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MISSISSIPPI'S BUCKETMOUTH
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18
TURN THE
SPRING RED



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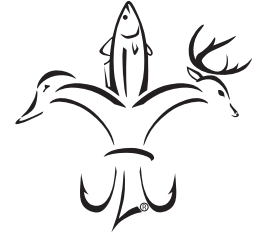
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Mississippi
SPORTSMAN
www.MS-SPORTSMAN.com

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

P.O. Box 1199, Boutte, LA 70039-1199
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Volume 23 | No 5

ON THE COVER:



Big or small, the Biloxi Marsh is full of redfish in May as they relocate to match rising water temperatures, feeding all the while.
 Photo by Bobby Cleveland.



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Outdoor UPDATE with Bobby Cleveland



A nice largemouth bass explodes through the surface, inhaling a topwater plug.



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.

FISHING TAKES OVER THIS MONTH BASS, BREAM, REDS AND SPECKS: MAY IS A RICH MONTH FOR ANGLERS

Despite a limited amount of hunting opportunity — one day of turkey season and 15 days of spring squirrel season — May truly is an excellent month to be a Mississippi sportsman and a great time to have this issue of *Mississippi Sportsman* magazine.

For example, the fifth month is full of exciting topwater bass action in the Magnolia State. Few scenes in fishing can match the exhilaration generated by a largemouth bass blowing up on a surface lure, and writer Mike Giles offers us a look into one of the oldest styles of topwater baits. Propeller baits elicit some of the most powerful strikes in the sports and Giles gives expert tips on how, when and where to throw those plugs in Mississippi.

In another feature, writer David Hawkins takes us around the state to find the hottest largemouth bass lakes. Use his story to help plan trips to enjoy some productive waters this year.

Mississippi's most sought-after gamefish is much smaller, but arguably the best eating: bream. Bluegills and a few other pan-fish species will bed on the full and new moons in May, again in June and every other summer month. When bream bed, they are extremely vulnerable, but there's another natural phenomenon that will produce even faster action, especially for a fly fisherman. It's a Mayfly hatch, when the favorite winged prey of bluegills appears from the depths to begin a short, 24-hour life span. Writer Phillip Gentry offers expert tips on how to turn such a hatch into a limit of bluegill.

We're not overlooking coastal fishermen either, as one of Mississippi's top Gulf Coast charter captains discusses the many ways he finds and catches redfish in the waters connected to the Mississippi Sound. Whether you're seeking reds to eat, called slot reds, or looking to battle monsters, called bull reds, May is the last good month to find them before the fall season.

This issue of *Mississippi Sportsman* offers all those fact-filled features and more. Read, enjoy and learn, and then get out on the water and catch some memories. ■



Kathrine Brumfield killed this double-bearded gobbler on April 2 near Summit.

Mississippi frog hunters are allowed 25 frogs per night from April 1 through Sept. 30.

WHO GIVES A HOP? FROG HUNTERS!

Once Mississippi's spring turkey season ends on May 1, besides the spring squirrel season, the next legal gun season will be the July 1 opening of the early raccoon season.

Of course, wild hogs remain legal to harvest since there is no set season on the nuisance animals. There is no limit, either daily or seasonal, and hunting is allowed 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

But sportsmen can get a jump on another season. The 2021 frog season opened April 1 and will continue through Sept. 30. The limit is 25 per person per night. Reports of early success were above average, including one party that posted a great story on Facebook.

"We grabbed nearly 50 bullfrogs per boat. We had some trophy legs each of the first three nights," said Billy White of Grenada. "The season opened on a Thursday, and we turned it into a long-weekend frog party. We have a lot of natural sloughs on different properties over in the Delta, and we had three boats, two guys to the boat. We grabbed every frog by hand and spent the rest of each night skinning frogs.

"We had 380 sets of legs by the time we stopped cleaning on Sunday morning. We cooked about a third of the legs for Easter lunch, and it was fun."

White said the rest were vacuumed-sealed and frozen.

"They better last a while, because we pretty much took all we need to take off those sloughs," he said. "It might be another two years before we have a weekend like that. As cool as it was, they were croaking. By the third night, it wasn't near as loud as it had been on Thursday. We're looking for more places." ■



ONLY ONE BILL PASSES

Despite a bill passing through both the House and the Senate in Jackson to allow the use of air guns, air bows and some pre-charged pneumatic weapons, they will remain illegal in Mississippi for at least another year.

When the appointed conferees failed to reach a compromise on the matter, Senate Bill 2035 died in a conference committee.

Only one bill related to outdoor sports passed both chambers and was signed into law by Gov. Tate Reeves. That bill, House Bill 382, authorizes the Mississippi Commission on Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks to require chronic wasting disease (CWD) testing on any deer within an enclosure (deer pen, high-fenced areas) that dies for any reason other than by hunter harvest. The bill also forbids the Commission from establishing a CWD Management Zone within a five-mile radius of any enclosure where CWD is found until there is a verified case of CWD identified in a deer within that 5-mile area.

The bill also changes current law to require a minimum of one hunter-harvested deer per every 200 acres of enclosed land to be tested for CWD. ■

LAKE MARY CRAWFORD SET TO REOPEN

Fishermen will soon have access again to one of the state's storied hot spots when the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks, reopens one of the crown jewels of its state lakes system in May.

Lake Mary Crawford at Monticello is tentatively scheduled for a youth-only opening at 7 a.m. on Saturday, May 22. It will be open to all fishermen at 6 a.m. on Wednesday, May 26.

The 128-acre lake has been closed since 2018 for renovation, including replacing the water-control structure and restocking.

"It's great to get that lake back," said James Thomas, who lives in Lawrence County about 10 miles from the lake. "Mary Crawford was always one of the best bluegill and bream lakes in the area, if not the state or country. I've been fishing there for so long, and I can't begin to tell you how many bream me and my family have eaten that came out of that lake."

Once known as a fly-fisherman's dream for its bedding bream, Thomas said it was a year-round hot spot, no matter the bait.

"I never fooled around much with a fly rod because I was

catching them so fast on a cricket or a worm," he said. "I tried it a few times with (Jim Foerste, former lake manager), and he could sure catch them on a fly when they were bedding in April and May, maybe June. But he wasn't catching them as fast as I could on a cricket and a light spinning rod, and the rest of the year, I was hammering them on the bottom in 6 to 8 feet on worms.

"I sure hope when it opens back up it comes back strong on bream like it has always had been, and I hope all my old hot spots are still hot."

According to MDWFP, the lake will open with these limits:

Largemouth bass: 10 per angler per day with a 16-inch to 22-inch slot limit. All bass between 16 and 22 inches must be released immediately, and only one of the 10 fish kept per day can exceed 22 inches.

Bluegill and redear sunfish: A total of 25 in combination per angler per day.

Crappie: 15 per angler per day.

Catfish: 10 per angler per day. ■

ALLIGATOR APPLICATION PERIOD WILL OPEN JUNE 1

Although the Mississippi Commission on Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks has not taken final action on the 2021 public waters alligator season, the proposals approved in March show a total of 960 permits available through a draw.

Ricky Flynt, the program coordinator for the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks, said no major changes are proposed for the 2021 season; the application process is scheduled to begin at 10 a.m. on June 1 and last through 10 a.m. on June 8, with an electronic draw to take place on or about June 14.

To be eligible, applicants must be residents of Mississippi, at least 16 years old, who possess either a valid Sportsman License, All-Game Hunting/Fishing License, Small Game Hunting/Fishing License, Apprentice Sportsman License, Apprentice All Game License, Apprentice Small Game License, Senior Exempt License, Disabled Exempt License, or a Lifetime License.

Applications are free, but there is a processing fee of between \$2.29 to \$2.34, depending on purchasing method. Only a credit or debit card will be accepted for online applications. Applicants can apply only once and in only one zone.

The 960 permits are divided thusly:

Northwest Zone: 40.

Northeast Zone: 130.

West Central Zone: 190.

Pearl River/Barnett Reservoir: 100.

Southwest: 190.

South Central: 150.

Southeast: 160. ■



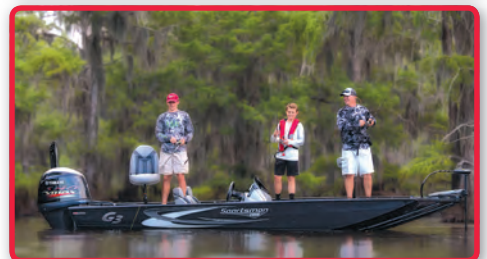
Mississippi alligator hunters will have 960 permits available for the 2021 season.

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Hunting/Fishing SCRAPBOOK



Lisa and Kate Fortner

Lisa and Kate Fortner both killed a deer on the same afternoon while hunting in south Marion County on Dec. 29, 2020. Lisa's doe was 7½ years old and Kate's 8-point was 4½ years old.



Jenna Ingram

Jenna Ingram, 8, killed her biggest deer to date, a nice 8-pointer, on Jan. 14 in Leake County.

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Abram Duhon

Abram Duhon, 9, of Meaux, La., with his biggest buck to date, a 188-pound, 6½-year-old buck that scored 130. It was killed in Port Gibson.



Donald Wagers

Donald Wagers, aka Wage Rage Fishing Team on Facebook, was sheepshead fishing in Bay Saint Louis when he landed this convict fish.

GOT PICS? We want 'em

Email images to: images@ms-sportsman.com

All images will be considered, but those taken on the water or in the woods will have the best chance of being featured.

*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.

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MERIDIAN PASTOR GETS 51ST TURKEY IN 53RD YEAR OF HUNTING GOBBLERS

In By Mike Giles his younger days, Allen Shortridge cut his teeth hunting in the mountains of West Virginia and later in Florida. It was later in life, however, when he became an avid turkey hunter, and he's become very successful at calling up and harvesting tough eastern Wild Turkeys.

On March 19, 2021, Shortridge, a 75-year-old pastor who lives in Meridian, was back in the woods before daylight, hoping to notch a victory over a particular Lauderdale County gobbler that had eluded him on a couple of occasions.

But no more. Shortridge tagged the 20-pound gobbler, which sported a 12-inch beard and 1-inch spurs — the 51st of his 53-year turkey hunting career.

"I got into the woods before daylight and didn't hear any gobblers early," Shortridge said. "It was really overcast and cold, and I was really dejected and discouraged, because I'd called up four longbeards since the season opened but had not yet been able to score."

With nothing to lose, Shortridge decided to call again.

"I tried my little slate and didn't hear a peep," Shortridge said. "I followed up the slate with a Primos Will 1 mouth call and really bore down on it. I believe in aggressive calling when needed, so I ratcheted up the volume with a series of raspy calls, and everything broke lose then."

Shortly after Shortridge ramped up his

calling, two or three hens came running and things were really heating up.

"I looked to my right behind the hens and saw wings flapping and realized a gobbler was mating a hen, and beyond him, another gobbler was coming in," he said. "The hen came right into range, with both gobblers following in full strut."

ONE WRONG MOVE

The gobblers made a semi-circle and strutted right into shotgun range. Both gobblers were trophies, and Shortridge was ready for them to make a wrong move.

"That gobbler finally got close enough, and I wasn't going to wait any longer, so I took a fine bead on him and slowly squeezed the trigger," said Shortridge, who was carrying a Browning Gold Hunter shotgun with a Super Full turkey choke loaded with Federal 3rd Degree shells.

"Boom!"

Shortridge's shotgun roared, and the turkey collapsed in a heap.

TOUGH HOMBRES

"I've been preaching for 55 years and

Allen Shortridge of Meridian started his 53rd turkey season off with a bang by harvesting a trophy gobbler that had a 12-inch beard, 1-inch spurs and weighed in at nearly 20-pounds.



hunting turkeys since 1968," he said. "I've hunted in several states in this country, and I can tell you that the eastern-strain birds we have here in Mississippi and Lauderdale County are by far the toughest gobblers to hunt and harvest."

One of the things Shortridge knows about turkeys is that they are prone to act different every day. No matter what you think they're going to do, they may do the opposite.

"The reason we can't predict what a turkey is going to do is that they don't even know what they are going to do themselves," Shortridge said. "You've just got to learn the land you're hunting as well as where the turkeys like to roost and where there strutting zone is." ■

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Justin Hutton's Madison County unique gobbler carried a 9½-inch beard and half-inch spurs.

MADISON HUNTER CASHES IN ON RARE BIRD WITH RED-SMOKE COLORATION



Photos courtesy Matt Harrison

Jy Dan Kibler
Justin Hutton of Madison readily admits that he didn't know what he had the morning of March 19 at about 7 o'clock, until he raced over to a gobbler that was flopping on the ground.

"I looked at him, and I thought, 'What in the world have I just killed?'" Hutton said. "I didn't realize how special that bird was until then. I jumped on him and was trying to keep him from flopping around, to keep all his feathers intact."

What Hutton had was perhaps the rarest of the rare: a turkey with plumage that combines two very uncommon color patterns: red-phase and smoke-phase.

Wild turkeys usually come in basic black, but four unusual color phases can show up from time to time:

- **Smoke.** The turkey's plumage is basically gray and silver to white on a black background.
- **Melanistic.** The turkey is completely black, with none of the beautiful chestnut or tan colors usually present on the feathers.
- **Red.** The turkey's plumage has a red tint instead of black, aka cinnamon-phase.
- **Albino.** Completely white. The most-rare color phase, because it's a true genetic anomaly.

Hutton's bird has the coloration of a red-phase bird, but on a background of grey. It carried a 9½-inch beard and half-inch spurs and was killed on his hunt club in Madison County.

