kibler

THE PROMISE OF A GOOD SPAWN:

When crappie reproduction is hitting on all cylinders, the productivity of a flood-control reservoir can be unmatched, but young-of-the-year crappie have to make it through their first winter before they can begin to contribute to the health of a specific reservoir's crappie fishery.

allow 5,000 cubic feet of water per second to flow out of the reservoir, and the lake level was lowered 13 feet in 21 days. Multiple rainfall and discharge events in a season make fish losses greater, and in late February, Arkabutla had again risen almost to spillway elevation.

Mississippi's flood-control reservoirs are among the best, and in any given year might be the best, crappie fisheries in the country. But the abundance of

crappies in these reservoirs depends on water — how much, when it comes, and when and how fast it goes. ■



Hal Schramm is an avid angler and veteran fisheries biologist.

THE NATURE OF COMPETITION



LIVETARGET

Sunfish — aka "bream" and "bluegill" — represent one of North America's most prolific forage species, thriving in everything from lakes and rivers to ponds and reservoirs. Work the lifelike LIVETARGET Sunfish Swimbait around docks, through grass and weeds, over rock piles and amidst timber. The lure's Oscillator tail produces an authentic swimming action, while its protected hook makes the Sunfish Swimbait virtually snag-free. The medium-slow sinking Sunfish Swimbait is available in three sizes and four realistic colors.

LIVETARGETLURES.COM  

LUNKER LINES

Paul Elias

FISH FOR BOGUE HOMA POST-SPAWN BASS IN APRIL

START YOUR DAY WITH TOPWATER PLUGS, THEN SEINE THE LAKE'S CYPRESS TREES

Two patterns on Bogue Homa will pay off in April — the underwater stumps on the edges of ditches during the early morning and the live cypress trees on the upper end of the lake about 3 hours after sun-up.



April is a post-spawn bass month at Bogue Homa. The females will be coming off the bed, and they'll want to feed up to help recover from the spawn. But they will still be holding fairly close to the spawning area in shallow water.

Ever since the restructuring of Bogue Homa 10 years ago, the lake has held numbers of big, healthy bass. To successfully fish at Bogue Homa, remember that weekend anglers know the big-bass potential of this lake. So your best opportunity to catch bass there is to fish during the week.

EARLY MORNING

• **Two topwater baits.** In April, I like to start off fishing topwater baits early in the morning around the big, underwater, cypress stumps that line the ditches running through the flats on Bogue Homa. My favorites in April are the Zara Spook and the Whopper Plopper. The stumps will be about 1 to 1½ feet under the

surface and can be hard to see at first light. I have a number of them marked on my Garmin GPS, but the electronics tool I'll primarily be using is my Garmin Panoptix.

I'll be running the Whopper Plopper over the tops and around the sides of those stumps. The transducer of the Panoptix is on the trolling motor, and you can see the stumps with it — and often the bass holding on those stumps. If you cast in the direction in which the trolling motor is pointing, your cast will go right over the top of the stump.

• **A Mann's C4 Crankbait.** I'll ricochet a shad-pattern Mann's C4 crankbait off the stumps. When the crankbait hits the stump, I'll hesitate it and then speed it up very fast, coming away from the stump. The strike usually comes as the bait approaches the stump, hits the stump and pauses after the hit or starts to swim away from the stump quickly. I'll fish the crankbait on a 6-foot-6 medium-action Shimano rod with a Shimano

Paul Elias recommends that you fish the Zara Spook, pictured here, or the Whopper Plopper, at first light.



Curado XG reel and 20-pound White Peacock fluorocarbon.

• **Six-inch junebug Mann's Jelly Worm.** I like to use another tactic — pitching this worm with a 1/8-ounce sinker in front of it on a 7-foot-6 Shimano rod with 23-pound fluorocarbon.

I let the bass tell me which of these four lures they want during those first 3 hours of daylight. One of the secrets to catching post-spawn bass is you'll have to make repeated casts to the same stump.

THE SUN'S UP

As the sun gets up, I'll fish by pitching and skipping into the shade of live cypress trees on the edges of those little ditches coming into the upper end of the lake with several baits.

• **Mann's 1/2-ounce black/blue Stone Jig with a black/blue craw trailer.** I'll start off pitching this bait on a Shimano 200 Curado XG reel with 50-pound bass braid as my main line. I'll attempt to fish all the way around the shade of those cypress trees. Most of those cypress trees will have limbs close to the water, so I'll have to skip the jig under them to get it in close to the stumps. I'll fish the jig all the way from the stumps and through the roots and the cypress knees.

• **Six-inch Jelly Worm.** I'll also pitch and skip this worm under the cypress trees and work it through the same area where I've worked the jig.

• **Mann's Black Super Frog.** This is another bait I'll use once the sun comes up, fishing it around and through the lily pads at Bogue Homa on 50-pound bass braid. I'll use a 7-foot, heavy action Shimano rod with a Shimano Curado 200XG reel. I'll keep the Super Frog moving as it comes through the pads, occasionally stopping it in the openings of the pads. The real secret to successfully fishing the pads is to listen for the bluegills and shad smacking beneath the pads and look for

fish moving in the pads.

• Equipment.

Fishing at Bogue Homa in April, you can expect to catch several bass weighing more than 5 pounds, and possibly an 8 or a 9 pounder. You need tackle that can handle those big bass and get them away from the stumps. Besides the rods mentioned, I'll also be using a Shimano Curado 7-foot-2 Expride medium heavy rod with a Curado XG reel and 30-pound bass braid. ■



TOPWATER SPEED:

When fishing the Whopper Plopper at first light, just use a steady retrieve and swim it around and over underwater stumps.



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

RJ'S OUTBOARD Sales & Service

Since 1980

Over 70 Years of Service Experience!

New Dealer for G3 boats

Largest War Eagle Dealer in the Country!

New Dealer for XPRESS Boats

Skeeter ZX 250



Bennington



G3 Sportsman Series



Wareagle 961 Blackhawk



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



YAMAHA

HAPPY TRAILS

Bill Garbo

The author with a mature buck. Unfortunately, older-aged bucks seem to be the most CWD susceptible members of whitetail deer society.

CWD IS HERE!

MISSISSIPPI HUNTERS NEED TO UNDERSTAND THE DISEASE, HOW GOVERNMENT AGENCIES ARE RESPONDING, AND WHY CERTAIN DECISIONS ARE BEING MADE

I had something else in mind originally for this column, but the recent happenings regarding the finding of chronic wasting disease (CWD) in a Mississippi deer is more important than anything else.

As much as the topic has been covered in recent weeks by every form of media you can think of — since an infected deer was found back in late January — my guess is that most all deer hunters and other interested parties have heard at least something about the serious repercussions that this revelation is causing.

The Mississippi Department of Wildlife Fisheries and Parks (MDWFP) has had CWD contingency plans in place for a while, and the agency jumped on this once it was confirmed that we had a case of CWD in Mississippi. The Mississippi Department of Health has also gotten involved, and in conjunction with MDWFP, has issued its own guidelines and precautions.

WHAT IS IT?

When I hear the word “disease”, the first things that come to mind involve a sickness or disorder caused by a living virus or bacteria. When I looked it up in the dictionary, I find that a disease is basically a disorder, condition or affliction that produces specific signs or symptoms. So, in the case of CWD, the disease is a neurological (brain and nervous system) condition found in deer, elk, moose and other members of the Cervidae (deer) family. It has similarities to “mad cow” disease in cattle and scrapie in sheep, and it is always fatal to the infected animal.

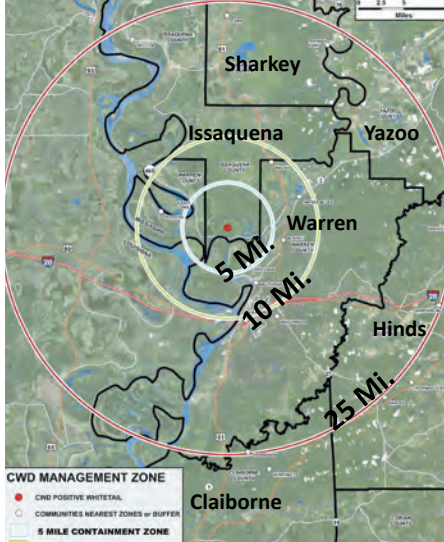
Scientists believe that CWD is caused by a malformed or folded protein molecule — a “prion” — that can replicate and infect otherwise normal proteins found in the brains and nervous systems of members of the deer family. The actual scientific name for this neurological dis-

ease in deer is transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE).

HOW IS IT SPREAD?

CWD is thought to be spread from one deer to another through contaminated body fluids and tissue, or indirectly through the shedding of prions by an infected deer into a source of drinking water or food, which are later ingested or touched by an uninfected deer.