HOW RARE IS IT?

The odds on killing such an unusual turkey: maybe 1 in 10,000. Smoke-phase birds comprise 1% of all turkeys. Red-phase birds are much less common. The combination? Maybe the most unusual.

"When I called the bird in to report it to MDWFP (Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks), I talked to a biologist, and he said it was a red-phase turkey with a hint of smoke-phase. He told me that most of the time when you come across a turkey with a different color phase, it's usually a hen," Hutton said.

The unique gobbler was one of four that Hutton had strutting, drumming and spitting at 30 yards through a thicket. He was really set on taking the lead bird, but it never got to a spot where he had a clean shot. He had noticed that one of the three birds that were following the lead bird had "a lot of white on his wings" but took that to be just a particular reflection of the sun.

"The first one, when I saw him, he was at 100 yards, and then I saw the others behind him. All of the sudden, they got to 35 or 40 yards in just 5 or 6 seconds, like they were running," he said.

"I could see four birds all in a full strut at 35 yards, and I've got my gun across my lap. The first bird had a pretty good beard, and following him were the other three, about 10 yards behind."

NOT HIS CHOSEN VICTIM

The undergrowth was thick enough for Hutton to get his gun to his shoulder and wait for a good shot. He planned on taking the lead bird.

"I knew that one looked different, but I was so focused on shooting the other bird," Hutton said. "But the first bird didn't give me a shot, and this one stepped out and gave me a shot."

Hutton dropped the gobbler with a load of Winchester Long Beard XRs from his 12-gauge Beretta A300, fitted with an Indian Creek choke.

"The place I was hunting was so thick, I took the XRs instead of TSS shells because I knew if I had a shot, it would be close, and I didn't want to shoot a pattern so tight at 30 yards."

Hutton took great care of the gobbler once he had it on the ground, even spreading out on the back seat of his truck to protect the feathers. He's having John Beard of Birds Only Taxidermy in Dickson, Tenn., mount the bird in a full strut. ■

On March 19, Justin Hutton of Madison killed a turkey with plumage that combines two very uncommon color patterns: red- and smoke-phase.



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READER REPORT

GOOD ADVICE TURNS INTO BIG 8-POINT FOR HINDS COUNTY HUNTER

By Kiel May

I was hunting family land about three-quarters of a mile from the Big Black River in Hinds County on Dec. 30, and I decided that morning to hunt a stand that covered a bottom with a spring-fed ditch at the end of the food plot. I was going to get down around 9 o'clock, because I had to work that day, but I figured with the rut on, I might see something early and end up a little late for work. The day had other plans for me, though.

At 7:49, one of my co-workers texted me about a COVID case on site; he needed me to text some contractors to tell them to stay out of that area. As I was texting, I looked up and saw a big deer crossing a shooting lane at about 190 yards. I couldn't tell anything about him other than he was worth getting my rifle, not my binoculars, but by the time I got the gun up, the buck was gone.

I sent a text to my cousin, and he gave me the best advice I could have gotten: he reminded me about the layout of the property. The ditch at the back of the lane is fed by a spring further back in our property, and we have a stand overlooking the bottom where the spring is. He told me that if the deer was following the ditch, he had about 700 yards to go, through some thick underbrush, but I only had about 200 yards to go to get in that other stand, and I could probably get there ahead of the buck, so I climbed down and headed that way.

THE RIGHT CALL

Two minutes after I got into the other stand, a doe crossed the bottom, and I could hear something crashing through the woods behind her. As soon as he stepped out, I bleated at him to get him to stop and put the crosshairs on him. All I remember



before the shot is seeing the back side of his rack as he looked away from me and thinking, "Dang, his head looks like a basketball hoop." Right as he started to take a step, I burned powder. I shot right at 8:13.

I wasn't sure about my shot, so I went back to the camp to wait on my cousin to finish hunting and bring his blood-trailing dog, Gunner. Turns out, I didn't need to wait. We got down to where he was, and there was blood and hair all over the water. The deer went about 30 yards and got his rack tangled up in a small tree. The shot was perfect, behind the front shoulder, in and out, double lung, with my Ruger M77 in .270, shooting 130-grain Federal Power Shok bullets.



Kiel May killed this trophy 8-point on family land in Hinds County on Dec. 30.

A GIANT BUCK

What a rack the deer carried. It was a main-frame 8-pointer with a ninth point that I didn't know whether it would be long enough to be scored. It had a 23½-inch inside spread, 25⅝-inch main beams, 6-inch bases with mass that carries out to 4½ inches at the last measurement. We green-scored him at the camp at 165⅘, and I took him to be scored for the US 96 Big Buck bounty for an "official" green score of 164⅘. The official scorer said the ninth point was just scoreable at 1 inch.

I'm not sure where he will place in the state record books, but for a main-frame 8-pointer, he's huge. He's the fifth buck I've ever killed, and he's definitely my biggest. I was shaking after I shot; my cousin said it's probably a good thing I didn't have time to

look at him, cause buck fever would have made me mess it up.

We didn't have a single photo of this buck on any of our trail cameras. We usually have a couple of pictures of good bucks every year, and we end up seeing tailgate pictures the neighbors send us of the deer killed on their place. It was real nice to be able to return the favor and let them look at tailgate pictures this year, especially on one as nice as this.

I'll be taking him to get officially scored after the 60-day drying period. I've been told there is a chance he'll go down as one of the top 5 8-pointers ever killed in Mississippi, possibly the biggest. But even if he isn't, he's the a heck of a trophy. Brent Opdyke of Opdyke Taxidermy in Brookhaven is doing the mount. ■



TURN THE

By Bobby Cleveland

SPRING RED

BILOXI MARSH IS A REDFISH HOTSPOT IN MAY, AFTER FISH MOVE IN, BEFORE THE HEAT MOVES THEM BACK OUT. HERE'S HOW A GULF CAPTAIN FINDS THEM AND PUTS THEM IN THE BOAT.

OUR FISH BOX WAS CROWDED WITH SPECKLED TROUT

by 9 a.m., proving that Capt. Kenny Shiyou had made the right call, one he pitched at us at sunrise in the calm waters of Pass Christian Harbor before we hit the Gulf on a cool May morning.

"Guys," he said, "I know you came down here wanting to chase redfish, and if you will indulge me, I think we will have time to get a bunch of reds, but we need to hit the speckled trout for the first couple of hours. We can fill the box with specks and have plenty of time left to get on the reds."

"All you have to tell me is what kind of reds you want to chase. Do you want to catch reds you can take home and eat, or do you want to catch reds that will try to pull you right out of the boat?"

His confidence, shared by other captains of the multi-boat operation that is Shore Thing Charters of Ocean Springs, was inspiring. We took the bait.

At 8:45, what had been an outstanding speck bite, with one bite seemingly right after another, ebbed as quickly as the tidal current. After 15 minutes without a bite, Shiyou pulled the anchors and told us to get where we wanted to be for a 30-min-

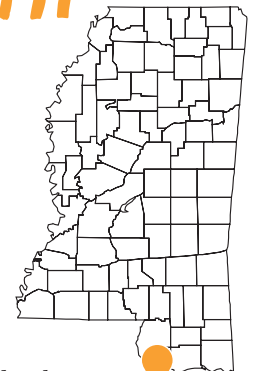
ute run and hold on.

"You want redfish? We'll go find redfish," he said.

As he steered his boat south, deeper into the Biloxi Marsh at the west end of the Mississippi Sound, Shiyou explained his strategy.

It was a page right out of his May playbook.

"May is the time of the year (when) you really can see and feel the water beginning to warm more quickly during the course of a day," he said. "That has an impact on fishing almost as much as the tides. It is the last month we have before it gets really tough over the summer where redfish are concerned."



Biloxi Marsh

The Biloxi Marsh, in May, holds whatever kind of redfish you want to target, from slot-sized keepers like this one to bulls.



Summer can be brutal on redfish anglers, especially in the Mississippi Sound and connected areas like the Biloxi Marsh. Temperatures, biting flies and gnats can be treacherous without wind, and the redfish can disappear as they seek cooler water. May is the last, best chance to slam the slot reds until the fall, when they return and provide the best action of the year.

“That’s why May is important for guys devoted to redfish,” Shiyou said. “The keeper fish are still plentiful in the bays, the sound and the marsh. The key to it, though, is the tide. I like a falling tide to fish for reds in May unless I’m after the bigger bull reds. Then, you just need some good water movement.”

Back to the strategy.

“Speckled trout bite early, but they don’t like the heat as much,” Shiyou said. “They are spawning throughout May. They spawn at night, feed heavily at sunrise and then rest. They generally peak at sunrise, and then it slows down after 8 and it shuts down around 9. It can be tough to get a bite, and that’s when you think redfish.

“If you got a (full-day) charter, that leaves us enough time to go get the reds,” he said. “They aren’t as impacted so much by the heat as they are the tide, and that’s when we start looking for a day when the tide starts falling in mid-morning or at noon and begins emptying the ponds and drains in the marsh.”

That’s an ideal situation, Shiyou said, because it puts the slot redfish that are legal to keep and great to eat— those fish between 18 and 30 inches in Mississippi and between 16 and 27

inches in Louisiana — in a vulnerable situation.

“A falling tide pulls them out of the shallow ponds and drains toward the deeper bayous or bays,” he said. “These can be drains so shallow you can’t get a boat in or out of, coming out of lakes or ponds in the marsh that you can’t fish on a low or falling tide. Just because you can’t get into a drain doesn’t mean they can’t.

“You just start hitting drains and fishing them until you find the hot spot. Or, you just hit as many spots as you can catching one here, two there or three over there until you get the limit.”

Finding hot spots like drains — cuts that create an avenue of travel from ponds in the marsh to the main bayous — is a never-ending process for Shiyou and all other coastal captains.

“I’m looking for drains that have shells, or I’m looking for a shell bed near a drain,” he said. “Those are prime grounds

““” *When Plan A goes wrong, you need a Plan B or Plan Bs, especially in this business.*

because bait like shrimp or small crabs stay around those shell bottoms to pick up meals hiding in the shells. The redfish come there for the shrimp, crabs or any small fish.

“The trouble is that the Gulf, the barrier islands and especially the Marsh, are constantly changing. Just because there were shells and redfish in a spot last year, or just last fall, doesn’t mean there will be shells or anything else that would hold redfish this year. So I’m always looking for shell beds and broken grass, even when I’m running. I never pass without checking a new spot, or at least I’m logging it into my memory so the next time I’m out, I can check it. It is amazing how many new good spots you can find, and you can’t have enough. There are a lot of days that your got-to spots may not be fishable because of

Look for bull redfish to be stacked up along the edge of current seams or breaks around the mouths of major creeks or bigger bayous.



Capt Kenny Shiyou likes to target slot-sized redfish on a late-morning falling tide outside of drains that empty the marsh.



conditions beyond your control, like wind or tide. When Plan A goes wrong, you need a Plan B or Plan Bs, especially in this business.”

Shiyou quit talking and began pointing to a break in the bank on the right side of the bayou we were cruising through. We could shells on the bank on both sides of the cut. Current was running out the small channel into the bayou.

Within five minutes we had a fat, 22-inch redfish in the boat and another hooked up and circling. Shiyou netted the first fish, rebaited the client’s hook and was ready with the net again when a 24-inch red came to the boat. He scooped up the redfish and broke into a broad smile.

“Oh, I love it when a plan goes off perfectly,” he said. The bite continued through three more stops and until 10 reds were in the boat at noon. All of them were between 20 and 26 inches and destined for the grill back home.

Shiyou had more good news: “Y’all got a couple of hours left. Want to try a bull red or two?”

Well, heck yeah!

Shiyou put the big engine to work, running back down the bayou toward the open water at the edge of the marsh. He was quickly talking again, describing the plan to catch bigger reds.

“We will try to find a major point in a big body of water, like a point at the mouth of a main bayou, or just a long point extended from the marsh,” he said. “We’re looking for one with a major flow, a big current line, running around the point. When you pull up to the point, if it’s right, you’ll see the current line. There may be a color change in the water or a small weed line, but there will be something that makes that current line stick out. Big bull redfish love current and will be sitting on the edge of that current line, looking for it to bring a meal by them.”



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. He can be reached at bobbyc7754@yahoo.com.

POP AND KNOCKIN'

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“We set up on the edge; I like to use a 6- to 8-inch mullet or white trout, or half a blue crab, top shell and all, for bait. We cast them out with a heavy sinker along the current line and either put the rod in a rod holder or just stand or sit there holding it. Big bulls are usually in schools, and when they come through, it can be entertaining. If there’s a bait in the area, they’re going to get it.”

Bull reds are fished most often purely for sport, since they aren’t that good to eat except in a courtbuillon — Cajun pronunciation cou-bi-on — and the Mississippi limit is only one per person per day as part of a limit of three redfish per day. While 20- and 30-pound bulls are the norm, fish up to 40 pounds are often caught. Bass tackle will give you a workout, but Shiyou suggests otherwise.

“We use the 3000-class reels on slot reds, but I recommend a 4000-class reel with 40-pound braid and 50-pound mono

leader,” he said. “You get a 20- or 30-pound fish in that current line, it takes more than a medium or medium-heavy trout rod to turn its head. And, besides, jack crevalle are well known to run those current lines, and that’s a 30-minute job on heavy gear. One thing about a jack: his last pull is just as hard as his first pull.”