This does not square well with certain hunting traditions and habits that are all too commonplace in Mississippi and surrounding states. One of the biggest problems is that infected prions are extremely stable and resistant to the environment. Prions shed by an infected deer do not easily break down when exposed to weather and environmental factors such as heat, cold, sun or rain. This is terrible news, since deer hunters have become addicted over the years to the use of feeders, mineral licks and stations,



MDWFP CWD Management Zone map. The three zonal radius circles show how the five counties are affected, where all forms of supplemental feeding and mineral attractants have been completely banned county-wide.

tion by officials of the MDWFP, the buck tested positive for CWD and was found to have died from pneumonia that resulted from the deer's weakened state. This is common with CWD infections. Radiating out from "ground zero," the MDWFP has formulated zone-specific regulations to assess and contain this CWD outbreak. The zones are as follows:

- **Containment Zone (CZ).** A circle with a 5-mile radius from the location of the CWD-positive deer. There are stringent regulations and recommendations for this "bull's eye" zone.
- **High Risk Zone (HRZ).** A circle with a 10-mile radius from the location of the CWD-positive deer. Restrictions are only slightly less in the HRZ when compared to the CZ.
- **Buffer Zone (BZ).** A circle with a 25-mile radius from the location of the CWD-positive deer.

The biggest takeaway here is that for any county that is contained in even a portion of the three zones, it is no longer

and other forms of deer attractants. Additionally, many of us feed our deer supplementally for months at a time or even year-round.

WHERE WAS IT?

The one CWD-infected deer that has been documented, so far, was an adult buck that was found dead in a food plot on private land in southern Issaquena County on Jan. 25. The hunter who found the buck had previously seen the same animal alive, but acting strangely, and it did not appear healthy. The hunter reported the buck, and upon examina-

FEEDING BAN:

The MDWFP has formed a CWD Management Zone, centered on the location of the CWD-positive deer. As a result, all supplemental feeding of every kind and all mineral stations are prohibited in the counties of Issaquena, Warren, Yazoo, Sharkey, Claiborne and Hinds. This is a complicated situation, and deer hunters who hunt in or near the affected counties should visit the MDWFP website (www.mdwfp.com) and keep up with what's happening.

legal to utilize any practices that cause unnatural concentration of animals. This prohibition affects all supplemental feeding, use of feeders and troughs of every kind, plus mineral blocks or licks and mineral troughs of every kind.

The individual zonal regulations, prohibitions, and recommendations are too extensive for me to list here. Go to the MDWFP website and pay careful attention to what is being put out. ■



Bill Garbo is a petroleum engineer and avid whitetail hunter from Madison. He has lived and hunted out west and taken numerous big game species, but hunting big old mature southern whitetail bucks is his favorite pursuit by a country mile.

#1 SELLING COMPACT TRACTOR BRAND*

0% A.P.R.
FINANCING
FOR 84 MONTHS**

Standard L Series

www.hragripower.com
H&R AGRI-POWER
THE POWER TO GET YOU MORE
901 Hwy 45 N. • Columbus, MS 39702 • 662.328.5341

*Claim based on EDI/ISS data for the period of 6/2007 through 5/2017 for new tractor sales in the United States. Excludes Utility Tractor. Excludes all other categories. **20% Down, 0% A.P.R. financing for up to 84 months on purchases of select new Kubota L Series equipment from participating dealers. In-stock inventory is available for qualified customers through Kubota Credit Corporation, U.S.A. Subject to credit review. Some restrictions apply. Excludes 68 monthly payments of \$1,150 per \$1,000 financed. Offer expires 5/31/18. See us or go to KubotaUSA.com for more information. Optional equipment may be shown.

DeerView
WINDOW CO.

DeerView manufactures the best windows in the industry!
Dealer(s)/Manufacturer Pricing Available
All of our windows and doors can be custom made or you can select from our standard sizes.

817-453-7421
www.DeerViewWindows.com

LURE REVIEW

Don Shoopman

Creme's new Speed Scremer is a versatile creature bait with lots of action, and it comes in 10 colors. The lure is available now at Bass Pro Shops.

CREME SPEED SCREMERS

BASS LOVE THE NEW SOFT-PLASTIC CREATURE BAIT

Dusty Anders of Deville, La., was excited when he called an outdoor writer in early February.

A 50-year-old firefighter, an avid bass angler and part-time fishing guide, Anders had just boated an 8-pound bass at Toledo Bend on one of his favorite, new soft plastics.

He thought it was high time to get the word out about the Speed Scremer made by Tyler, Texas-based Creme Lure Co. and designed by his good friend Mike Clark of

Rock Hill, La.

Anders said he's used Speed Scremers to put bass in the boat at Toledo Bend, and on the Red, Cane and Sabine rivers.

"Mike gave them to me a few months ago," he said, noting the versatile 3½-inch soft plastic comes in 10 popular colors.

"The ones we got weren't packaged yet. They were in Zip Lock bags. (But) the fish don't care," he said.

In his opinion, Creme Lure Co. has

another winner on its hands. The artificial lure manufacturer, born in 1949 in Akron, Ohio, developed soft plastics that have been relied on over the past six decades, including the Creme Scoundrel, one of my favorites when I got into bass fishing seriously in 1976.

There have been many fish caught on their products leading up to the Speed Scremer and the new FlipFlop.

continues on page 70



What the smell?

**No need to find out...
just get rid of it.**

Does your truck cab still smell like your last fishing trip? ...from last summer?? Ever spill a drink in your car? Track in some mud? Light a cigar? Sweat in the hot, humid summer before your AC kicks in?

Yeah, you guessed it, all of that bakes up in your car and causes some funky odors. As anything organic decays—think sweat, a spilled iced coffee, food wrappers, even grass—bacteria grows and causes stinky odors. To rid your car or truck of bad smells completely, first control the odor-causing bacteria with **NosGUARD^{SG} Auto Odor Eliminator**.

Find out more at www.AutoOdorEliminator.com

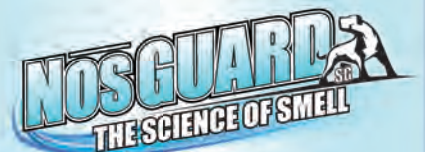
© 2018 Starbrite, Inc. All Rights Reserved.



**DEEP-PENETRATING
Cl₂ VAPOR
TECHNOLOGY
ELIMINATES TOUGH
MUSTY ODORS:**

- *Mold*
- *Mildew*
- *Cigarettes*
- *Cigars*
- *Smoke*
- *Pets*
- *Alcohol*
- *Urine*
- *Vomit*
- *Bodily fluids*
- *Bait*
- *Rotten food*

**The EPA-Registered DIY
odor treatment is fast,
easy, and effective.**



LURE REVIEW

Don Shoopman

Brett Preuett of Monroe, La., knows how effective Speed Screamers are after relying on them to finish in the money earlier this year at the first stop on the FLW Tour for 2018.

Preuett, introduced to Creme's Speed Scremer last fall by Clark, used the new soft plastic to catch 12 of the 15 bass he weighed-in to finish 19th at Lake Okeechobee, Fla. A former Bassmaster Elite Series angler, Preuett swam it Texas-rigged with a pegged worm weight, and he also fished it on the back of a swim jig.

Anders tipped his cap to Clark, who has been coming up with soft-plastic lure designs for Creme since 1993. His first entry into the market was a Devil's Toe (he swears he didn't come up with the name), a 4-inch French fry-style soft plastic that floated and gained popularity when used on Carolina rigs.

He also designed the Fish Frog, which was renamed Dudad. And the hits kept coming.

"A few years ago I designed a bait called the Reel Scremer, a swim bait," he said.

BIRTH OF THE BAIT

After that soft plastic's success, Anders stayed in his fishing buddy's ear about making another soft plastic, Clark said.

"The last two, three years, he's been on me. He said, 'Man, we've got to get Creme to make a small flippin' bait, based on trends' in the ever-changing world of bass fishing, he said.

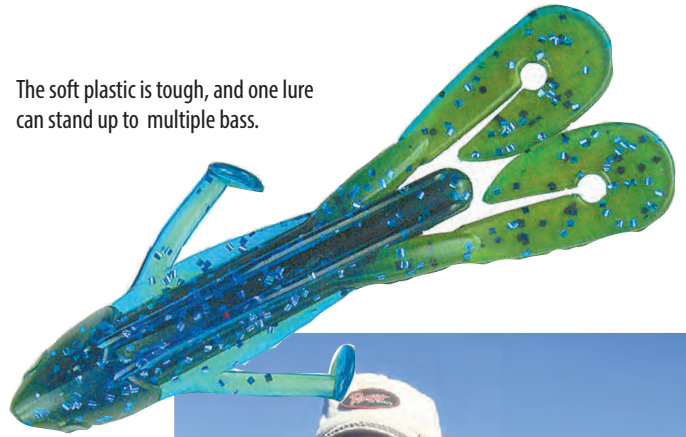
"I drew it out at first. A buddy of mine drew it up on a computer," he said, noting a main feature was two "arms," one on each side, with a tiny paddle-like appendage similar to a popular Creme crappie soft plastic. There is a slot top and bottom of the soft plastic.