Shiyou left the bayou on the east end of Biloxi Marsh and turned north toward home. About a mile up the marsh, he turned left and ran to a point on the edge of the grass line. A slight change in the color where the water ran around the point on the falling tide was immediately visible. It was the kind of current line he was seeking.

“We got an hour, so let’s get after them,” Shiyou said, handing out pieces of a blue crab that he had broken in half. “Bait up and try to get the crab right on this side of the current break.”

We managed, and he quickly added a live white trout that we had caught that morning. His cast was off the opposite side of the boat but right against the same current line. All our rods

went into rod holders, we opened a few cold beverages and sat back.

It took about 30 minutes before all hell broke loose.

Our two crab-baited lines went off within a second of each other, and our heavy action spinning rods were quickly doubled over, line peeling off each reel. Shiyou was yelling at us to grab them as we flew across the boat to do just that.

As we bowed up against the two big fish, Shiyou eased his rod out of his holder and was ready when the school of fish reached his bait on the other side of the boat.

“Poor white trout,” he said, “I wouldn’t want to be you.”

Bam! We were all hooked up, and the dance routine we did to get those redfish to the boat was both difficult and hilarious. We managed, and one by one, we released the fish without ever taking them out of the water. Our best guess was that all three were between 25 and 30 pounds.

It was work and nobody complained when Shiyou cranked the engine, pointed the bow at the reading for Pass Christian and showered down on the throttle.

Redfish in May in the Gulf?

Count me in. ■

Contact Capt. Kenny Shiyou at 228-493-5735 or Shore Thing Charters at 228-342-2295 or online at shorethingcharters.com.

May in the Mississippi Sound and Biloxi Marsh is a perfect time to target reds. The water is warming, but not too hot to cause fish to shut down.



Anglers in smaller boats can reach most of the places along Mississippi's Gulf Coast in May.

MAY REDS: BIG BOATS, LONG RUNS NOT REQUIRED

Even fishermen without a bay boat or other big watercraft can get in on some great redfish action on Mississippi's Gulf Coast.

"Some of my favorite few days of the year are any time in May that we have a really high, super tide," said Capt. Sonny Schindler of Ocean Springs' Shore Thing Charters. "That's when we can catch redfish like crazy in the (Bay of St. Louis). It's those days that I hate in the Biloxi Marsh because the high tide can make it impossible to get where the reds can get. They can get deep into areas of the marsh that a boat can't get."

"But the high water works for you in the Bay because it opens up the water enough where we can get a boat closer to the bank that we can normally get. We can get within reach of the shoreline where the redfish will be feeding."

Hence, anyone with a smaller boat can access the kind of redfish action that the bigger boats and charter boats find on a daily basis in the marsh. The same is true in the Back Bay Biloxi area and in the lower part of the Pascagoula River.

But that's not all.

"You can get the same kind of action in May and even June on the man-made jetties built with some of the BP oil-spill money," said Capt. Kenny Shiyou, also of Shore Thing Charters. "They've built a lot of those rock structures in Hancock County, all along



the shoreline, and you can see them out of the water. They were designed to encourage nature to rebuild the marsh in some areas. The breaks in those jetties where water moves in and out, man the redfish love those spots. A lot of them you can see from the bank." ■

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PROPPING UP POST-SPAWN BASS

■ By Mike Giles

BASS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN SUCKERS FOR TOPWATER LURES THAT CARRY PROPELLORS. AND THE TIME AFTER THE SPAWN CAN'T BE BEATEN FOR THIS KIND OF ACTION.

Curtis Laster cast a bream-colored Devil's Horse across a bream bed and started working it across the water's surface with a jerk-jerk-pause cadence. As he continued the rhythmic retrieve, the lure never made it past the bed. Jerk, jerk, pause. "Ka-Whoosh!"

A ravenous bass exploded through the surface, smashed the bait and headed toward deep water like a torpedo. After a short battle, Laster landed the post-spawn bass, and his thoughts drifted back to memories of his formative years.

Laster, a bass pro from Morton, cut his fishing teeth on Ross Barnett Reservoir and Roosevelt State Park Lake, fishing with his grandfather, Ellis Laster, and an uncle, Logan Laster. Like a lot of country boys, he relished the opportunity to go fishing any time he could.

"There was a policeman and angler in Morton by the name of Freddie Warren; he saw us fishing and knew what we were

catching, and he told us we were good enough to be fishing tournaments, we just needed a little bigger motor and a livewell to keep the fish alive," Laster said. "I didn't know I had what it took until my uncle bought an aluminum boat for my cousin and me to fish out of. We won the first tournament I entered at age 16, and we just went from there."

Laster learned a lot of basics on Ross Barnett, a lake that gets plenty of fishing pressure, fishing there with his uncle the 1980s.

POST-SPAWN BASS

“I learned about fishing topwater in a unique way,” Laster said. “We were fishing with my uncle Logan and catching bream on fly rods from a bream bed ... when the bass moved in and started feeding. My uncle started casting his Devil’s Horse across the beds, and we ended up catching about 15 bass in the 3- to 5-pound range, and I was hooked on bass fishing.”

While bream fishing was fun, it was nothing compared to the bone-crushing strikes from bass crunching topwater lures.

Laster learned lessons about catching big bass that have served him well, with many tournament wins over a lifetime of fishing.

“These days, I’ll key on post-spawn bass and bream beds from mid-April through May,” he said. “I like to use a Devil’s Horse

and a Boy Howdy. They will entice really vicious strikes around the bream beds, and it’s like clockwork every year.”

Post-spawn female bass are often lethargic from the rigors of the spawn, and they’re ready to feast and build up their energy, but they can’t usually chase fast-moving lures as well as they can later in the year, so they target easy marks: plucking fat bluegills from bream beds. That’s when the topwater propeller baits shine for Laster and many other anglers.

“When bass are feeding on bream, I’ll use the bream color and yellow perch-colored Devil’s Horse,” Laster said. “They are very effective colors, but when the shad spawn comes, I’ll switch to a chrome Boy Howdy and work that in areas where the shad are spawning.”

FIND BREEM BEDS, FIND BASS ➤

The author admires a post-spawn Mississippi largemouth that hit a topwater prop bait.



Propping up post-spawn bass

FIND BREAM BEDS, FIND BASS

Laster uses a Hummingbird Mega 360 unit to locate the bream beds; he can see the defined areas of the beds and the darker spots that are bass invading the beds.

“I like to start searching for beds in 3 to 5 feet of water closest to the first dropoff for post-spawners,” Laster said. “The post-spawners will suspend sometimes and wait for an easy meal to come by. I’ll also look for surface movement while scanning the 360 to determine exactly where the beds are located. If I see surface movement, it will usually be nervous bream, and that’s another sign that they’re bedding in the area.”

The bottom line is that you need to “read” the weather, the day, the time of day and the area to bring it all together. If Laster can find active beds when the time is right, he’ll have an opportunity to catch 4- to 7-pound bass in the vicinity.

Bigger may not always be better, but there are times, especially during the post spawn when bigger prop baits are like magnets to tired, hungry female bass. They just can’t resist an easy meal while they’re recuperating from the spawn.

Curtis Laster learned how to catch post-spawn bass quite by accident; his uncle showed him one day while they were fishing for bream with fly rods.



Terry Madewell

Topwater prop baits offer post-spawn bass the opportunity for a big meal without having to expend much energy. **BELOW:** The Devil's Horse is a decades-old prop bait that's still effective when it comes to drawing strikes from bass.

So many lures, so many choices. Sometimes it's hard for some anglers to determine what to throw, when and where, but when bass are actively feeding on bream or shad, it's an easy choice, and it should be for any angler who'll read the conditions and give the bass what they want.

In addition to the chrome Boy Howdy, the Devil's Horse also comes in chrome/white and is equally adept at drawing strikes from post-spawn bass under certain conditions. One of the older Devil's Horse lures is the King Snipe, a slightly shorter, fatter, version with slightly larger propellers that make for a different sound and action. It's pure death on lunker bass if you can find an original model.



TOPWATER EQUIPMENT

Although many anglers use longer rods all the time, Laster likes to use a slightly smaller rod fitted to him and the bass.

"I like a 6-foot-6 to 6-foot-8, medium rod that will really load up well and doesn't tear the hooks out," Laster said. "I prefer the Duckett Silverado and Micro Magic rods ... they fill the topwater bill for me.

"Longer, stiffer rods will often let the bass get leverage and tear the hooks from their mouths, and if that's happening, you should consider a lighter-action rod. It might just increase your strike-to-hookup ratio."

When it comes to topwater bass, monofilament is still the king. It is more buoyant and floats, while fluorocarbon and other lines sink. Laster wants his line to float on the surface so he can work topwater lures the way they were designed. Fish a topwater prop bait on fluorocarbon and then try it on mono. It's like the difference between daylight and dark.

"I like the 14- to 17-pound mono because it floats, keeps my line up so it won't sink and is tough enough to handle the violent strikes I get," Laster said. "If you're fishing in thick cover with lots of stumps and brush, you can use larger mono, just fit the conditions to the situation, and you'll be okay."



The Boy Howdy is another topwater prop bait that's deadly on post-spawn largemouth bass.



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

SINGLE PROP BAITS >

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SINGLE PROP BAITS

While many prop baits have front and back propellers, single-prop lures with a prop on the back of the lure also work. The Tiny Torpedo and Baby Torpedo are two that come to mind for Laster.

“My grandfather use to take us kids to Roosevelt State Park Lake; he fished a Tiny Torpedo, and he really whacked them,” Laster said. “He was using a 202 Zebco and really knew how to use it, and he consistently caught bass on that outfit while casting Tiny Torpedos. You can’t catch them like that now, but back then we did, and it really helped lay the groundwork for my topwater fishing later on.” ■



The Tiny Torpedo is a smallish, bullet-shaped topwater bait with a single propeller on the tail that's been catching bass for years.

Terry Madewell



COVERING COVER

Joel Ross of Brandon is a regular tournament-winning competitor who also likes to fish topwater prop baits in the post-spawn.

"Prop baits can be worked slow and methodical next to cover or along the sides of docks for great topwater strikes," Ross said. "When you have a chop on the water surface, a ripping cadence will trigger some explosive strikes in open water. If the water is slick, use a slow twitch for a very subtle presentation. This presentation also works well around hard edges of vegetation as well as around wood."

Ross also likes to fish around bream beds in late spring because bass will be feeding and cruising and will explode on the bait using a subtle presentation.

"In clear water, a large prop bait works well over standing timber," Ross said. "It may surprise you how deep you can pull a fish from with a steady, fast retrieve over the timber. Make multiple casts on the same line to get the fish to come up and eat."

"I'd recommend always having a prop bait tied on for exciting topwater bites year-round as well," Ross said. ■

Propellor baits work great when cast around visible cover; they'll draw explosive strikes from lurking bass.



SALTWATER

STATE COASTAL WATERS REGULATIONS (0 - 3 miles)

FISH SPECIES	Minimum Lengths	Creel Limit (per person)
Greater amberjack	34" FL	1/day
Blue marlin	99" LJFL	no limit
White marlin	66" LJFL	no limit
Sailfish	63" LJFL	no limit
Sharks (large coastal/pelagic)@	37" TL*	1/day or 3/boat
Sharks@	37" TL*	1/day, 3/vessel
Cobia	36" FL	2 per day
Redfish (red drum)	18" minimum 30" maximum TL	3/day (1 over 30")
Flounder (state waters)	12" TL	15/day
Grouper (black and gag)	24" TL@	4/day aggregate
Hogfish	12" FL@	5/day
Red, yellowfin grouper	20" TL@	4/day
Scamp grouper	16" TL@	4/day
Speckled hind/Warsaw grouper	no minimum@	1/day each
Gray/schoolmaster/cubera/ mahogany/yellowtail/dog snapper	12" TL@	5/day aggregate
Mutton snapper	18" TL@	10/day
Queen/blackfin/silk/winchman snapper	none@	5/day aggregate
Vermillion/lane snapper	10"/8" TL@	20/day aggregate
Gray triggerfish	15" FL@	1/day
Golden/blueline/anchor/blackline tilefish	none@	20/day
King mackerel	24" FL@	2/day
Spanish mackerel	12" FL@	15/day
Yellowfin tuna	27" CFL@	3/day
Bigeye tuna	27" CFL@	no limit
Tripletail	18" TL	3/day
Spotted sea trout (speckled)	15"	15/day

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

FRESHWATER

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

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

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

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

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

* Possession of certain species of sharks is prohibited.



M

ississippi is blessed with state lakes, state-park lakes, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers lakes, U.S. Forest Service

Lakes, flood-control lakes, a few rivers and streams and countless ponds that are stocked with bass.

The numbers can be mind-boggling.

All state-controlled lakes received an initial stocking of bass, aka largemouth bass, with a few bodies getting the fast-growing and sought-after Florida-strain bass. So bass fishing in the Magnolia State, as a whole, has never been better. After a year of pandemic woes, job layoffs, mask requirements and a myriad of other curtailments, the time to plan a fishing trip has never been better.

So grab a Mississippi Outdoor Digest and a state highway map, log on to the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks' website and put together your own bucket list for bass fishing in Mississippi.

By David Hawkins

THE MAGNOLIA STATE CAN BOAST COUNTLESS BODIES OF WATER THAT HOLD BASS, AND SOME OF THEM OFFER FISHING THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH TO PUT TRIPS THERE ON YOUR TO-DO LIST. HERE'S WHAT THAT WOULD PROBABLY LOOK LIKE.

MISSISSIPPI'S BUCKETMOUTH BUCKET LIST

STATE LAKES

The crown jewel of the Mississippi state fishing lakes has to be Lake Calling Panther in Copiah County. It was designed as a trophy bass lake and has lived up to its billing. A few decades ago, it contained standing trees so thick that maneuvering a boat was difficult. That timber has now broken off into the water, creating a massive amount of cover for bass and forage fish. With so many holes and pockets, getting a bait to the fish can be a bit of a challenge. If ever there were an argument for a side-imaging sonar, Calling Panther is it.

Weedless jigs or plastic baits are a better choice than crankbaits and their multiple treble hooks, but both baits have their places on the lake. Calvin Tadlock of Homewood is one of the few anglers who fishes the lake with live bait.

“I look for a shiner (minnow) that is at least 6 inches long,” Tadlock said. “I fish it on a smaller float that will allow the bait to be free, sometimes taking the float below the surface, then a second float rigged 10 to 12 inches higher that will only go down when I have a fish on. My biggest catch to date is 11 (pounds) 10 (ounces). I’m rarely skunked at Calling Panther and always allow the fish to grow some more.”

The lake record is a 15.4-pound lunker caught by James Allen in February 2011.

“This was during the peak of the renovation,” said Ryan Jones, an MDWPF biologist. “Big fish are routinely caught this time of

year, but nothing has been close to breaking the record lately. “We have also been somewhat in the dark on Calling Panther lately, due to inability to creel survey during last spring’s pandemic and the unexpected passing of the lake manager, Ricky Blakeney. Also, while we conduct electrofishing sampling every other year, Calling Panther’s deep, clear water is not conducive to this type of sampling. This often results in low number of adults sampled. Follow the weekly fishing reports at the agency’s website for more current information.”

Neshoba County Lake is another lake with a stellar reputation that lost its manager, Chuck Hazlewood. Sherry Hazlewood, known for her involvement in fishing rodeos, is the acting manager.

Neshoba has experienced a number of other challenges recently that have affected the fishing. The water level was lowered to allow for repairs to the dam, but it’s back up to normal.

The lake was also covered partially with thick vegetation in the past that provided fish cover and gave frog fishermen a chance to test bass fishing with critter baits. But not everyone liked the blanket of plants, so the bulk of the cover was removed, leaving more open water.

“The creek channels are popular places for bass anglers to start searching, and a look at the bottom map shows the creek beds rather clearly,” Hazlewood said. “A recent youth fishing tournament from Noxubee County was quite successful, with over 18 pounds winning the event.”

STATE PARK LAKES ➤

A handful of state-managed lakes offer excellent bass fishing across Mississippi, particularly Calling Panther and Neshoba County lakes.



STATE PARK LAKES

Natchez State Park Lake holds the distinction of producing Mississippi's biggest bass to date, Anthony Denny caught the 18.15-pound behemoth on New Year's Eve 1992.

The lake was fished hard after Denny's fish was certified as the state record, and while many good fish have been caught, none have come close to that level. Catching quality fish at Natchez is not the problem, but landing a double-digit fish is a challenge.

U.S. FOREST SERVICE LAKES

The U.S. Forest Service manages a number of lakes of different sizes across Mississippi. According to Rick Dillard, a fisheries biologist, testing of these lakes slowed to a crawl during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic as restrictions were placed on travel and other normal activities.

"Based on the most-recent data we have, the lakes that were sampled in 2019 showed good fish growth and age-class populations," Dillard said. "Recently, our samplings are looking promising, and we soon hope to have more results available to share with the public."



Davis Lake, a small lake, is in the Tombigbee National Forest in Chickasaw County, not far from scenic Natchez Trace. The lake has produced some double-digit fish in the past and should be part of any bass angler's bucket list.

On the other end of the state, Turkey Fork is coming into its own as a bass fishery. Marathon Lake in central Mississippi has never been known as a trophy bass lake but does offer consistent catches of largemouth. It and other national forest lakes across the state are well suited for small boat fishing.

For trophy sized bass, concentrate on lakes and reservoirs that are home to the fast-growing Florida strain of largemouth bass.



The Homochitto National Forest is home to Okhissa Lake near Bude. Once the pearl of the bass fishing world, Okhissa has seen some issues that needed to be addressed.

The lake still has a vibrant bass population, according to Dillard, who witnessed good spawns in 2017 and 2018. Those results should prove good for 2- to 3-year-old bass.

OTHER LAKES

It is difficult to write any bass-fishing report without mentioning the Ross Barnett Reservoir. It is arguably the most-fished lake in Mississippi; only Pickwick could run a close second, and the lakes of the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway deserve mention.

Pro angler Jason Reynolds was a regular to the Mississippi Wildlife Extravaganza before that show, as we know it, ended. He held court over a huge tank with glass walls with casting demonstrations, and on some occasions, he fished “the ‘Rez” as a means of stocking those fish everyone admired.

“I was always in awe of the vast resource Mississippi had for its citizens and how well it was managed,” he said. “It struck me that it was free to the public, no launch fees, no charge to fish, and so full of opportunity.”

There are oxbows, points, cuts, deep river runs, sand bars, fast water, slow water, pad stems, stump fields and brush piles. Ross Barnett is not the kind of place to fish in a day; the facility is just that vast.



This bass was fooled by a jig and pig at Neshoba County Lake.

TOUGH AS NAILS

Gamakatsu

Superline Offset Round Bend



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

WWW.GAMAKATSU.COM

It's a jungle out there and the Gamakatsu Superline Offset Round Bend Worm Hook is built using heavy wire specially designed for braided line and heavier fluorocarbon. Have no fear.

Joe Horn gets a little help landing a bass from Copiah County's Calling Panther Lake, a fantastic state-lake fishery.



Upriver at the Low Head Dam, the current is swift along the banks and a perfect place to fish a lipless crankbait for spotted bass. In the swift water itself, hybrid stripers can be caught as they make a false spawning run. As the Pearl River approaches Ratliff Ferry, the current slows, but the bass action doesn't. Spinnerbaits swill work in the downed tree tops, logs and submerged structure found along the way.

The river starts to play out in one of the many areas that offer all sorts of vegetation, including lily pads. Anglers can search the pads for bass by using lizards and frogs. Working a bait slowly across the surface of the pads, expect to be bitten when the bait comes off the pad.

In more open areas, plenty of different baits worked in the pad stems will result it strikes. The venerable old balsa Rapala in silver/black is still a favorite, but tackle boxes need to be stocked with Chatterbaits, jigs and Whopper Ploppers. The one thing an angler needs to be is prepared. "I don't need any more baits," said no angler ever.

Downlake are more coves, ditches and submerged bass attractors. Baitfish like life along the rocks were they can seek cover. Any crankbait or soft-plastic bait that mimics a shad is a sure bet in these locales.

The Rez is also home to some fine stump fields and mud flats — perfect habitat for crawfish. In May, don't discount bass hanging out near bread beds; lures in bream colors, imitating

bream, can get the job done.

On the lower end, where the lake really spreads out is a good place to cash in on the annual mayfly hatch this month. Yes, bass too eat those pesky bugs. This is the right time to pick up a fly rod and get ready to rumble with a bass bug.

So plan your trip, keep wearing your mask in crowds, and fish for bass — all across this fine state. ■

LUNKER LINES >

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That's where SPRO's Little John MD 50 crankbait enters the picture. A deeper-diving brother to the Little John 50, the MD 50 will reach down to 7 to 9 feet.

Designed by bass pro John Crews, the MD 50 has a longer, thicker lip and a steel ball that generates a loud, bass-attracting rattle. It dives quickly and deflects easily off structure.

The MD 50 features No. 5 round-bend Gamakatsu trebles. It weighs ½-ounce, is 50mm long and comes in 27 different color patterns.

MSRP: \$11.99.

**For more info, visit:
www.spro.com**



MILLENNIUM Q200 BUCK HUT

If you like the idea of a shooting house for a deer blind, but you want one a little more portable than the big, wooden job you hoisted onto that 4x4 platform, the Millennium Q200 Buck Hunt may be just what the doctor ordered.

The Buck Hut measures 7-foot-4 wide and 4-foot deep by 7-foot tall, and it weighs just 323 pounds, making it relatively easy to move if you need to, but with a 500-pound capacity. The height makes it perfect for bowhunters who want to stand to shoot, but it fits sit-down hunters with guns and crossbows.

Blind material is a waterproof, heavy

duty, soft-shell material, with the frame powder-coated steel. Support legs include two that are adjustable for leveling on unlevel ground, and each stand includes an anchoring kit.

Windows can be shaped and adjusted for rifle, bow or crossbow, and each has an adjustable-height shooting rest.

The overall height is 15-foot-8, and the overall footprint is 11-foot-9 by 8-foot.

MSRP: \$799

For more info, visit: www.millennium-stands.com

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The hoop is finished in gunmetal, so there's no shine to spook a fish that's on the way to the square-bottom of the net, which is built with tangle-free, dipped micromesh material so a fish's slime coat won't be damaged, and so you won't spend any time trying to untangle hooks from the net.

Nets come in five sizes, from teardrop to square, depending on the kind of fishing you're doing. There will be one to fit your needs.

**MSRP: \$24.99-
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LUNKER LINES

Paul Elias

Some postspawn bass will be in Ross Barnett's shallow water at the first of May.

CATCH MAY'S ROSS BARNETT LARGEMOUTHS

BASS WILL MAKE PLENTY BIG MOVES AS POST-SPAWN MONTH PROGRESSES

You'll have numerous choices of lures and tactics at Ross Barnett in May, a post-spawn month. Early, the bass will roam everywhere. From the middle to the end of May, bass will move to deeper ledges.

EARLY MAY BASSING

At daylight, I'll fish riprap all over the lake, beginning at the dam, looking for bass chasing shad. I'll have a white buzzbait tied on one rod and a Pop-R on another. The buzzbait, fished fast, is there to catch actively-feeding bass. The Pop-R, fished with a slower presentation, makes a loud or a soft pop. You can retrieve it quickly or pop it and stop it.

• **Buzzbait.** I'll cast a 3/8-ounce white buzzbait on 23-pound White Peacock fluorocarbon on a Bruin 7.3:1 reel and a 6-foot-10, heavy action FX Custom rod parallel to the rocks holding bass. I'll retrieve it quickly in the shallowest water. Since the bass will be ganged up in certain places, you may fish 200 yards



of riprap and not get a single bite, but then get several. If I get four or five bites in a 50-yard stretch, I'll haunt that spot, fishing it heavily. You may have the opportunity to catch a 5- to 7-pound bass in that skinny water.

• **The Pop-R.** Sometimes May bass prefer a slowly moving bait they can watch before attacking. I'll cast a Pop-R, work it quickly for about 2 to 3 feet and then stop it. I like a shad-colored Pop-R with a white tail on its back treble hook. Often, the bass will hit the tail of the lure when it's sitting still. If I don't get bites with that retrieve, I'll pop the Pop-R softer to make it spit but not cause a big splash. I'll fish the Pop-R on 23-pound fluorocarbon on an 8:1 Bruin reel and a 6-foot-9, medium-action FX Custom rod. The softer tip on this rod allows the bass to suck those treble hooks deeper into its mouth.

• **SpringR worm.** Shad may spawn on rocks, boat docks or vegetation. I'll fish a follow-up lure like a junebug-colored SpringR worm rigged wacky style with a No. 1/0 hook to catch the bass that may



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





Jelly Worm

strike at the buzzbait but miss it. I'll use spinning tackle with a 15-pound braid tied with a Uni-Knot to a 6-foot leader of 15-pound fluorocarbon.

• **Super Frog.** After the morning bite, I'll go to the east side of the lake and fish the lily pads with a white Super Frog on a 7-foot-3, heavy action FX Custom rod with a 7.3:1 Bruin reel and 50-pound braid tied to the eye of the frog. I'll constantly keep the frog moving in the lily pad openings and retrieve the frog quickly toward the boat's stern to get actively feeding bass to chase and eat the frog. If I'm not getting any strikes, I'll stop the frog in the openings of the lily pads and move it slowly to catch bass that won't chase the frog.

• **Craw worm.** Ross Barnett also has some small patches of thick, viney grass growing in the lily pads that I'll fish with a 1-ounce sinker and a craw worm. That weight can penetrate the grass in 2- to 5-foot deep water.

THE REST OF THE MONTH

I'll fish the west side of the lake in the Natchez Trace area, with its plentiful ledges and underwater roads, bridges and stumps, generally in 8 to 10 feet of water.

• **T15+ crankbait.** My favorite bait on the ledges and the underwater structure I spot with my depthfinder is a shad colored T15+ crankbait. My 23-pound fluorocarbon on a 6.2:1 Bruin reel will be fished on a 7-foot-6 cranking-action FX Custom rod. I'll fish fairly fast and cover a lot of water. Once I get bites, I'll slow down. I may catch three or four bass on the crankbait before they quit biting.

• **Little George, Jelly Worm.** Next, I'll fish two different baits to fire up the school of bass like a ½-ounce Little George with a blue back and pearl sides. I'll use the same rod, reel and line I've fished with the crankbait. I'll also fish a watermelon/

red 6-inch Jelly Worm on a ½-ounce shaky head jig with my spinning outfit. I like 15-pound braid tied to a 15-pound, 5- to 6-foot fluorocarbon leader. I'll fish the shaky head worm just like a Texas-rigged worm, hopping it off the bottom, letting it fall back, shaking it, hopping it off the bottom, allowing it to fall back and shaking it.