After a few prototypes were made and in the field testing, Clark was mowing grass at his home near a pond when Preuett dropped by to visit Chance Downs, Clark's son-in-law who lives next door. Preuett and Downs are good friends, and all three share a passion for catching bass. Downs and his young son were fishing at the pond with a Speed Scremer.

It was there Preuett took an immediate liking to the lure.

"Brett said, 'I love the way it looks.' He couldn't believe the action of those legs in the water. They caught 12. That was last fall. He asked if Creme would take it on," Clark said.

The soft plastic is tough, and one lure can stand up to multiple bass.



The Speed Scremer features "arms" that provide maximum action bass just can't resist.

FINE-TUNING

The prototype was sent out west to mold-maker Kevin Jones, who sent a prototype to Creme owner Wayne Kent.

"We tweaked it. I thinned out the tails and changed the shape a tiny bit trying to get maximum action," he said. "I think it'll be a great success. It's so versatile."

The Speed Scremer got into some stores around the end of the year, Anders said, and made its big debut the week of March 16 at the Bassmaster Classic in South Carolina. It recently found its way to shelves at Bass Pro Shops, Clark said.

There's more to the Speed Scremer than its seductive action, Anders said, noting each soft plastic is tough.

"Creme baits hold up. I catch more fish on one. I caught seven or eight the other day on one bait," he said.

For more information on Creme Speed Screamers and other Creme Lure Co. products, go to www.cremelure.com or call 903-561-0522. ■

CUSTOM MAPS



- Full-Color Aerial Photo or Topo Map
- Zoom To Any Location In The U.S.
- Personalized Fishing & Hunting Maps
- National & State Wildlife Refuges
- All Waterways & Roads Labelled

Beautiful wall maps or convenient roll-up size... We can print any size... Laminating is available

www.custom-mapping.com

CALL TODAY FOR YOUR FREE PREVIEW MAP
Custom Mapping Services (225) 677-7207



Don Shoopman fishes for freshwater and saltwater species mostly in and around the Atchafalaya Basin and Vermilion Bay. He moved to New Iberia, La., in 1976, where he lives with his wife, June. They have two grown sons.

A man wearing a camouflage hat and a life vest is smiling while sitting in a yellow Hobie kayak. He is holding a large fish, likely a bass, which is splashing water. The kayak has the Hobie logo on its side. The background shows a marshy area with tall reeds and lily pads on the water.

Hobie®

A FORCE OF NATURE

Discover what makes Hobie the #1 selling fishing kayak. The revolutionary MirageDrive® is the original pedal kayak drive, 20 years of innovation perfected.

hobie.com

STICKS AND STRINGS

Sammy Romano



TRADITIONAL ARCHERY

GET BACK TO THE BASICS THAT ATTRACTED YOU TO THE SPORT

Modern technology has made it easier than ever to be a successful archer. Tools such as compound bows with high let-offs, electronic range-finders, magnified fiber-optic bow sights, fall-away arrow rests and many other advances have changed our sport forever.

But along the way, we have also lost something — the basic simplicity of archery that attracted many people to the sport in the first place.

Over the last decade or so, this has led to a resurgence in the popularity of traditional archery. It's archery in its simplest form: A stick and a string.

Using a recurve or long bow and shooting purely by instinct, without the aid of a sight or rangefinder, the traditional archer can become surprisingly accurate with both time and practice.

WHERE TO BEGIN?

Although traditional archery is simple as far as less gear, it still requires being properly fitted and setup to perform at your best. Go to an archery pro shop, preferably one that is familiar with traditional archery, and get setup with the best bow and arrows for you. Draw weight is very important here; unlike compound bows, traditional bows do not have any let-off, and the draw weight steadily increases as the bow is drawn

back. For this reason, most archers typically shoot bows 15 to 20 pounds lighter in draw weight when switching from a compound bow. I have seen too many people mistakenly order too heavy a draw weight, and they struggle terribly and don't enjoy shooting as much.

Choosing the proper-length bow is also important. Longer bows tend to be easier to point and don't "stack" the weight at the back of the draw as much, but they are much less maneuverable if you will be hunting. They also have less finger pinch when drawn, making a clean release of the arrow easier. While shorter bows are easier to transport and more maneuverable in the field, they are more critical when it comes to the shot. In a recurve, I find a happy medium of 58 to 60 inches long to be the best for a majority of archers.

Recurves are also available in single-piece and takedown models, with each having its pros and cons. The single-piece wooden recurve is much more nostalgic and simple, but is usually much more expensive. It is also harder to transport, and if a limb is warped or cracked, the whole bow is lost. Takedown bows offer the advantages of easier transport, the ability to replace damaged limbs at a lower cost and the ability to change draw weight by simply purchasing heavier limbs. The disadvantages are they're



heavier and have more parts.

Arrows are important, too, and a good pro shop will help you select the best ones for your setup. These days, most manufacturers offer carbon arrows that look like wooden arrows and are fletched with feathers. They are superior in straightness and strength to wooden ones, and are also safer and more reasonably priced. It is best to try a few arrows before investing in a full dozen if pos-

LEFT: A recurvedisplays the nostalgic appearance of a traditional bow.
INSET: Modern carbon arrows that look like wooden ones and are fletched with feathers are a major improvement over wooden alternatives.

sible, as arrow selection is less of an exact science when it comes to traditional bows.

WILL YOUR BOW SING IN TUNE?

Tuning of traditional bows is an art as well. There are three primary considerations.

First is brace height — the distance from the string to the back of the grip. Most longbows should be braced at around 7 inches, while recurves typically require between 7 and 9 inches of brace height. You can adjust the brace height of your bow by adding or removing twists from the string. Add twists to increase the brace, and remove them to decrease. Nocking point is next, and one-half inch above the bows shelf is a good starting point. Lastly is arrow spine, which is something of a trial and error process. Trust your instincts.

This is archery in its simplest and purest

form. Rather than using a rangefinder to range the target and then a bow sight to aim, a traditional archer uses instinct to point the bow.

The easiest and best explanation I can give for “instinctive shooting” is the analogy of learning to throw a ball. The first time you threw it, maybe it didn’t go where you intended. But your brain immediately began to subconsciously calculate the adjustments needed, and after a little practice, you were able to throw the ball with a fair degree of accuracy. There was no conscious thought of the distance to your target or aiming, you just naturally compensated by adjusting the angle and/or power with which you threw.

Since a bow launches each arrow at the same velocity when shot with proper form, the archer adjusts the angle to hit their target at varying distances. With the exception of a few “naturals,” this form and instinctive shooting require

both practice and dedication to achieve any degree of accuracy.

There is nothing quite like the feeling of becoming proficient with a traditional bow. The simplicity of a stick and string without the heavy and cumbersome accessories is nostalgic and a joy to carry into the woods or onto a range.

While not for everyone, many people are rediscovering this neglected part of our sport and enjoying it more than ever. There is something about the flight of an arrow that you shot without sights that is hard to explain, but extremely rewarding. Pick up a traditional bow and discover it for yourself. ■



Sammy Romano is a lifelong 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.

From camps to custom homes, build with



FRED NETTERVILLE
LUMBER COMPANY

Netterville Lumber Company is your complete solution to professional moldings like Crown Molding, Wall Paneling, and Trim Moldings. Custom Trim & Solid Hardwood Floors. We look forward to working with homeowners, designers and builders.





www.nettervillelumber.com
800.343.4577

COOKING ON THE WILD SIDE

Jerry Dilsaver

GOBBLER GRUB

THIS SIMPLE RECIPE FOR OVEN-ROASTED WILD TURKEY WILL LEAVE YOU STRUTTING

April is a special time of year across the Southeast. There is something for all outdoor enthusiasts to do. If you like fishing, there are opportunities of all kinds, freshwater and saltwater, and hunters can get back into the woods for encounters of the gobble, gobble, gobble kind.

If you consider yourself a sportsman and don't look forward to April, you might want to reevaluate your opinion of yourself.

One thing I try to provide in April is an excellent recipe for wild turkey and many of them come from my friend, Robert Cardwell, of Rockingham County, N.C. You won't be disappointed with this one. I can't say he is the only one who influences my gastronomical experiences with thunder chickens, but he has shown me a lot. For several years running I have featured one of his recipes in April, and there have been others going back more than 10 years. If you tried any, you won't need to ask why. He knows turkeys and knows how to prepare them.

If you still have a turkey breast in your freezer from last year, go ahead and try this. If you don't, you'll need to slip into the woods once the season opens and send one an invitation to dinner that begins with sweet purrs and encouraging yelps, but is followed by a loud bang pushing a magnum load of No. 5 shot. ■



Sliced and ready to eat, oven-roasted wild turkey, prepared with a few spices and barbecue sauce, will give you another reason to long for turkey season.

TIP!

To help seasonings penetrate meat to be cooked, don't just brush it on and shove it on the grill or in the oven. Seal it in a Zip Lock bag for an hour or two, and the seasoning will wind up throughout the meat, not just on the surface.

OVEN-ROASTED WILD TURKEY BREAST

I'm certainly not an expert turkey hunter, but I'm seeing a bunch these days. It appears they fared well during the winter and are on the move and feeding hard early this year. Once we had a few nice days in February, I began regularly seeing some pretty large flocks in a variety of places, and that has continued.

This recipe is about as simple as one can be. Someone said the only way it could be any simpler would be if the turkey prepares himself. It definitely is simple and surprisingly good, especially considering the effort — or, more appropriately, the lack of effort involved.

Recipe author Robert Cardwell's instructions say to use Cracker Girl or your favorite seasoning, and he suggested Tony Chachere's Original Creole Seasoning if you don't have a favorite. This was fine with me, as Tony Chachere's is a personal favorite, but I have to warn folks not familiar with it that it can jack up the spice if you get heavy handed. Cardwell said it was fine to just put this on and keep going, but my suggestion is to season the turkey and seal it in a Zip Lock bag, with all the air squeezed out, for at least an hour — and several hours is better. This helps it penetrate the meat, and the seasoning is throughout the meat, not just around the outside.

Cardwell uses his own barbecue sauce, but recommends John Boy and Billy's Original Grilling Sauce as a close substitute. One of the reasons he and I get along so well is he also likes a little kick in his food and this, mixed with a fair dusting of Tony Chachere's, provides just

that. Folks who make their own sauce with a bit of sweetness and kick might try using it rather than purchasing any.

Cardwell specifies a white wine to create moisture while cooking, but not which white wine. I don't care for the dry white wines many folks use for cooking, but I like sweet wines. I am particularly fond of a muscadine-based wine; it's just right for this recipe, and it helps channel my inner Justin Wilson to enjoy a glass (or two) while the turkey is cooking. I'll gar-on-tee both are excellent.

Cardwell cooks this covered the whole time, but I experimented a bit, and think I prefer it with the foil removed for the last 15 to 20 minutes. This gets a little crust to the outside and seals in some of the flavor. You might not recognize this eating it the first time, but it shows if there are leftovers, to reheat. Trust me, this isn't your Thanksgiving turkey and you won't mind these leftovers. You'll probably look forward to them and find a variety of ways to use them — I do. Enjoy! ■

PREPARATION:

Season the turkey breast with the seasoning. Remember, with Tony Chachere's, that more makes it spicier and less makes it milder). Allow to season in Zip Lock bag for 1 to 4 hours. Preheat oven to 350. Spray glass baking dish with non-stick cooking spray. Put breast in baking dish with outside facing up. Add ¼-cup white wine to baking dish. Lightly cover entire breast with barbecue/grilling sauce. Cover with aluminum foil and cook for 30 to 45 minutes depending on size (thickness) of breast. Remove foil and cook an additional 15 to 20 minutes (until breast reads 165 to 170 degrees on thermometer). Slice breast and return to baking dish before serving.

A green salad or steamed mixed vegetables go well with this. I also enjoy a slice of hearty warm bread with butter. A bowl of warm bread or rice pudding is an excellent dessert. ■

INGREDIENTS:

One skinned turkey breast
Your favorite seasoning: Cracker Girl, Tony Chachere's, etc.

Sweet barbecue/grilling sauce: homemade or John Boy & Billy's Original

¼ cup sweet, white wine

Non stick cooking spray

Aluminum foil



Slices of warm bread are a great garnish for this delicious turkey recipe.

All photos by Jerry Diltsaver



Jerry Diltsaver, a former Southern Kingfish Association national champion, and USAA Angler of the Year, is a full-time freelance writer specializing in cooking and kayak fishing.

It's time for Turkey

Subscribe today for the best:

- **FISHING REPORTS**
- **TIDE TABLES**
- **HOTSPOTS**
- **HOW-TOS**
- **NEW GEAR**

\$17.95

12 issues



Toll-free

1-855-371-1546

or for faster service visit

MS-SPORTSMAN.com/subscribe

*Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery of first issue



Mississippi
SPORTSMAN

AN ALABAMA GULF COAST VACATION REALIZATION

KNOWING WHAT YOU'VE REALLY CAUGHT
IS AN UNFORGETTABLE DAY.



GULF SHORES & ORANGE BEACH

It's a Whole Different State

You'll find year round fishing in some of the world's richest inshore and offshore fishing grounds along the Alabama Gulf Coast.

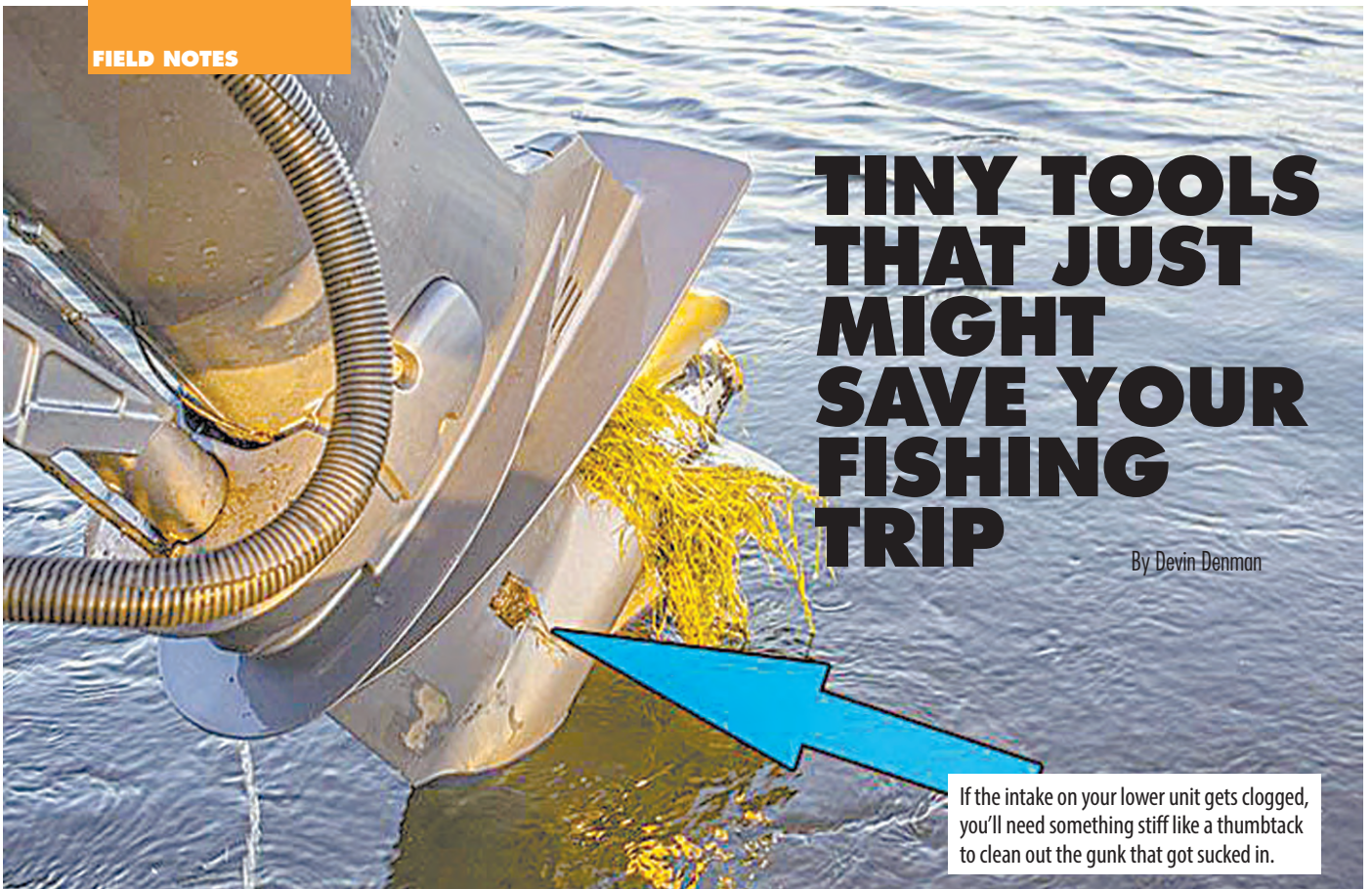
Orange Beach Billfish Classic
May 16-20

Blue Marlin Grand Championship
July 10-15

OrangeBeach.com / 877-475-1534

TINY TOOLS THAT JUST MIGHT SAVE YOUR FISHING TRIP

By Devin Denman



We all want to have fun when we go fishing — not play mechanic out on the water.

So when your lower unit inevitably sucks up a fragment of marsh gunk, your motor will stop peeing. But what exactly is meant by “peeing?”

Outboard motors don't use a closed-loop system for cooling like our pickup trucks. Instead, they are designed to use the outside water in an open-loop cooling system.

As you motor hums down the bayou, it picks up water, circulates it through cooling passages and then squirts it out via a “pee hole.”

So what happens if something gets clogged in the line?

Your motor could go into a “limp mode,” or worse yet, leave you stranded. Imagine being stuck in the marsh as the sun is going down and the mosquitoes are coming out. That ought to be enough motivation to keep reading.