In a day of May fishing at Ross Barnett, I'll catch about 15 keeper-sized bass — mostly in the 1½- to 2-pound range, with a few bass weighing 3 to 7 pounds. ■

LURE REVIEW ➤

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LURE REVIEW

Don Shoopman



This 2-pound fish bit on a thumping, rattling Racket Jig that lived up to its name the first week of March at Lake Fausse Pointe. The Stanley Jigs' product designed by Lonnie Stanley hit the market a few months ago.

THE RACKET BLADE

STANLEY'S ENTRY INTO THE BLADED JIG MARKET IS A ROCKET WITH PLENTY OF RACKET ATTACHED

One of the most-talented and successful artificial lure designers since the 1980s remembers the trials and tribulations associated with designing Stanley Jigs' Racket Blade.

Texan Lonnie Stanley knew what he wanted from a bladed jig. It took him a while, but his persistence paid off.

"I've been playing with this thing for almost three years. It wouldn't work right," Stanley said.

He tweaked it and tweaked it and did some more tweaking until he was satisfied with its performance, i.e., its ability to trigger bites. Stanley, 75, and others fished with prototypes for a year or so before it was deemed worthy of reaching the market.

"We've had this for a year. We've been testing it. We're excited about it. It does catch fish," he said.

Racket Blades were distributed a few months this year to stores around Lake Sam Rayburn and Toledo Bend, Stanley said. If bass anglers want to get their hands on one more quickly, go to www.fishstanley.com.

"It's a 'big fish' bait, but you can also catch a limit on it," Stanley said. "You can catch a 1-pounder on it and an 8-pounder on it," plus everything in between.

Stanley's heaviest bass with his new bladed jig was a 9.8-pound hawg that bit in a private pond in east Texas. A native of Zavalia, Texas, he also has caught several 7-pound class bass on it at Lake Sam Rayburn and Toledo Bend. Other bragging-size bass were boated by others who tied on the prototypes.

Stanley, whose business is based in Huntington, Texas, got an immediate thumbs-up on the design early on in the process from his longtime friend and

business partner, John Hale, another veteran east Texas angler in his late 70s.

SOME EXTRA RACKET

What separates the Racket Blade is a short, wire harness between the familiar Stanley spinnerbait head and the steel or brass blade, which are available in different colors. That blade causes the bladed jig to thump, thump, thump, as others do, but look closer, and there are two silver beads — one smaller than the other — on the wire going to the eye for the line tie that clack on the blade as it vibrates up and down on the retrieve.

"It rattles as it comes through the water."



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

It flashes like a spinnerbait and has the noise and vibration of a (Rat-L-)Trap,” said Stanley, whose company celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2019.

The rattling capability wasn’t planned, he confided. It was a pleasant surprise.

“That’s an action of the good Lord,” he said, chuckling.

Racket Blades are available in ⅜-, ½- and ¾-ounce models. The hand-tied silicone skirts, the company’s staple since the 1980s, are available in 16 colors.

Racket Blades are armed with a 4/0 Mustad Needlepoint hook on the ⅜-ounce model and 5/0 Mustad Needlepoint hooks on the ½- and ¾-ounce models.

Stanley, a five-time Bassmaster Classic qualifier, is oh-so proud of another quality feature — a twin titanium-alloy wire weedguard. Bass anglers have the choice of models with or without the weedguard. Like Stanley said, some bassers who fish mostly around rocks feel like they don’t need them, but those who target bass in heavy cover and vegetation appreciate its fishability.

Each Racket Blade also comes with a solid, soft-plastic trailer keeper.



Stanley Jigs Racket Blade

Stanley designed his pet project so that it would get the desired results whether fishing for largemouth bass, smallmouth bass or even redfish.

“Everybody’s catching the heck out of fish on it,” he said. ■

For more information about the Racket Blade and other Hale Lures/Stanley Jigs products, call 936-876-5713 or go to www.fish-stanley.com.

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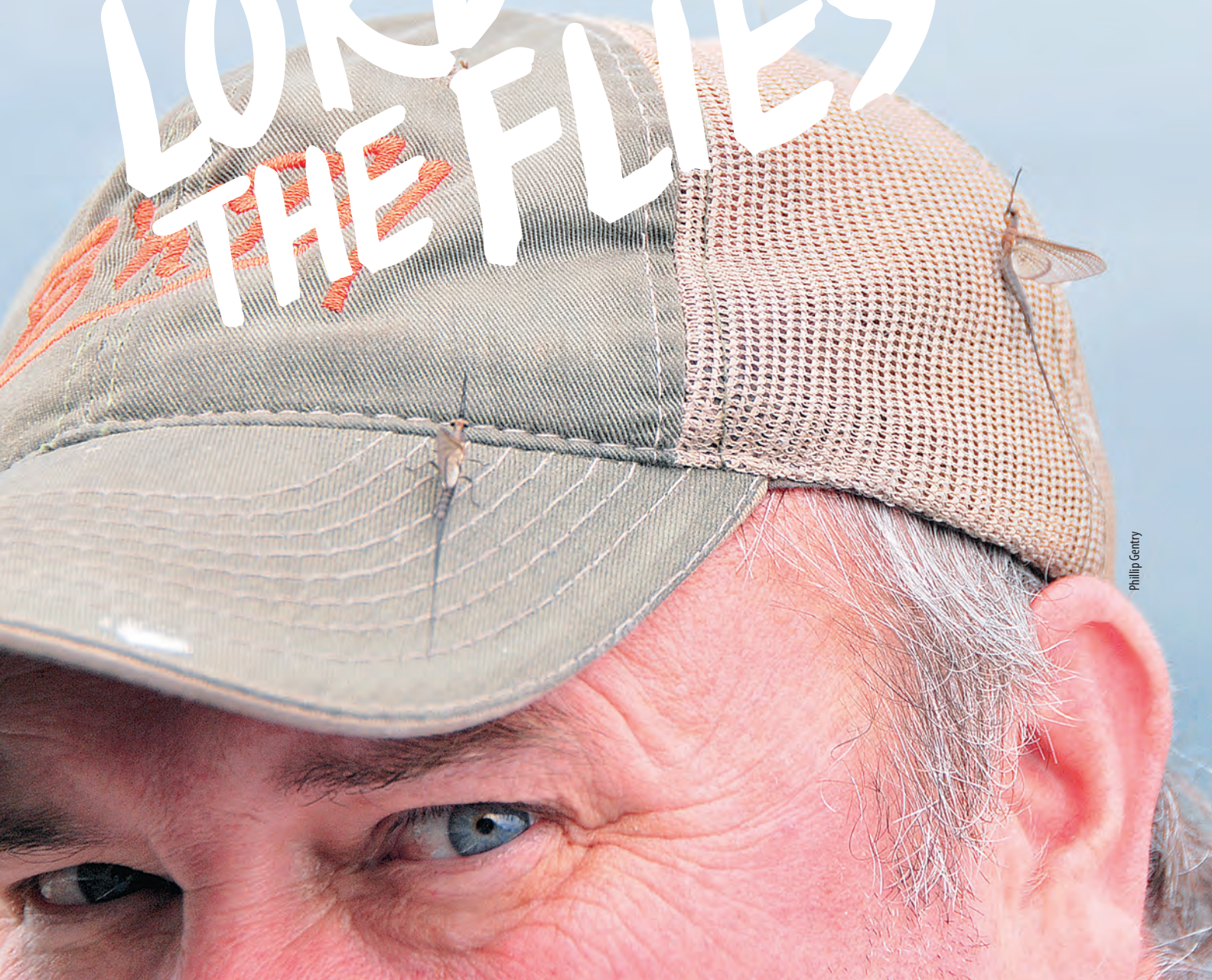
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**WHEN MAYFLIES START SWARMING
JUST ABOVE THE WATER, IT'S
TIME TO BREAK OUT YOUR
BREAM-FISHING GEAR AND
GET READY FOR ACTION.**

■ By Phillip Gentry

LORD OF THE FLIES



Phillip Gentry

During the heat of summer, a lot of the best fishing goes deep, meaning deep water — or at least open water well away from the shoreline. One exception is bream fishing — meaning bluegills, redear sunfish or any other fish that loves to eat bugs — particularly during a

MAYFLY HATCH.

Mayflies are an aquatic insect belonging to the family of insects that includes dragonflies and damselflies. More than 3,000 species of mayflies are found worldwide, but they all share a common characteristic: they spend most of their sub-adult life underwater.

When mayflies “hatch,” they transform from their aquatic nymph stage to their brief adult stage as a winged, terrestrial insect. This occurs anytime from spring until fall, depending on the subspecies.

A clue to their importance to anglers? In Canada, mayflies are referred to as “fish-flies” or “shad-flies.” The insects swarm in large numbers after emerging from the water and will molt one time before becoming full adults, reproducing and then dying. Swarming typically occurs at dawn or dusk on nearly any structure adjacent to the water.

While swarming in this soft-shell phase, large numbers of mayflies are preyed upon by other animals, particularly fish, if the insects are unlucky enough to fall into the water.

Catching a fish on every cast is the kind of activity that will recruit young anglers into the sport of fishing.



Courtesy Kent Driscoll

While freshwater trout, panfish and even crappie are fond of eating larval mayflies, when the creatures hit the warm, shallow waters during the summer, it can be a bream fisherman's dream come true.

The best part is that mayflies will hatch several times throughout the summer.

Kent Driscoll, a pro-staff member for Mississippi-based B'n'M Poles, said he witnesses just such an occurrence nearly every summer.

"They mostly hatch in clear-water lakes, and when they do, they just swarm all over everything," said Driscoll. "They particularly seem to like hardwood trees, and if I find a hatch occurring, I'm certainly going to head to the banks with a bream pole."

Driscoll uses one of B'n'M's new 6½-foot, split-handle, panfish/trout rods, the "TCB rod," which is designed to be used with lures as light as ¼-ounce on 2-pound-test line. The rod offers the deceptive presentation of a fly rod and the mechanics of a spinning outfit.

Driscoll said it's hard to predict when and where mayfly hatches will occur, but the best fishing spots seem to be under hardwood limbs with heavy leaf cover in a shady area that overhangs deeper water. He said under these conditions, fish, most

typically bluegills, will rush the surface and feed like piranhas.

"You can start the action. If you see the insects on a limb and just reach over and shake it a little, that draws the fish in," he said. "Then you'll have some fast fishing until the action peters out. Then, you just move down the bank or to the next spot and start all over."

Obviously, not every location is going to hold only bluegills big enough to fillet; anglers should expect to wade through their share of shorts while sorting out the better bream if the goal is taking some home for the table.

One of the best methods to target larger sunfish in a mayfly hatch is to look for areas with deeper water and/or cover like docks or heavy vegetation that will provide the bigger specimens with some security.

Driscoll said you can usually tell the size of the hatch once you hit the water. A widespread hatch may not occur all across a lake; in fact, a smaller hatch may involve just a mile or two of shoreline. In any event, he suggests taking some time and looking at your topo map or chart plotter; see if you can pinpoint deeper locations or steeper banks on the lake where the hatch is occurring.

Driscoll's top baits are small, match-the-hatch style jigs. He prefers 1-inch Trout Magnet jigs or a small Popeye jig. He said the best colors are black, dark brown or "earthy" tones that resemble the insects. He usually just lobs the tiny, ¼-ounce



Fishing during a Mayfly Hatch makes for some exciting bream fishing, and there are several ways to take advantage.

jigs under the cover. The bait is typically eaten as soon as it hits the water or as it is falling. In some cases, he may add a small cork above the jig to add weight as well as suspend the bait in the water.

“If you use a cork, set it for about 3 feet to try to get down below the smaller fish but still keep it well off the bottom. These fish are feeding up, so you need to stay above them,” he said.

Finally, Driscoll said another way to take advantage of mayflies is to take a kid with you.

“As experienced fishermen, we’ve all seen this kind of fast action before,” he said, “but to a young angler, this is probably something they’ve never experienced, and it really adds to their excitement to see fish breaking all over the surface and catch a fish on every cast.” ■



Courtesy Kent Driscoll

TROUT MAGNET ➤



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.



Hardwood limbs that are covered in mayflies while hanging over a deep, shady spot can make for some fast-fishing action.

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The Trout Magnet fishing system was designed for freshwater trout fishing, but it will also catch plenty of sunfish species.

TROUT MAGNET WORKS GREAT ON BREAM, TOO

A spinning rod, line, float and lure system designed by Arkansas-based Leland Lures works wonders for catching cold-water trout. The same system that works magic on trout is also a killer on bream; it catches both bluegill and redears as well as any other insect-eating panfish.

Jeff Smith, Trout Magnet's owner, designed the system and explained how it works.

"It starts with our TCB rod, which stands for Trout, Crappie and Bluegill," Smith said. "It's a longer rod with a very fast tip. You need that tip to cast these small 1/4-ounce lures."

Smith said rather than using the typical 4- or 6-pound monofilament that most anglers associate with spinning gear, Trout Magnet markets 2-pound line called SOS fishing line — Strong, Obscure, Small.

"Our SOS line is a very smooth, copolymer line made for light-line fishing," Smith said. "It is extremely abrasion-resistant, has great knot strength and is much stronger than other lines at the same diameter."

He said the line's the shade of green makes it difficult for fish to see underwater, and that 2-pound line also casts further with just the weight of the lure and float.



Courtesy Kent Driscoll

The last piece of the system is the Trout Magnet jighead and meal-worm plastic body.