STEPS TO TAKE WHEN THE MOTOR ISN'T PEEING:

1. Clear the water intake.

It's found at the “foot” or lower unit of your outboard. That may be all your motor needs to start peeing again. But if not, move on to step No. 2 . . .

2. Clear the “pee hole.”

Fingernails won't get the job done here. You have to use one (or both) of these tools: A thumb tack and/or a stripped twist tie (like from a loaf of bread.)

The thumb tack is stiffer, and does a great job of clearing clogs at the exit of the pee hole. The twist tie does a better job clearing clogs further upstream.

Incidents like a clogged pee hole are inevitable. It's not a matter



Photos by Devin Denman

of if — but when it will happen. When it does, now you'll be prepared. So keep a thumb tack and an extra twist tie in your tackle box — you never know when you might need them to get home. ■

Editor's Note: Devin Denman is an avid inshore fisherman who writes the Louisiana Fishing Blog. To read more of his articles, visit lafishblog.com.



DURING THE MONTH OF APRIL.

AT PARTICIPATING DEALERS ONLY.
BUY ONE GET ONE FREE ON CXX X-TRA STRONG,
THE STRONGEST, MOST SHOCK RESISTANT LINE
ON THE MARKET. STOCK UP FOR SUMMER!

Visit P-Line.com or Call 1 800.537.2394
For full details and to find a dealer in your area.

IN STORE PROMOTION • WHILE SUPPLIES LAST

INSTANT DISCOUNT TAKEN AT THE REGISTER.
OFFER EXPIRES APRIL 30, 2018

* OFFER IS LIMITED TO STOCK ON HAND.
FREE CXX X-TRA STRONG SPOOL MUST BE OF EQUAL OR LESSER VALUE THAN THE PURCHASED SPOOL.
* P-LINE IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR SHIPPING SPOOLS TO THE CONSUMER.

P-LINE
www.P-Line.com



EASY TIP TO PREVENT BACKLASH

By Devin Denman

SPOOLING THE CORRECT AMOUNT OF LINE IS KEY

Baitcasters are excellent tools for inshore anglers, offering capabilities not found in spinning reels.

These include faster, repeatable and accurate casts to pinpoint targets like bridge pilings or tailing redfish. On top of that, baitcasting tackle gives inshore anglers more power and control over their lures, enabling actions and presentations not possible — or at least very difficult — with spinning gear.

But the baitcaster comes along with every inshore angler's arch nemesis: the dreaded backlash. If you want to see \$12 of fishing line quickly turn into a bird's nest, backlashing a baitcaster is an easy way to do it.

But that really is no reason to reject casting tackle as an excellent tool for your tackle box.

There are many things you can do to prevent "professional over-run", including the adjusting the magnetic/centrifugal brakes, the spool tension knob and even applying silicon lubricants. But if I had to pick one thing that would really help baitcaster performance, it would be the amount of line spooled onto the reel.

SO, WHAT IS THE CORRECT AMOUNT?

Inshore anglers need to strike a perfect balance between too



Devin Denman

little and too much line.

Too little, and there isn't enough mass to keep the spool turning. But too much will leave the spool faster than it can leave the rod tip, resulting in a backlash.

With the perfect amount of line, you can hit the "sweet spot" for awesome casting performance, minus the nasty bird's nest.

Whether I am using monofilament, fluorocarbon or braid, I like to put line up to $\frac{1}{16}$ -inch away from the spool's beveled edge. Every reel, rod and lure combo is different, but I have found this to be the right amount of line to start with across the board for more casting success — minus backlashes. ■

Editor's Note: Devin Denman is an avid inshore fisherman who writes the Louisiana Fishing Blog. To read more of his articles, visit lafishblog.com.

NEW LOCATION IN GLUCKSTADT OPENING IN 2018!

COMING SOON

Barnett's

BODY SHOP

Tire & Alignment

FLOWOOD, MS - 601-939-9700 • RICHLAND, MS - 601-664-9770
BYRAM, MS - 601-372-0042 • RIDGELAND, MS - 601-856-0700

NEW



Abu Garcia® is a registered trademark of Abu Garcia, Inc. Abu Garcia is a subsidiary of Pure Fishing, Inc. ©2018

24lbs.

OF STOPPING POWER

**Revo® SX
Low Profile**

The Revo SX features the power stack carbon matrix drag system, delivering 24lbs of fish stopping power.

**Abu
Garcia**

FOR LIFE™



Revo Premier

Revo STX

Revo SX

Revo S

Revo X

Revo Inshore

Revo Winch

The Revo Low Profile Family

LOWRANCE

FIELD NOTES



GOOGLE EARTH COMES TO GPS MAPPING

By Andy Crawford

The new Trent Mapping v10 cards brings Google Earth maps to anglers' GPS units.

Photo courtesy Front to Back Boat Service

GPS mapping has come a long way from the old line drawings of the older systems. But it seems every system has its weaknesses — one being the area covered by detailed maps.

Well, now you can move from your computer to your GPS seamlessly with a new mapping system based on Google Earth — Trent Mapping v10 cards.

“When you’re sitting in your office on a Friday afternoon fishing on the computer, when you get on the water on Saturday, you’ll be looking at the same thing,” said Trent Boudreaux, owner of Trent Mapping LLC.

Boudreaux said he developed Trent Mapping v10 for two reasons.

“First, I saw a need for it in the areas I fish,” he explained.

For instance, he spends a lot of time at Toledo Bend, and he wanted GPS mapping to provide help in locating likely fishing holes.

“I can see the grass on Google Earth,” Boudreaux said. “I can zoom in and see

the grass on Toledo Bend. And then I added coastal Louisiana, so I could see the bayous and stuff to run around.”

Secondly, he perceived a financial reason.

“I figured there’s got to be a cheaper solution (than other available mapping systems),” Boudreaux said.

The wheels began turning, and he fell back on experience at a survey mapping firm for which he once worked.

“We used Google Earth maps all the time,” he said. “As long as you include an attribution that it’s Google Earth maps, you can use them.”

So he developed a system to place Google Earth maps on SD cards for use in GPS systems, and he’s been testing them for a while now.

Currently included on Trent Mapping v10 cards are high-resolution maps of the entire state of Louisiana, along with select lakes in other areas of the southern United States.

“It has Sam Rayburn, Toledo Bend, Lake Okhissa, Guntersville and Lake

Okeechobee,” Boudreaux said. “You can see all of the United States, but it won’t be clear until you zoom into those locations.”

All for a retail price of \$199, Boudreaux said.

Maps include subtle Google Earth watermarking, but Boudreaux said that won’t interfere with navigation.

“Unless you’re looking for it, you won’t even notice it,” he explained.

The system works with all GPS units using the Navico operating system. These include Lowrance, Simrad and Raymarine.

It’s important to note Garmin units run on a different operating system, so Trent Mapping v10 cards will not work on those models.

A website for the cards is currently being developed. In the meantime, Front to Back Boat Service in Baton Rouge, La. will be the primary Trent Mapping v10 dealer.

Call Front to Back Boat Service at 225-928-9644 for more information. ■

Avenger

AV-26



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



222 Sportfish



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

From The
Back Water
To The
Blue Water



230CC



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

A bone-colored topwater is all that's needed to catch trout, as they mimic weak mullet, Capt. Theophile Bourgeois said.

4 KEYS TO TOPWATER TROUT

By Andy Crawford

Photo courtesy Capt. Theophile Bourgeois

Capt. Theophile Bourgeois has spent his career learning what makes trout tick, and he lives for that magical time of year when the big girls come out to play.

That's when he pulls out his topwater plugs and goes to work — but don't look for him to be obsessing over what color the fish want, because he's figured that out.

"I order (Bomber Badonk-a-donks) 300 at a time, and they're all bone," Bourgeois said.

The reason is simple, said the owner of Bourgeois Fishing Charters, which is based in Lafitte La.

"Any time you see a raft of mullet, if you notice the ones in the back, you always see they're discolored," Bourgeois said. "Maybe a jack crevalle has nipped at them or something, but they're the weakest ones in the raft."

Bone-colored Badonk-a-donks perfectly mimic the sickly mullet struggling to live a few more minutes.

"If you get in that crystal-clear water, you can see the trout hanging around the back of the rafts," Bourgeois said. "They're watching those weaker mullet, and ever now and then you'll see them flash through the mullet."

That knowledge allows him to target his casts to areas he knows ups his odds of knee-quivering blow-ups.

"I'm going to throw my plug to the back of the raft," Bourgeois said. "I'm not going to cast it to the front of the raft, where the healthy mullet are: Why would I throw it up there, where they're on steroids and ready to shoot out the water at the first sign of a trout?"

"Ninety percent of my big trout come off the tail end of a raft."

He said he likes Badonk-a-donks because of the high-pitched sound the lures make during the retrieve.

"Every company makes two rattles: one high-pitched and one low-pitched," Bourgeois said. "For redfish, I like a low pitch, but for trout I always want the high-pitched sound."

"I think it's just the amount of noise in the water."

Another key to topwater success relates to the retrieve.

"Everybody works topwaters too fast," Bourgeois said. "Everybody is in a hurry; they want to catch one on every cast."