"One of the things we were looking for when we designed this lure was we wanted something that falls horizontally in the water instead of falling headfirst, like all other jigs," said Smith. "That was the idea behind the unusual head shape."

Pairing the 1/4-ounce heads with split-tail, 1 1/4-inch bodies makes for a great imitation of an aquatic insect floating in the water. Smith said it's important to hook the bait right in front of the split in the tail so that it all lays out naturally without any twist, allowing the bait to appear more natural than a bait spiraling down through the water.

"This whole system was designed for catching trout in moving-water streams," said crappie pro Kent Driscoll. "It's just as deadly on bream, bluegill, redear, anything that eats aquatic insects is going to suck this thing in as soon as it sees it." ■

More info on the Trout Magnet fishing system at www.troutmagnet.com.



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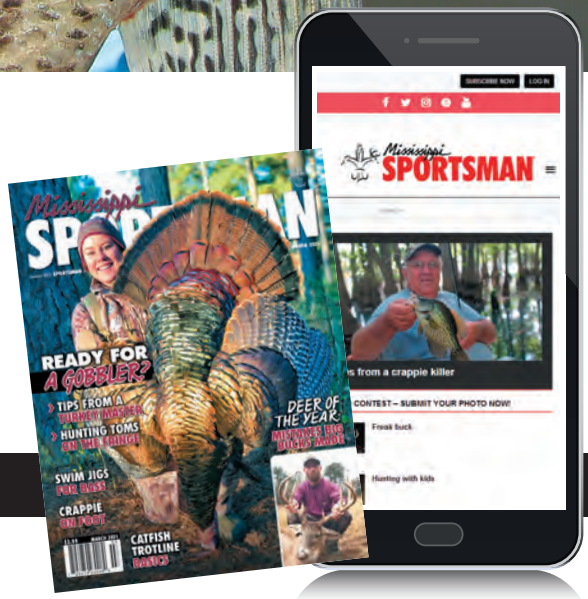


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GETTIN' FRESH

Hal Schramm

Low-frequency electrofishing effectively samples blue and flathead catfish.



SAMPLING FISH VIA ELECTROFISHING

Photo courtesy Graham Montague, Oklahoma Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit

PUTTING CURRENT IN THE WATER GIVES ACCURATE PICTURE OF FISHERIES

A recently published study that evaluated underwater video cameras for assessing brook trout in Appalachian streams piqued my interest. Brook trout do not swim in the warm lakes or streams in the Deep South, and few streams in Mississippi resemble the rock and bedrock, clear-water streams of the Virginia's Shenandoah National Park, where the study was conducted.

But the study provided a head-to-head comparison of estimates of fish populations obtained via direct observation by divers and electrofishing, thus allowing insight into a question I have wondered about for years: the efficiency of electrofishing and how well samples represent what is actually in the water.

Electrofishing, usually using backpack electrofishers, and direct observations by snorkel divers clad in wet suits or dry suits, are the go-to methods for assess-

ing fish populations in shallow, wadable streams. The term "electrofisher" refers to the power source, a control box that manipulates the electric current, and the electrodes that transfer the current to the water. The U.S. Geological Survey and U.S. Forest Service fisheries researchers compared brook trout counts obtained by diver counts, electrofishing captures and fixed-location video cameras.

The video-camera methods, when averaged over many sampling stations with a wide range of environmental conditions, provided estimates of brook trout abundance similar to both diver counts and backpack electrofishing. Although the researchers' focus was the effectiveness of video cameras, the study answered my question; the number of fish captured by electrofishing was, on average, about the same as divers' counts.

Well, sort of. The stream pools where fish counts were compared were

sampled by single-pass electrofishing — once through the pool — and triple-pass electrofishing — three successive passes through each pool with captured fish not released until the last pass is completed. The average counts of larger adult brook trout were the same for single-pass electrofishing, triple-pass electrofishing, and divers. For smaller, young-of-the-year trout, only the triple-pass electrofishing counts were similar to diver counts, but the single-pass counts were much lower.

Not a big surprise. Small fish are less affected by electric current. A threshold amount of electric current is required to



Hal Schramm is an avid angler and veteran fisheries biologist.

Electrofishing is a preferred sampling method because it generally does not injure fish. This is especially important when trying to capture rare individuals, either because of their size or very low abundance.

affect a fish, and the amount of current that flows through the fish to elicit a response increases as the fish grows.

The counts achieved by electrofishing and those from divers were not in perfect accord for each individual sample. Fish can hide from divers, and not all fish in the field of an electrofisher are stunned. But the brook trout study reinforces the notion that electrofishing provides as good an estimate as can be achieved by direct observation.

ALL CHARGED UP

Electrofishing has been the standard method for sampling black bass and sunfish in the Southeast for at least 50 years. Advances in the equipment have improved both operator safety and sampling efficiency.

Many early electrofishers relied on alternating current (AC) output from generators. They worked for some fish, like black bass, sunfish, crappie and white bass. Most biologists today use pulsed direct current (DC) outputs that combine the fish-attracting effect of DC — fish in a DC field swim to the positive electrode — with the fish-stunning effect of AC.

Advanced electrofishing control boxes allow operators to adjust power output, pulse form and pulse frequency. Adjusting power output allows standardization of power in the water and facilitates comparison of catches across environmental conditions that vary with a body of water over time or among different water bodies.

The ability to adjust pulse frequency has made electrofishing an effective tool for sampling catfishes. AC or 60-pulses-per-second DC outputs that are typically used to sample many scaled fish do not work for sampling catfish, but low frequency (15 pulses per second) DC is very effective and has become the standard method for assessing blue and flathead catfish populations in many states. The response to low-frequency current is why old hand-crank telephone generators effectively captured catfish.

INTERRUPTED CURRENT

Electrofishing has limitations. It does not work in water with very low conductivity (few dissolved salts) or very high conductivity water (brackish water). Fortunately, most waters throughout the Southeast have mid-range conductivities conducive to effective sampling.

Depth is also a limitation. Most of the electric field in the water flows between the electrodes. If you want to create an electric field on the bottom in 25 feet of water, you need 25-foot long electrodes.

If you shock a fish on the bottom, it has to swim or float to the surface to be detected. Despite all that has been learned about both electric current in water and the physiology of fish, exactly how fish are attracted to or stunned by electric current remains a mystery.

You can learn a lot when shocking relatively clear water: not all fish are affected, and some of the stunned fish remain on the bottom. Electrofishing does not collect all fish.

Electrofishing has exposed another mystery, a largemouth bass mystery. Electrofishing bass quickly reveals areas and habitats where bass congregate. Yes, I'm guilty of trying some of these areas on my next fishing trip. Wouldn't you?

But here's the deal: I can always collect bass with an electro-



Photo courtesy Tim Bonvechio, Georgia Department of Natural Resources

fisher in an area where I catch them, but in only a very few instances have I found new places to fish based on electrofishing catch. In other words, just because fish are in an area doesn't mean you can catch them there. ■

An advertisement for Suzuki's Springtime Sales Event. The background is a bright blue sky with a green field and a body of water. On the left, there are three Suzuki outboard motors of different sizes (35, 25, and 15 HP). In the center, a large bass fish is shown jumping out of the water, holding a lure in its mouth. On the right, a person is visible in a small boat on the water. The text "SUZUKI SPRINGTIME SALES EVENT" is written in large, bold, yellow letters. Below it, the slogan "Don't Wait Another Day." is written in white. There are two main promotional boxes: "SUZUKI INSTANT SAVINGS" with the text "SAVE BIG! BUY NOW ON SELECT SUZUKI OUTBOARDS" and "REPOWER FINANCE" with the text "RATES AS LOW AS 5.99% ON NEW SUZUKI OUTBOARDS ON APPROVED CREDIT * 160 MONTHS!". At the bottom, the "Smith Marine" logo is displayed, featuring an anchor icon. To the right of the logo, the address "149 Harbor Dr, Ridgeland, MS (601) 856-3959" and the website "smithmarinesales.com" are listed. Small print at the very bottom provides details about financing and dealer locations.

SPECIES SPOTLIGHT

Brian Cope



Angler Drew Gregory was targeting largemouth bass when this longnose gar hit a spinnerbait in the tailrace below a dam, a common area for this species to search for prey.

SPECIES SPOTLIGHT: LONGNOSE GAR

COMMON ACROSS NORTH AMERICA, LONGNOSE GAR ARE LONG, SKINNY PREDATORS

Photo by Brian Cope

The longnose gar, *Lepisosteus osseus*, is one of the most pre-historic fish swimming in North American waters. It is native to much of the United States, and it has been around for 100 million years.

Longnose gar are common in all types of water throughout the Southeast and are very adaptable. Fisheries biologists believe longnose gar prefer the calmest waters they can find, but they will venture into swiftly moving water in search

of prey. Rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, swamps and drainage ditches are all home to longnose gar.

These fish are one of five subspecies of gar that live in the U.S. The longnose gar, as its name implies, has the longest nose and also the skinniest. It resembles a long beak more so than a nose or mouth. The species is sometimes referred to as needlenose gar. A longnose gar's nose is more than twice as long as the rest of its head.

The color of these fish varies widely. Usually olive brown or green with dark spots across its body, some longnose gar are all silver, and others are solid black.



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

A longnose gar's snout jaws are more than twice as long as the rest of its head, meaning it's well-named.

NEEDLE TEETH

The fish's long mouth is full of small, sharp teeth, which the fish uses to impale prey. They then toss the prey around until they can swallow it head-first. Their diet is mainly small fish. They will eat vegetation at times.

Longnose gar can use their swim bladders as lungs, gulping for oxygen above the surface when in very shallow water or water with poor or low oxygen levels. They have been known to live for more than 24 hours completely out of water.

Spawning takes place in the spring, mainly May and early June. When spawning, a female is surrounded by several males in shallow water. The males circle the female, often splashing violently. In a single spawning season, one female can release up to 77,000 eggs.

Longnose gar are often confused with shortnose gar, alligator gar and spotted gar. They have very little food value, although a small but dedicated number of anglers swear the meat is sweet and tasty when cleaned and cooked properly.

HOOK UNNECESSARY

They are rarely targeted by anglers, but some anglers who often encounter them will tie a short piece of frayed rope onto a hookless fishing line just for fun, as in "Watch me catch this fish without a hook." Mistaking it for a meal, the gar will slash its mouth at the rope, entangling its small teeth.

The Louisiana state record longnose gar weighed 16.04 pounds. Felix Kuntz III caught the fish in August 2018 at Bonnet Carré Spillway. The Mississippi state record weighed 48 pounds, 1 ounce. Don Henson caught this fish, which is also the world record for the species, at Sardis Reservoir Spillway in September 2016. ■



Photo by Dan Kibler

An advertisement for Gator Trax boats. The main image shows a blue duck boat with a thatched roof and a purple bass boat on a body of water. Text overlays include 'FROM DUCK BOATS TO BASS BOATS', 'CHECK OUT WHAT GATOR TRAX CAN DO FOR YOU', and 'FOR A FULL LINE OF GATOR TRAX BOATS, VISIT WWW.GATORTRAXBOATS.COM'. There are two smaller inset images: one showing a duck boat on a trailer and another showing a blue bass boat with people on it. The background has a green, textured pattern.

HAPPY TRAILS

Bill Garbo

Anna Beth Garbo from Robert, La., with a December buck taken this past season. She is a crack shot and has been hunting and bagging deer since the age of six. Her preferred caliber and bullet combo are the the .243 Win. with a 100-grain PSP Bullet.



CALIBER, BULLET SELECTION FOR WHITE-TAILED DEER

When it comes to hunting white-tailed deer, having a rifle in the right caliber and an appropriately constructed bullet can make all the difference. The terrain you hunt and the type of hunting you do determines what caliber and bullet you should use.

The ability to hit what you shoot at, however, is arguably the single most-important factor behind cartridge performance. The biggest component of this intangible factor is the person behind the gun.

I have heard gun experts give bullet placement a relative importance of as much as 70% when it comes to consistently and effectively downing game. The remaining 30% can be divided between bullet energy and bullet performance after impact, which are directly related to caliber and bullet construction.

CALIBER QUESTION

For decades, a spirited disagreement between the advocates of small-bore, high-velocity bullets and those who champion bigger and heavier, slower-moving bullets has played out. The proponents of high velocity point to the “impact shock” that is produced by favored calibers and bullets. Likewise, the fans of bigger and slower slugs point to large entry and exit wounds they say contribute to quicker and faster kills.

Both arguments make sense under

certain conditions that occur within certain yardage ranges. Because of this, a perfectly legitimate statistical argument can be made that the .30/30 at 100 yards is a better killer than a .300 Winchester Magnum at 500 yards.

BULLET CHOICES

The bullet is the “point of the spear.” It is the bullet that actually puts the hole in the target or drops your trophy whitetail. Your choice of rifle is just the means of getting to the point of impact. As with many other things in life, the best bullet for the task at hand is often a compromise. Modern cartridges are usually available in a variety of bullet weights and styles.

One bullet style and weight cannot be expected to do all things well in a single rifle. Select a bullet that best fits the environment of your hunt. Whitetail habitat spans the range from wide-open agricultural fields, to close-range heavy brush. A caliber and bullet combination that works well in one instance will likely give disappointing results in the other.

The array of available bullet styles include: flat-base, boat-tail, pointed soft point (PSP), rounded soft point, ballistic tip — on-and-on. Each style has unique



Whitetail cartridge comparison (top to bottom) .223 Rem, .243 Win, .270 Win, .30/30 Win, .30-06 Sprfld, .308 Rem, .35 Whelen.

aerodynamic and kinetic properties that you can use to best fit the prevailing conditions of where and how you hunt.



Bill Garbo is a petroleum engineer and avid whitetail hunter from Madison, Miss. 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.

UP TO .25 CALIBER

It is a widely accepted opinion that the only caliber smaller than .25 that can be recommended for deer hunting is either the 6mm or .243, and even then, shot placement is critical. No .22 caliber cartridge should ever be used on deer or deer-sized animals. And yes, I have to admit, skilled marksmen at close range can and have dispatched deer with the .22 and .223, but the average hunter is not in that class.

.25 TO .30 CALIBERS

Many cartridges in this caliber range are well suited for deer. Mainstays are the .270 Winchester, the .280 Remington, and the 7mm/08 Remington. The great Jack O'Connor absolutely swore by the .270 Winchester, using this caliber to hunt big game the world over.

.30 CALIBER AND LARGER

A number of calibers in this range are very efficient deer killers, but at the same time, there are a number that are far too powerful for deer hunting due to excessive recoil and other factors.

Right off the bat, my short list of great choices for deer would include calibers such as the .308 Winchester, .30/06 Springfield, .30/30 Winchester, .35 Remington and the old, standby .45/70. In recent years, the .35 Whelen has regained popularity and has become one of my personal favorite whitetail cartridges.

IN SUMMARY

If you were to gather 10 experts on deer-hunting calibers and bullets, you'd get 10 theories about the best choice. In my personal view, after more than 50 years in the whitetail woods, the answer is not a simple one. A satisfactory answer would involve type of rifle, bore and cartridge, bullet style and weight, hunter experience, and practice, practice and more practice. ■

POINT-BLANK VELOCITIES, REMAINING ENERGY LEVELS OF POPULAR CARTRIDGES

Shows maximum range at which these cartridges retain at least 1,200 foot-pounds of energy, considered by to be the minimum "wallop" required for the efficient killing of deer and antelope. From: "Carmichael's Guide to Hunting Cartridges"

Caliber	Bullet Weight (Grains)	Muzzle Velocity (Feet/Second)	Range (Yards)
.223 Rem	55	3,340	0
.243 Win	100	2,690	250
.270 Win	130	3,110	435
7mm/08 Rem	140	2,860	410
.30/30 Win	150	2,390	120
.30/06 Spfd	150	2,910	435
.308 Win	150	2,820	345
.35 Rem	150	2,300	95

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COOKING ON THE WILD SIDE

Jerry Dilsaver



GROUPE CAKES

THIS POPULAR BOTTOMFISH REALLY SHINES ON PLATES

TIP!

Grouper is firmer and cuts better when it is cold, like straight out of the cooler or fridge.

Jerry Dilsaver

The outdoors world makes some serious changes as we enter May. Whenever they happen, we suddenly realize the world is bright and warm, winds lay out more than they blow, and the heavy rains become welcome showers. It's shirt-sleeve and shorts weather everywhere but in the high country and on most days, it warm to it there by noon.

By May, most hunting has ended, with turkey season in Mississippi ending May 1. Fishing has been improving all spring, and it's a great way to enjoy some fresh air and return with dinner.

Calm sea conditions and warmer weather are magnets that most offshore fishermen can't resist. The waters in the Gulf of Mexico are warming, and the action is heating up. One of the most-anticipated offshore fish around the Gulf is actually a group included in the classification of shallow-water grouper: gag, black, red, scamp, yellowmouth, yellowfin, tiger, graysby and coney grouper, plus red hind and rock hind.

With steadily improving weather and sea conditions, fishing become a priority. The good news is that fishing might get even hotter than the weather, as most summer species are arriving. It's a great time to be on the water and there is a great variety of

fish for those who enjoy them.

Seafood is always a welcome addition to the dinner table, and when you catch it yourself, you know just how fresh it is and how well it has been cared for. Whether it's sitting on a bank, wading a small stream or flat or gently rocking in a boat on the ocean, fishing is a great way to spend a day and more often than not, fishermen bring dinner home from May fishing trips.

This recipe is an excellent way to enjoy fish and will work with almost any fish. However, it is special with the mild flavor of grouper, and grouper are a primary target of offshore bottom-fishermen during May. There is a little bit of prep time involved, but once everything is ready to mix, it goes quickly, and there are soon hot grouper cakes ready to be eaten. ■



GROUPER CAKES

Grouper are one of my favorite fish. Their mild flavor lends itself to being prepared in a variety of ways. This recipe came about as a way to use some smaller pieces that were left over after cleaning. Some of my friends call them fritters, but fritters have more breading and less meat. This is a combination that fits somewhere between salmon patties and crab cakes.

Whatever you call it, we liked it so much that we began making sure there were some small pieces left after cleaning grouper. It works well with those pieces from near the tail that aren't big enough to be meal-size fillets, trimmings from around the bone, meat on the head above the pectoral fins and rib meat. I won't include the cheeks, as they're special on their own. A fillet could be cut up too, that's happened before.

Don't chop the pieces too small. You'll still have most of the flavor, but it isn't quite the same. Try it with larger pieces chopped finely and see for yourself. Aim for cubes about the size of a fingernail. A tip for chopping the grouper is that it is firmer and cuts better when it is cold, like straight out of the cooler or fridge.

I don't add salt because the saltines have plenty. However, seasoning is always to taste, and if you like a lot of salt, add some pink Himalayan salt. I like the way it seasons. As for pepper, I like it and coarse-grind lots of it into the mix.

I used to crush saltines with a mortar and pestle, but now I put them in a heavy duty quart Zip Lock bag to crunch them up. Not everyone has a rolling pin, but just about everyone has steel drink tumblers, and they make a good substitute for this small job. Don't crush the crackers to powder, but get them pretty fine.

PREPARATION:

Chop the grouper, parsley and pepper. Crush the saltines and slice the lemons and limes. Beat the egg and mix it with the yogurt, Dijon mustard, Worcestershire, garlic, onion and Sriracha sauce, and season (to taste) with salt and pepper.

Using a second bowl, combine the grouper, crushed saltines, parsley and pepper pieces. Mix the yogurt and spices mixture with the fish mixture. Form into six to nine cakes approximately ¾- to 1-inch thick.

Use a large heavy skillet and cover the bottom with oil, then preheat over medium-high heat. Get this hot but do not allow the oil to smoke. Put half the cakes in the pan and cook until golden brown and crispy, 2 or 3 minutes per side. Remove the cakes and set on a strainer or paper towel. Cook the rest of the cakes and remove to a strainer or paper towel.

Serve grouper cakes with lemon and lime wedges, tartar sauce and spicy tartar sauce.

Spicy Tartar Sauce:

Spicy tartar sauce is easily made by mixing Sriracha sauce with tartar sauce. This is done to your personal heat preference. Pink sauce is milder, and as more Sriracha sauce is added

If you're not a fan of yogurt, you can substitute the same amount of mayonnaise. If you do this, use real mayo, not fat-free or reduced fat. If reduced fat appeals to you, try plain Greek yogurt. It reduces the fat and tastes better.

I don't often suggest brands, but I will with the Sriracha sauce. Texas Pete Cha Sauce is not as hot as some brands, but it has enough bite to satisfy all but hard-core fire breathers. Where it really shines is with its smoky, sweet flavor. It works well in the recipe and mixed with tartar sauce to make spicy tartar sauce. When making the sauce, understand that lighter pink sauce is milder and better tolerated by most. As you add more Sriracha sauce and the color become redder, the spice and heat factor increase also.

With this recipe, I make six cakes. This works well as the entree of a meal and for making sandwiches. I occasionally make these for sliders and use the same ingredients for eight or nine smaller cakes that fit rolls and slider buns.

One of the things my wife likes about this recipe is that when everything is blended except the jalapenos, I can make a couple of cakes for her before adding the jalapenos. If you have someone who is not a fan of jalapenos, you can make theirs with a bell pepper or plain, then add spices and the jalapeno pieces for those with more robust palates.

Understand that I still experiment with this and won't be upset if you change it a little. If you like fish, I believe you'll like this. Grouper cakes are tasty and fun to eat. ■

the color darkens and the sauce becomes more spicy. Add it slowly and taste before adding more.

Grouper cakes can be served either as sandwiches or sliders with lettuce and tomato or as the entree for a meal. They go well with a potato (baked potato, fries or tater tots) or corn-on-the-cob and salad or slaw. A big glass of sweet tea, or your favorite adult beverage, completes the meal. ■

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound grouper
- 1 large egg
- ¾ cup crushed saltine crackers (approximately 21 crackers)
- ½ cup plain Greek yogurt
- 2 tbsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp Texas Pete Cha Sauce (Sriracha sauce)
- 2 tbsp freshly chopped parsley
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 3 tbsp minced onion
- 2 tbsp minced jalapeno pepper, or orange bell pepper for those with milder palates
- Pink Himalayan salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- Canola or peanut oil
- Lemon and lime wedges
- Tartar sauce



Jerry Dilsaver is a freelance writer, as well as a former national king mackerel champion fisherman.

TIPS TO PRESERVE FISH FOR MOUNTING ➤



TIPS TO PRESERVE FISH FOR MOUNTING

You feel a tug on the line, your rod is bending and you know you have a fish. As you are struggling to reel it in, you know you have “the big one.” Your heart is beating, and you are sweating profusely hoping the line doesn’t break and your trophy fish gets away. You are already planning the perfect spot to hang it on the wall.

There is nothing worse than an angler ruining their “trophy” because it was not handled properly. It is imperative that you handle the fish with care from the time you reel it in.

Larry Matherne, owner of DeeDee’s Taxidermy in Barataria, La. (504-235-3218), offers tips for preserving a fish for mounting:

- **Photograph quickly.** The first thing you should do is take pictures to capture all those little details of the fish, including the patterns on the fins and its original color. Once the fish is out of the water, the fish’s skin color changes quickly. Try not to handle the fish too much to prevent damage to the scales.

- **Tape of the tape.** Take a few measurements, because you never know if something goes wrong. A taxidermist can create an accurate replica, if need be. The first measurement will be the length, from the nose to the tail. The next measurement will be the girth. Wrap the tape measure around the fattiest part of the fish.

- **Cool and wet.** Get the fish on ice as soon as you can to delay the decaying process. Keep it in a separate ice chest from the other fish to eliminate any damage to the skin.

It is crucial to keep the fish as wet as possible. Most people think that you should wrap the fish in newspaper or brown paper bags but that will draw moisture from the fish causing it to freezer burn.

- **Wrap it up.** As soon as you get home, wrap a paper towel around the body of the fish, starting at the middle of the fish’s body. Place the paper towel under the fins to keep them away from the skin. If the fins are against the skin, it will cause discoloration.

Take more paper towels and wrap the entire fish completely. Make sure the fins are laid out nicely.

- **Bag it.** Run water over the fish while it’s wrapped in paper towels, and place it in an air-tight, plastic bag. The fish must stay wet while freezing to lock everything in and keep it moist. The ice will protect the fins from breaking off.

- **Details, details.** Don’t forget to write what type of fish it is and the date it was caught on the bag, because the last thing you want to do is accidentally throw it out when you clean out the freezer.

Matherne said the fish can stay preserved for about 2 to 3 years in the freezer.



Care taken between the time a fish is caught and taken to a taxidermist can help or hinder the making of a top-drawer mount. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** Part of a taxidermist's job is to duplicate the colors of the fish when it was still swimming.

The process of mounting the fish can take 4 to 5 weeks. This includes drying out the skin, fish tanning and painting. The price usually runs about \$12.00 per inch.

But before you leave your trophy in the hands of just anyone, ask how many years' experience they have and ask to see pictures of their work. Matherne has been in the taxidermy business for 35 years.

Taxidermy is an art form done with great precision. When fish skin dries, most of the color disappears, leaving only brownish spots. The taxidermist must totally recreate the colors of the skin. Fish taxidermists are outstanding artists as well. They must have the ability to draw, paint, mix colors and sculpt.

Preserving the fish properly with a skilled taxidermist can be the difference of a great mount or a mediocre one. ■

GIFT IDEAS FOR THE OUTDOORS-LOVING MOTHER >

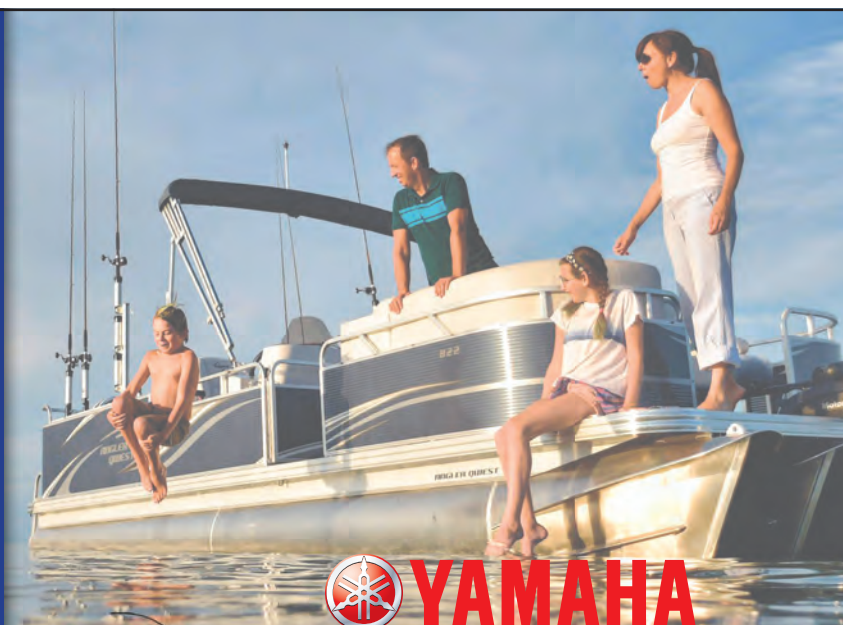
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5 GIFT IDEAS FOR THE OUTDOORS-LOVING MOTHER

W By Will Martin
 ith Mother's Day right around the corner, we thought it would be helpful to ask our friends at Puglia's Sporting Goods in Metairie for great gift ideas for the outdoors-loving mothers in our lives.