"Do you want quality or quantity?"

If you're hoping to catch lunker trout, easy does it.

"You want to make long casts, and it

should take 1 to 1½ minutes to retrieve the bait," Bourgeois said. "If you move (your lure) more than 16 inches on a big trout, it's done. It's over."

Knowing exactly how to work the lure is all about observing what's happening.

"I'll make my first cast, and I'll twitch it, walk the dog a couple of feet and pause," Bourgeois explained. "If I don't see anything happening — the water boil, a fish move under the bait — I'll lose interest and reel it and cast again."

But if a fish reacts without taking the lure, Bourgeois said it's imperative not to jerk the rod — a real test of nerves when a big trout boils the water.

Instead, just let it sit another moment, and then give the lure the slightest twitch.

If the fish refuses to make a move on the lure, there's one more tactic that could get that hesitant trout to change its mind.

"You've got to make (the lure) move a lot — but not move it a long way," Bourgeois said. "You want to make it erratic without covering a lot of water."

So he'll twitch his rod tip faster, which increases the lure's action, but he wants to move it inches instead of feet.

"Once a fish has shown interest, it's up to you to close the deal," Bourgeois said. ■

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 2018 **PrimeTimes Wall Calendar**, \$12.95 (plus \$4 s&h). Know the best days, best times, and their relative strengths for all of 2018 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 2018, the year's best periods, a look ahead at 2019, and more. Comes with FREE 2018 **Astro Tables** pocket calendar, which sells separately for \$7.95, 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.

2018 Ultimate PrimeTimes software for PCs, \$29.95 (plus \$3 s&h, or no s&h if downloaded from web). The world's best forecaster allows you to fine-tune the peak times to your exact location, quarry, and even weather. Too many features to list here, including making your own App. For more details, please call us or visit our web site (see below).

SPECIAL PACKAGE OFFERS:

#1: **Wall Calendar, Astro Tables and "How to Know..." book...** \$19.95 (plus \$5 s&h).

#2: **Same as #1, plus Software...** \$46.95 (plus \$6 s&h).

#3: **Same as #2, minus book...** \$37.95 (plus \$5 s&h).

Send to: PrimeTimes 2018 - Dept. LS - 2487 NW 75th Ave., Ste. 100 - Ankeny, IA 50023

For credit/debit card orders, call toll-free **866-809-5063**.

2018 APR		BEST DAYS			VALUE
POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCL		
Sun 1	██	██	██	██	61
Mon 2	██	██	██	██	48
Tue 3	██	██	██	██	35
Wed 4	██	██	██	██	27
Thu 5	██	██	██	██	25
Fri 6	██	██	██	██	23
Sat 7	██	██	██	██	28
Sun 8	██	██	██	██	38
Mon 9	██	██	██	██	30
Tue 10	██	██	██	██	27
Wed 11	██	██	██	██	30
Thu 12	██	██	██	██	42
Fri 13	██	██	██	██	56
Sat 14	██	██	██	██	69

Sun 15	██	██	██	██	78
Mon 16	██	██	██	██	72
Tue 17	██	██	██	██	65
Wed 18	██	██	██	██	58
Thu 19	██	██	██	██	56
Fri 20	██	██	██	██	57
Sat 21	██	██	██	██	61
Sun 22	██	██	██	██	69
Mon 23	██	██	██	██	58
Tue 24	██	██	██	██	49
Wed 25	██	██	██	██	46
Thu 26	██	██	██	██	53
Fri 27	██	██	██	██	59
Sat 28	██	██	██	██	67
Sun 29	██	██	██	██	70
Mon 30	██	██	██	██	57

25 50 75
AVERAGE

For more, visit primetimes2.com

		LUNAR PERIODS					
		TIMES OCCURRING AT NIGHT ARE SHADED					
		MOON RISE	PRIMARY MOON OVERHEAD	MOON SET	PRIMARY MOON UNDERFOOT		
Sun 1	8:57 pm	1:00 am - 2:58 am	7:56 am	1:25 pm - 3:23 pm	☉	☾	
Mon 2	9:57 pm	1:54 am - 3:40 am	8:31 am	2:19 pm - 4:05 pm	☉	☾	
Tue 3	10:56 pm	2:48 am - 4:20 am	9:07 am	3:13 pm - 4:45 pm	☉	☾	
Wed 4	11:52 pm	3:43 am - 5:01 am	9:45 am	4:08 pm - 5:26 pm	☉	☾	
Thu 5	12:25 am	4:34 am - 5:46 am	10:25 am	4:59 pm - 6:11 pm	☉	☾	
Fri 6	12:46 am	5:25 am - 6:31 am	11:09 am	5:50 pm - 6:56 pm	☉	☾ LOW	
Sat 7	1:37 am	6:14 am - 7:20 am ☀	11:56 am	6:39 pm - 7:45 pm ☀	☉	☾ Apogee	
Sun 8	2:25 am	7:02 am - 8:08 am ☀	12:46 pm	7:27 pm - 8:33 pm ☀	☉	☾ HALF	
Mon 9	3:09 am	7:48 am - 8:56 am ☀	1:39 pm	8:13 pm - 9:21 pm	☉	☾	
Tue 10	3:49 am	8:30 am - 9:48 am	2:33 pm	8:55 pm - 10:13 pm	☉	☾	
Wed 11	4:27 am	9:12 am - 10:40 am	3:30 pm	9:37 pm - 11:05 pm	☉	☾	
Thu 12	5:02 am	9:53 am - 11:31 am	4:27 pm	10:18 pm - 11:56 pm	☉	☾	
Fri 13	5:36 am	10:30 am - 12:26 pm	5:27 pm	10:55 pm - 12:51 am	☉	☾	
Sat 14	6:10 am	11:11 am - 1:19 pm	6:28 pm	11:36 pm - Midnight	☉	☾	
Sun 15	6:44 am	11:50 am - 2:16 pm ☀	7:30 pm	Midnight - 1:44 am	☉	☾ NEW	
Mon 16	7:19 am	12:32 pm - 3:14 pm ☀	8:35 pm	12:15 am - 2:41 am	☉	☾	
Tue 17	7:58 am	1:18 pm - 4:14 pm	9:40 pm	12:57 am - 3:39 am	☉	☾	
Wed 18	8:40 am	2:06 pm - 5:16 pm	10:47 pm	1:43 am - 4:39 am	☉	☾	
Thu 19	9:28 am	2:58 pm - 6:18 pm	11:52 pm	2:31 am - 5:41 am	☉	☾	
Fri 20	10:21 am	3:56 pm - 7:18 pm		3:23 am - 6:43 am	☉	☾ Perigee	
Sat 21	11:19 am	4:55 pm - 8:17 pm	12:54 am	4:21 am - 7:43 am	☉	☾ HIGH	
Sun 22	12:22 pm	5:56 pm - 9:12 pm ☀	1:51 am	5:20 am - 8:42 am ☀	☉	☾ HALF	
Mon 23	1:27 pm	6:57 pm - 10:03 pm	2:42 am	6:21 am - 9:37 am ☀	☉	☾	
Tue 24	2:32 pm	7:57 pm - 10:49 pm	3:27 am	7:22 am - 10:28 am	☉	☾	
Wed 25	3:37 pm	8:55 pm - 11:35 pm	4:08 am	8:22 am - 11:14 am	☉	☾	
Thu 26	4:40 pm	9:53 pm - 12:15 am	4:45 am	9:20 am - 12:00 pm	☉	☾	
Fri 27	5:42 pm	10:49 pm - 12:55 am	5:20 am	10:18 am - 12:40 pm	☉	☾	
Sat 28	6:44 pm	11:45 pm - Midnight	5:54 am	11:14 am - 1:20 pm	☉	☾	
Sun 29	7:44 pm	Midnight - 1:33 am	6:28 am	12:10 pm - 1:58 pm ☀	☉	☾ FULL	
Mon 30	8:43 pm	12:38 am - 2:14 am	7:03 am	1:03 pm - 2:39 pm ☀	☉	☾	

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

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



CARGO LIFTS

THREE MODELS ★ THREE CHOICES ★ SAME QUALITY

DO-IT-YOURSELF KITS NOW AVAILABLE!



EasyLift™
Lifts 1000 lbs



EconomyLift™
Lifts 1000 lbs



MiniLift™
Lifts 500 lbs

Equipped with "Cage-Arrest™" Brake System & Safety Screen to protect cargo from falling out.

This cage features balusters to better match deck hand railing.

This unit is for the small needs & take less space. Gates optional.

Marine Grade Aluminum . Stainless Hardware . Dual SS Cables . Remote Controls

Call today **888.684.6110** or visit www.beachouselifts.com

ELIMISHIELD SCENT-CONTROL PRODUCTS

Here's the equation deer hunters need to know: Any kind of physical exertion can lead to bacteria on the skin. Bacteria leads to body odor. Body odor leads to deer turning up their noses at areas where stinky hunters are set up in stands.

Plenty of companies make products intended to mask a hunter's scent, and a few have attacked the bacteria question, but perhaps none has a better background in killing bacteria than Bryson Industries, a long-time force in the hospital industry.

The people at Bryson have entered the outdoor arena with four products that allow hunters to "scrub up" and eliminate the cause of human odor that wafts through the trees and throws deer into a tizzy. Their Elimishield line includes a laundry detergent, a hair and body wash, a scent-eliminating spray for clothing that lasts for two weeks and a foam product hunters can apply to their skin when they get out of their trucks to head into the woods.

More Info: www.elimishieldhunt.com



BIG LAKE'S BREAKER BOX

Hugh McLaurin of Big Lake Outdoor Products has been making game calls out of a variety of woods for years, and he knows that dymond wood, a laminate that isn't easy to come by, is one of the hardest, most-dense woods around, often used in the handles of custom knives.

He'd been making barrels for duck calls and strikers for turkey pot calls out of dymond wood for a while, and one day about a year ago, he decided it would make an even better box call.

And that's how Big Lake's Breaker Box came into being. Big Lake is debuting the Breaker Box this spring on its website, with the price expected price to be in the neighborhood of \$60.

The Breaker Box can turn out some wonderful, raspy yelps and clucks, and depending on your mood and which side of the box you strike with the paddle, it can produce loud, aggressive calls or soft, plaintive yelps.

More Info: www.biglakeoutdoorproducts.com

N°12 EXPLORE SURVIVAL KNIFE

It's always a good idea to carry a knife when hunting or fishing. The potential uses are unlimited, and one thing's for sure — if you ever go on an outdoors adventure without one, you'll surely need it. And just in case the unthinkable happens, it's always good to have a knife with multiple uses.

The Opinel Survival Knife, which retails for \$49, is just that type of knife. With a sharp, locking, 4-inch blade and a sturdy handle, it cuts through any chore with ease. But it's more than just a knife. The survival orange handle will stand out to potential rescuers, and the built-in whistle can be used to alert others to your location with its 110-decibel rating.

That's all fine and dandy, but it doesn't help you make it through a night in the woods. But the onboard fire starter will. This flint starter and striker will help build a fire that will keep you warm through the night, signal your position and also allow you to cook a good meal.

The retractable gut hook works great for everything from cutting vines to gutting fish or game. You'll like this knife so much, you won't mind getting lost with it.

More Info: www.opinel-usa.com





Z-MAN SNAKELockZ

By Andy Crawford

The new Z-Man SnakeLockZ jighead perfectly marries the inshore and freshwater fishing worlds, offering what amounts to a freely swinging bullet weight on a heavy hook that increases lure action and hook-up ratio.

The SnakeLockZ is equally as effective when working cocahoes through coastal grasses as when bouncing worms or swimbaits through hydrilla mats on reservoirs or working craws around heavy wooden cover in the swamps.

The key is the streamlined, bullet-shaped head and weedless design. The SnakeLockZ is armed with beefed-up components including heavy-duty Mustad UltraPoint hooks and stainless through-wires, so the lure has the strength to muscle even the toughest fish to the boat.

Each hook features a molded lure keeper that locks plastics securely in place. When paired with any of the Z-Man ElaZtech plastics, the result is a lure that catches numbers of fish without needed to be re-pegged or replaced.

The lead head is engraved with the weight to make choosing just the right size for the job quick and easy.

The SnakeLockZ is available in 1/8-, 1/4- and 3/8-ounce sizes with 3/0, 4/0 or 5/0 hooks. A 3-pack retails for \$7.99.

More Info: www.zmanfishing.com

DAIWA LT SPINNING REELS

By Andy Crawford

Daiwa has introduced a full line of spinning reels designed to meet every angler's needs and budget.

With five reels, the LT (Light Tough) series is designed to provide rugged performance in smaller packages. LT reels offer smaller frames, larger gears and lighter weight to make fishing all day easier.

The Legalis, Excelled and Fuego models are composed of carbon light bodies, and even the 4000 bodies weigh just 8.4 ounces.

The Tatula and Ballistic LTs step up to Zaion bodies that are stronger than ordinary carbon bodies without sacrificing weight. The 4000-series Tatula weighs just 7.4 ounces, while the Ballistic LT's largest body (a 6000) tips the scales at just 11.1 ounces.

And the larger DigiGear drives on every LT reel offers the perfect combination of lightness and toughness.

Two models — the Ballistic and the Fuego — feature magsealed main shafts to provide superior saltwater performance.

The most impressive part of the entire line of reels is the cost — an angler can buy a Legalis LT for just \$69.

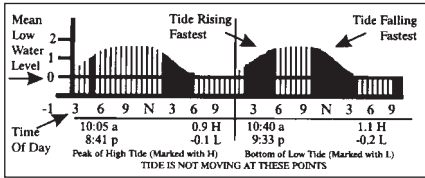
There are four other price points, ranging from \$79.99 to \$229.99, offering anglers a wide range of choices.

More Info: www.daiwa.com





IT'S NOT THE ENGINE, IT'S THE FUEL!
WWW.STARTRON.COM



How to use the **SPORTSMAN** Tide Guide

Fish feed most actively when the tide is moving. The Mississippi Sportsman has made it simple to spot the most active feeding periods each day in the TIDE GUIDE. Just fish those times indicated in black.

Be sure to visit our web site for more tide locations: <http://www.ms-sportsman.com>

Bay St. Louis Entrance

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 4:42 am 0.8 H 6:28 am 0.8 L 12:10 pm 1.1 H 9:47 pm 0.3 L	2 1:36 pm 1.4 H 11:02 pm 0.1 L	3 2:01 pm 1.5 H	4 12:12 am 0.0 L 2:32 pm 1.6 H	5 1:20 am 0.0 L 3:07 pm 1.6 H	6 2:26 am 0.0 L 3:47 pm 1.6 H	7 3:28 am 0.0 L 4:33 pm 1.6 H
8 4:25 am 0.0 L 5:28 pm 1.6 H	9 5:16 am 0.0 L 6:36 pm 1.5 H	10 5:59 am 0.1 L 8:05 pm 1.4 H	11 6:34 am 0.3 L 9:41 pm 1.4 H	12 6:59 am 0.4 L 11:13 pm 1.2 H	13 7:11 am 0.5 L 5:46 pm 0.8 L	14 12:47 am 1.1 H 10:2 pm 1.0 H 7:21 pm 0.7 L
15 2:42 am 1.0 H 12:44 pm 1.2 H 8:34 pm 0.4 L	16 12:48 pm 1.4 H 9:43 pm 0.3 L	17 1:08 pm 1.6 H 10:51 pm 0.0 L	18 1:39 pm 1.9 H	19 12:03 am -0.1 L 2:18 pm 2.0 H	20 1:16 am -0.3 L 3:03 pm 2.0 H	21 2:27 am -0.3 L 3:55 pm 2.0 H
22 3:35 am -0.3 L 4:52 pm 2.0 H	23 4:35 am -0.1 L 5:58 pm 1.8 H	24 5:27 am 0.0 L 7:26 pm 1.5 H	25 6:07 am 0.3 L 9:42 pm 1.4 H	26 6:27 am 0.5 L 2:49 pm 1.0 L 6:16 pm 1.0 L	27 12:18 am 1.1 H 6:10 am 0.8 L 7:43 pm 0.7 L	28 12:10 pm 1.4 H 8:44 pm 0.4 L
29 12:11 pm 1.6 H 9:36 pm 0.3 L	30 12:27 pm 1.8 H 10:23 pm 0.1 L					

Biloxi Cadet Point, Biloxi Bay

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 3:29 am 0.8 H 5:01 am 0.8 L 12:10 pm 1.1 H 8:20 pm 0.3 L	2 12:23 pm 1.4 H 9:35 pm 0.1 L	3 12:48 pm 1.5 H 10:45 pm 0.0 L	4 1:19 pm 1.7 H 11:53 pm 0.0 L	5 1:54 pm 1.7 H	6 12:59 am 0.0 L 2:34 pm 1.7 H	7 2:01 am 0.0 L 3:20 pm 1.7 H
8 2:58 am 0.0 L 4:15 pm 1.7 H	9 3:49 am 0.0 L 5:25 pm 1.5 H	10 4:32 am 0.1 L 6:52 pm 1.4 H	11 5:07 am 0.3 L 8:28 pm 1.4 H	12 5:32 am 0.4 L 10:00 pm 1.2 H	13 5:44 am 0.6 L 4:19 pm 0.8 L 11:34 pm 1.1 H	14 5:35 am 0.8 L 11:49 am 1.0 H 5:54 pm 0.7 L
15 1:29 am 1.0 H 11:31 am 1.2 H 7:07 pm 0.4 L	16 11:35 am 1.4 H 8:16 pm 0.3 L	17 11:55 am 1.7 H 9:24 pm 0.0 L	18 12:26 pm 1.9 H 10:36 pm -0.1 L	19 1:05 pm 2.1 H 11:49 pm -0.3 L	20 1:50 pm 2.1 H	21 1:00 am -0.3 L 2:42 pm 2.1 H
22 2:08 am -0.3 L 3:39 pm 2.1 H	23 3:08 am -0.1 L 4:45 pm 1.8 H	24 4:00 am 0.0 L 6:13 pm 1.5 H	25 4:40 am 0.3 L 8:29 pm 1.4 H	26 5:00 am 0.6 L 10:36 pm 1.1 H	27 4:43 am 0.8 L 11:28 am 1.1 H 6:16 pm 0.7 L	28 10:57 am 1.4 H 7:17 pm 0.4 L
29 10:58 am 1.7 H 8:09 pm 0.3 L	30 11:14 am 1.8 H 8:56 pm 0.1 L					