There is nothing worse than last-minute shopping; it's stressful, and your choices are limited. This Mother's Day, don't be that dope, panic-buying on Saturday night or worse, Sunday morning. Whether you are shopping for your mother, your wife or your girlfriend — or any combination of the three — no mother deserves to feel like an afterthought on her special day.

Here's the list the people at Puglia's came up with:



1 GRUNDÉNS WOMEN'S DECK BOSS ANKLE BOOTS

The Deck Boss collection was designed to provide anglers with comfortable, performance-driven footwear options that will outlast even the longest days on the water. A thicker insole promotes noticeable shock resistance, and the anti-microbial cooling liner will ensure you leave the typical footwear stench behind. Built-in razor siping helps move water from under the shoe, improving grip on wet surfaces, and combined with a natural gum-rubber outsole, you'll be standing upright on deck all day long.

MSRP: \$74.99



2 HUK WOMEN'S CURRENT CAMO ICON X SHIRT

The Huk Camo Icon X long-sleeve shirt for ladies is built to perform on the water with UPF 30 sun protection and breathable, vented panels along the back, sides, and arms. Internal Cooling Element (ICE) technology causes an endothermic reaction on contact with sweat or moisture, lowering your body temperature so you stay cool. This shirt features Huk graphics on the chest, back, and left arm for a professional look. The shirt is made of a durable but lightweight, 100% polyester stretch knit that moves with you. It's available with or without a hoodie.

MSRP: \$49.99 and up



3 COSTA DEL MAR SUNGLASSES

The hub of Southern California's fishing, beachy and outdoors lifestyle, Del Mar, is a place of passion where the living is easy. The Costa Del Mar frame designs are laid-back and timeless. The Del Mar series polarized sunglasses come in a medium fit for everything from checking the surf to watching the ponies run, available in four lens colors.

MSRP: \$189.99 and up

4 TOADFISH OUTFITTERS' SPATULA, CAN COOLER AND SHRIMP CLEANING TOOL

The spatula has a built-in spoon rest; the shrimp cleaner deveins, peels and butterflies shrimp in one motion. The can cooler has a non-tipping feature.

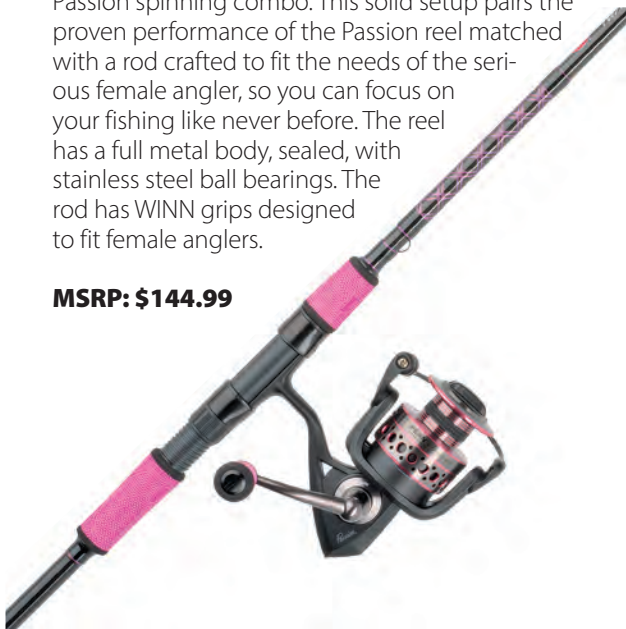
**MSRP: spatula, \$23.99;
can cooler, \$21.99;
shrimp tool, \$23.99**



5 PENN PASSION COMBO

Take a back seat to no one when you fish the Penn Passion spinning combo. This solid setup pairs the proven performance of the Passion reel matched with a rod crafted to fit the needs of the serious female angler, so you can focus on your fishing like never before. The reel has a full metal body, sealed, with stainless steel ball bearings. The rod has WINN grips designed to fit female anglers.

MSRP: \$144.99



HUNTING SEASONS

SPECIES	SEASON DATES	BAG LIMIT	POSSESSION LIMIT
Doves	Sept. 5-Oct. 18 (n), Sept. 5-20 (s)	15	45
	Oct. 24-Nov. 21 (n), Oct. 10-Nov. 8 (s)		
	Dec. 23-Jan. 8 (n), Dec. 19-Jan. 31 (s)		
Quail	Nov. 26-March 6	8	
Rabbit	Oct. 17-Feb. 28	8	
Squirrel (fall)	Oct. 1-Feb. 28	8	
Squirrel (spr)	May 15-June 1	4	
Raccoon	July 1-Sept. 30	1 raccoon per party	
Rac/Opp/Bobct	Oct. 1-Oct. 31 (food/sport)	5/day, 8/party	
	Nov. 1-Feb. 28 (food/sport/pelt)	No limit	
Rails			
King & Clapper	Sept. 1-Oct. 4, Nov. 26-Dec. 31	15	45
Sora & Virginia	Sept. 1-Oct. 4, Nov. 26-Dec. 31	25	75
Gallinules	Sept. 1-Oct. 4, Nov. 26-Dec. 31	15	45
Snipe	Nov. 14 - Feb. 28	8	24
Crow	Nov. 7 - Feb. 28	No limit	No limit
Woodcock	Dec. 18 - Jan. 31	3	9
Wild Turkey			
Fall season	Oct. 15-Nov. 15 (permit, selected counties)	2 per season (may be either sex)	
Spring season	March 15-May 1	1/day, 3/season, longbeards only	
Youth season	March 8-14	1/day, 3/season, bearded birds only	

WATERFOWL SEASONS

SPECIES	DATES	BAG LIMIT
Duck	Teal only: Sept. 12-27	6
	Nov. 27-29, Dec. 4-6	6
	Dec. 9-Jan. 31	
Geese (Canada, blue, Ross, white-fronted, brant)	Sept. 1-30	5
	Nov. 13-29, Dec. 4-6,	Canada 3, Brant 1
	Dec. 9-Jan. 31	Snow/blue/Ross 20 White-fronted 3
Light Geese conservation	Oct. 1-Nov. 12, Feb. 1-5, Feb. 8-March 31	No limit

DEER SEASON

ZONE	ARCHERY	PRIM WEAPON	GUNS
Northeast	Oct. 1-Nov. 20	Dec. 2-15	Nov. 21-Dec. 1 (dogs)
	Nov. 9-20 (antlerless primitive weapon)		Dec. 16-23 (no dogs)
	Jan. 21-31 (archery/primitive weapon)		Dec. 24-Jan. 20(dogs) Nov. 7-20 (youth)
East Central	Oct. 1-Nov. 20	Dec. 2-15	Nov. 21-Dec. 1 (dogs)
	Nov. 9-20 (antlerless primitive weapon)		Dec. 16-23 (no dogs)
	Jan. 21-31 (archery-primitive weapon)		Dec. 24-Jan. 20(dogs) Nov. 7-20 (youth)
Southwest	Oct. 1-Nov. 20	Dec. 2-15	Nov. 21-Dec. 1 (dogs)
	Nov. 9-20 (antlerless primitive weapon)		Dec. 16-23 (no dogs)
	Jan. 21-31 (archery-primitive weapon)		Dec. 24-Jan.20(dogs) Nov. 7-Jan. 20 (youth)
Southeast	Oct. 15-Nov. 20	Dec. 2-15	Nov. 21-Dec. 1 (dogs)
	Jan. 21-31 (either-sex arch-primitive)		Dec. 16-23 (no dogs)
	Feb. 1-15 (archery-primitive bucks only)		Dec. 24-Jan. 20(dogs) Nov. 21-Feb. 15 (yth)
Delta/South Delta	Oct. 1-Nov. 20	Dec. 2-15	Nov. 21-Jan. 1 (dogs)
	Nov. 9-20 (antlerless primitive weapon)		Dec. 16-23 (no dogs)
	Jan. 21-31 (archery primitive weapon)		Dec. 24-Jan. 22(dogs) Nov. 7-Jan. 20 (youth)



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 2021 PrimeTimes Wall Calendar. \$13.95 (plus \$4 s&h). Know the best days, best times, and their relative strengths for all of 2021 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 2021, the year's best periods, a look ahead at 2022, and more. Comes with FREE 2021 Astro Tables pocket calendar, which sells separately for \$8.95, plus \$3 s&h.
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2021 MAY	BEST DAYS				LUNAR PERIODS				TIMES OCCURRING AT NIGHT ARE SHADED	
	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCL	VALUE	MOON RISE	MOON OVERHEAD	MOON SET		MOON UNDERFOOT
Sat 1					31	12:29 AM	4:59 am - 5:45 am	10:15 AM	5:24 pm - 6:10 pm	Low
Sun 2					36	1:27 AM	5:58 am - 6:46 am	11:19 AM	6:23 pm - 7:11 pm	Low
Mon 3					46	2:16 AM	6:49 am - 7:47 am	12:24 PM	7:14 pm - 8:12 pm	Half
Tue 4					37	2:57 AM	7:36 am - 8:44 am	1:28 PM	8:01 pm - 9:09 pm	Low
Wed 5					33	3:31 AM	8:14 am - 9:40 am	2:30 PM	8:39 pm - 10:05 pm	Low
Thu 6					35	4:01 AM	8:51 am - 10:33 am	3:29 PM	9:16 pm - 10:58 pm	Low
Fri 7					36	4:28 AM	9:25 am - 11:23 am	4:26 PM	9:50 pm - 11:48 pm	Low
Sat 8					48	4:54 AM	9:55 am - 12:13 pm	5:22 PM	10:20 pm - 12:38 am	Low
Sun 9					61	5:19 AM	10:27 am - 1:03 pm	6:18 PM	10:52 pm - 1:28 am	Low
Mon 10					72	5:46 AM	11:00 am - 1:52 pm	7:15 PM	11:25 pm - 2:17 am	Low
Tue 11					80	6:14 AM	11:34 am - 2:44 pm	8:12 PM	11:59 pm - Midnight	New & Apogee
Wed 12					72	6:45 AM	12:13 pm - 3:35 pm	9:09 PM	Midnight - 3:09 am	Low
Thu 13					65	7:20 AM	12:55 pm - 4:27 pm	10:06 PM	12:38 am - 4:00 am	Low
Fri 14					56	8:01 AM	1:42 pm - 5:18 pm	11:02 PM	1:20 am - 4:52 am	Low
Sat 15					53	8:47 AM	2:31 pm - 6:11 pm	11:54 PM	2:07 am - 5:43 am	High
Sun 16					54	9:40 AM	3:23 pm - 7:03 pm		2:56 am - 6:36 am	Low
Mon 17					55	10:37 AM	4:18 pm - 7:50 pm	12:42 AM	3:48 am - 7:28 am	Low
Tue 18					59	11:38 AM	5:15 pm - 8:35 pm	1:25 AM	4:43 am - 8:15 am	Low
Wed 19					68	12:42 PM	6:11 pm - 9:17 pm	2:04 AM	5:40 am - 9:00 am	Half
Thu 20					56	1:47 PM	7:08 pm - 9:58 pm	2:38 AM	6:36 am - 9:42 am	Low
Fri 21					49	2:53 PM	8:07 pm - 10:37 pm	3:10 AM	7:33 am - 10:23 am	Low
Sat 22					46	4:01 PM	9:08 pm - 11:14 pm	3:41 AM	8:32 am - 11:02 am	Low
Sun 23					54	5:11 PM	10:10 pm - 11:56 pm	4:13 AM	9:33 am - 11:39 am	Low
Mon 24					62	6:24 PM	11:17 pm - Midnight	4:46 AM	10:35 am - 12:21 pm	Low
Tue 25					73	7:40 PM	Midnight - 12:39 am	5:24 AM	11:42 am - 1:04 pm	Perigee
Wed 26					75	8:56 PM	12:24 am - 1:30 am	6:07 AM	12:49 pm - 1:55 pm	Full
Thu 27					62	10:09 PM	1:33 am - 2:25 am	6:58 AM	1:58 pm - 2:50 pm	Low
Fri 28					50	11:14 PM	2:40 am - 3:26 am	7:56 AM	3:05 pm - 3:51 pm	Low
Sat 29					39		3:44 am - 4:30 am	9:01 AM	4:09 pm - 4:55 pm	Low
Sun 30					34	12:09 AM	4:41 am - 5:33 am	10:09 AM	5:06 pm - 5:58 pm	Low
Mon 31					35	12:54 AM	5:30 am - 6:36 am	11:16 AM	5:55 pm - 7:01 pm	Low

25 50 75
AVERAGE

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ANY LUNAR PERIOD IS ENHANCED WHEN IT OVERLAPS A KEY SOLAR PERIOD. THE BEST OF THESE OVERLAPS ARE DESIGNATED BY THE SUN SYMBOLS:
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