Horn Island Mississippi Sound

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 2:00 am 1.0 H 6:37 am 0.8 L 11:03 am 1.1 H 7:28 pm 0.3 L	2 11:27 am 1.3 H 8:14 pm 0.2 L	3 11:57 am 1.5 H 8:56 pm 0.1 L	4 12:34 pm 1.6 H 9:42 pm 0.1 L	5 1:20 pm 1.6 H 10:47 pm 0.2 L	6 2:13 pm 1.6 H	7 12:22 am 0.2 L 3:05 pm 1.6 H
8 1:27 am 0.2 L 3:57 pm 1.5 H	9 2:21 am 0.2 L 4:50 pm 1.5 H	10 3:19 am 0.3 L 5:44 pm 1.4 H	11 4:19 am 0.3 L 6:45 pm 1.2 H	12 5:03 am 0.4 L 10:49 pm 1.1 H	13 5:32 am 0.5 L 4:25 pm 0.7 L 11:46 pm 1.1 H	14 5:54 am 0.7 L 5:46 pm 0.5 L
15 1:14 am 1.0 H 6:13 am 0.8 L 10:36 am 1.1 H 6:52 pm 0.3 L	16 4:13 am 1.0 H 6:25 am 1.0 L 10:51 am 1.3 H 7:44 pm 0.1 L	17 11:15 am 1.5 H 8:30 pm -0.1 L	18 11:46 am 1.7 H 9:18 pm -0.2 L	19 12:24 pm 1.8 H 10:17 pm -0.2 L	20 1:14 pm 1.9 H 11:50 pm -0.2 L	21 2:12 pm 1.9 H
22 1:06 am -0.1 L 3:09 pm 1.8 H	23 1:56 am 0.0 L 4:03 pm 1.7 H	24 2:38 am 0.1 L 4:57 pm 1.5 H	25 3:08 am 0.3 L 5:51 pm 1.2 H	26 3:28 am 0.5 L 11:48 am 0.9 H 3:01 pm 0.8 L 10:53 pm 1.0 H	27 3:44 am 0.7 L 11:12 am 1.0 H 4:41 pm 0.6 L	28 12:10 am 0.9 H 3:55 am 0.8 L 10:43 am 1.1 H 6:10 pm 0.4 L
29 10:08 am 1.3 H 7:06 pm 0.2 L	30 10:30 am 1.5 H 7:44 pm 0.0 L					

Pascagoula Point Mississippi Sound

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 2:24 am 0.9 H 6:01 am 0.8 L 10:38 am 1.0 H 7:01 pm 0.3 L	2 11:10 am 1.2 H 7:59 pm 0.2 L	3 11:47 am 1.3 H 8:54 pm 0.2 L	4 12:33 pm 1.4 H 9:54 pm 0.2 L	5 1:23 pm 1.5 H 11:10 pm 0.2 L	6 2:09 pm 1.5 H	7 12:22 am 0.2 L 2:51 pm 1.5 H
8 1:27 am 0.2 L 3:37 pm 1.4 H	9 2:53 am 0.2 L 4:45 pm 1.3 H	10 4:40 am 0.3 L 6:14 pm 1.2 H	11 5:09 am 0.3 L 7:32 pm 1.2 H	12 5:27 am 0.4 L 10:15 pm 1.1 H	13 5:04 am 0.5 L 11:41 am 0.7 H 4:19 pm 0.6 L 11:43 pm 1.0 H	14 5:14 am 0.6 L 9:45 am 0.8 H 5:19 pm 0.4 L
15 1:27 am 1.0 H 5:33 am 0.8 L 10:06 am 1.0 H 6:16 pm 0.2 L	16 3:13 am 1.0 H 5:44 am 0.9 L 10:33 am 1.2 H 7:16 pm 0.1 L	17 11:03 am 1.4 H 8:18 pm -0.1 L	18 11:40 am 1.6 H 9:24 pm -0.1 L	19 12:29 pm 1.7 H 10:53 pm -0.2 L	20 1:25 pm 1.7 H	21 12:17 am -0.2 L 2:15 pm 1.7 H
22 1:20 am -0.1 L 3:01 pm 1.6 H	23 2:38 am 0.0 L 3:48 pm 1.5 H	24 3:53 am 0.1 L 5:06 pm 1.2 H	25 4:37 am 0.3 L 6:48 pm 1.0 H	26 4:58 am 0.5 L 11:08 am 0.8 H 3:20 pm 0.7 L 10:48 pm 0.9 H	27 3:55 am 0.7 L 10:50 am 0.9 H 5:06 pm 0.5 L	28 5:55 pm 0.3 L
29 9:31 am 1.3 H 6:39 pm 0.2 L	30 10:01 am 1.4 H 7:23 pm 0.1 L					

SAVINGS ARE ALWAYS IN SEASON.

EQUINOX & DRI BALANCE SERIES STARTING AT \$19.99

ONLINE ONLY



ENGINEERED for MAXIMUM COMFORT

- Quick Dry Moisture Support
- UPF 25+ Sun Protection
- Odor Control
- Lightweight



SPORTSMANGEAR.COM

More colors & options available online

ADVERTISERS INDEX

B'N'M POLE COMPANY	39	FIRST SOUTH FARM CREDIT	92	RJ'S OUTBOARD SALES & SERVICE.....	65
BARNETT'S BODY SHOP	80	FRED NETTERVILLE LUMBER.....	73	SEVEN C'S MARINE.....	38
BEN NELSON GOLF AND OUTDOOR.....	3	GATOR TRAX	19	SOUTHERN EXPOSURE INLAND FISHING	
BERRYLAND CAMPERS.....	42	GEICO - SPECIAL MARKETING	11	CHARTERS	40
BOBBY LYNN'S MARINA	34	GIBSON REALTY/UNITED COUNTRY	29	STAR BRITE, INC	69
BROOKHAVEN HONDA	56	GULF SHORES AND ORANGE BEACH TOURISM	77	STIHL SOUTHWEST	23, 34
BRYAN'S MARINE	40	H&R AGRI-POWER	67	VAN'S OUTDOORS	91
CAROLINA COMPOSITES, LLC.....	83	HOBIE CAT	71	WHITETAIL PROPERTIES	27
COLUMBIA SPORTSWEAR CO.	41	JEFF REGISTER BUILDING & TRUSS.....	18	WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS INC.	18
CRAIN TRACTOR	33	K2 MARINE	53	WILEY X.....	54, 55
CUSTOM MAPPING SERVICE	70	LIVE TARGET	63	YAMAHA MOTOR COMPANY.....	5
CYPRESS COVE BOATING.....	10	MARINE LIFT AND DOCK SUPPLY COMPANY.....	85	YO-ZURI.....	15
DEER VIEW WINDOWS CO.	67	NAUTIC STAR BOATS.....	9		
DIXIE RV	24	PARISH TRACTOR.....	61		
DOCKSIDE MARINE.....	46	P-LINE /G. PUCCI & SONS.....	79		
EMMETT'S MARINE.....	47	PURE FISHING	45, 81		
ENVIRON METAL, INC.....	21	REED'S METALS, INC.....	2		

Get decked out in the latest from the **SPORTSMAN** Store48, 89

Subscribe Today and SAVE76

CLASSIFIEDS

Display Ads

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

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

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

REAL ESTATE

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

Peel & Stick



SPORTSMANGear.com
 or 866-616-3315

Top It Off!

SPORTSMANGear.com
 or 866-616-3315



HELP WANTED

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

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

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

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

Mississippi
SPORTSMAN

SAVE \$15

GOBBSTOPPER COMBO
FEB. 1 - APR. 30



SEE BACK FOR CONDITIONS



2 Locations to serve you!

777 Hwy 468
Brandon, MS 39042
601.825.9087

2045 County Road 222
Cullman, AL 35057
256.775.4031

www.vansoutdoors.com

Follow us on 



Let's share.



As a financial cooperative, First South Farm Credit shares profits among our borrowers. In fact, our borrowers will receive their share of \$17.1 million in refunds in 2018 alone.

So if you're a First South customer, thank you for your patronage and loyalty throughout the years. If you're not, simply call on us when you're ready to buy that special piece of land or farm—and you can start sharing in our success as well. We've written checks for \$355 million over the last 23 years!

Contact us today to learn more about how we can help you finance your land or farm in Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi.



Your Rural Lender | FIRSTSOUTHLAND.COM | 800-955-1722



First South
Farm Credit