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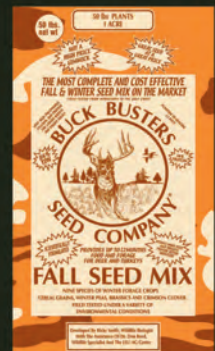
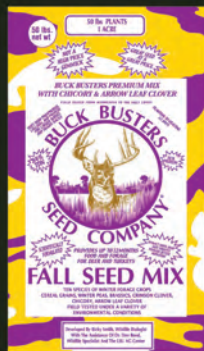
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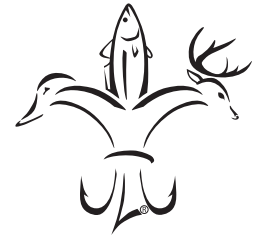
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**Volume 23 | No 9**

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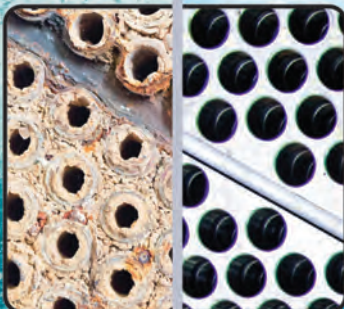
Deer season is right around the corner for Mississippi hunters, who can check out WMA prospects, make some mock scrapes, find big bucks on small tracts of land and refurbish last season's stands. Photo by Matt Hansen.



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Outdoor  
**UPDATE**  
with  
**Mike Giles**



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

# SEPTEMBER: FINALLY, TIME TO GO!

## FALL HUNTING SEASONS BEGIN ACROSS MISSISSIPPI

**F**all harvest time begins in September, as hunters head to the woods and waters in search of a wide variety of fish and game. If you're looking for an excuse to get back outdoors, then dove season is the reason many hunters will venture into the field this month. Labor Day weekend is traditionally the time when most hunters get out their shotguns and begin hunting. It's a time to head to deer camp and begin preparations for the upcoming seasons, while also getting in some much-needed hunting and shooting opportunities.



Mississippi hunters get a jump on duck season this month with a couple of weeks of teal hunting.

The array of hunting seasons in September begins with is the Canada goose season opener on Sept. 1, running through Sept. 30. Gallinules and rails also open on Sept. 1 and run through the end of the month.

Dove season officially begins Sept. 4, and hunters across the state will be able to harvest the speedy and scrumptious birds. There's nothing like a dove hunt with sizzling action.

The Sept. 11-26 teal season is another popular opportunity, as the little ducks descend on marshes and shallow lakes across Mississippi, offering fast-paced, challenging shooting action if you find the right

spots. They are also tasty.

After doves, alligator hunts are the most sought-after opportunities for young and adult hunters; the season officially opened Aug. 27 and runs through Sept. 6 for those

who have drawn tags. It's one of the most-anticipated hunting events of the year, as hunters and anglers team up to in search of gators.

Youth season for squirrels runs Sept. 24-30, offering youngsters a chance to get back in the woods in search of one of the fall's most-popular species.

Mississippi deer biologists are providing good news in all regions; they expect good public-hunting across the state on a number of well-managed tracts. Whether you want to harvest an antlerless deer, a buck or a trophy, the opportunities abound, and we cover some of the top hunting areas in each WMA region in this issue.

Elsewhere, Kinny Haddox relays some tricks of the trade when it comes to fooling deer; he tells us how to "Fake 'em out." Making mock scrapes can put hunters a step up on finding deer and places to hunt once the season opens. There are no shortcuts to finding and harvesting bucks, but Haddox explains how to put the odds in the hunter's favor.

Bradley Williams discusses how it doesn't take a 500-acre lease to kill a big buck. Look for timely advice and good information on hunting deer on small tracts; it's a reminder that you don't have to spend a fortune to harvest deer. It doesn't take hundreds of acres of land to kill a big buck either, if you know how to find them and what to look for.

Tiny spinners can be panfish killers across Mississippi, especially as summer wanes and fish need a little convincing. Writer John Felsher reminds us that panfish are still around and ripe for the taking if you offer them the right lures. There's nothing much more appealing to bream than light jigs and tiny spinners.

Felsher also shows us how to "drum up some business" in the saltwater. Black drum make a great September target along Mississippi's Gulf Coast, especially if you want to battle a huge, strong fish. Read about locating and catching these powerful yet tasty fish. ■

# DOVE SEASON BEGINS STATEWIDE ON SEPT. 4

Thousands of hunters will gather around their camps, farms and public hunting lands to celebrate the time-honored tradition of dove hunting with family and friends this month. There's just nothing much more fun than spending an afternoon in the fall shooting doves and having fun with friends. There will be a lot of missing, too, but that's just a part of the annual fall hunting kickoff.

Many opening weekend dove hunts will serve up plenty of scrumptious food, drinks, fellowship and lots of old-time story telling as friends and acquaintances gather together once again. Many haven't seen each other since the previous year's hunt, so it gives outdoor lovers a chance to get the whole family involved, to renew old friendships and to make new friendships.

There's just nothing quite like a Delta Dove hunt over sunflowers, millet, wheat or sorghum. One September near Greenwood, friends from all over the South gathered for a shoot over a huge sunflower field. Thousands of shots were fired, an untold number of doves were picked up and many young hunters got their start with a taste of an action packed hunt

While there are a few pay hunts around the state, and plenty of private-land hunts, there is also ample opportunities at our state owned Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs).

## WMA YOUTH DOVE HUNTS

Special youth dove hunting opportunities will be offered on the following WMAs:

**Black Prairie WMA, Sept. 6:** The hunt is open to youth 15 years and younger. Youth hunters must apply online at [www.mdwfp.com](http://www.mdwfp.com). Participants will be selected by a random, online drawing. A parent or guardian over 21 years of age must accompany each youth hunter during the entire hunt. Lunch will be provided. The hunt will begin at 2 p.m. and will conclude at sunset.

Dove hunting will be allowed on designated fields after the Sept. 6 youth hunt from 2 p.m. until sunset on Wednesdays and Saturdays during the first season only.

**Hell Creek WMA, Sept. 4:** A opening day youth hunt will be

## 2021-22 MISSISSIPPI DOVE SEASON DATES

**North Zone: Areas north of US 84, plus areas south of US 84 and west of MS 35.**

Sept. 4-Oct. 17;  
Oct. 30-Nov. 28;  
Dec. 25, 2021-Jan. 9, 2022.

**South Zone: Areas south of US 84 and east of MS 35.**

Sept. 4-19;  
Oct. 9 - Nov. 7;  
Dec. 19-Jan. 31, 2022.

held on a designated millet and sorghum field from 2 p.m. until sunset. From Sept. 5-Oct. 17, hunting hours are 2 p.m. until sunset. No hunting during scheduled deer gun hunts (Oct. 6-9 and Oct. 13-16).

**Leroy Percy WMA, Sept. 4:** Youth hunters with a guardian can hunt from 2 p.m. until sunset. Guardians accompanying youths may hunt. One guardian is allowed per youth and is defined as a person over 21 years of age with a valid hunting license. The youth and guardian must hunt together in one of the 25 designated hunting locations.

Hunting continues Sept. 8 to Oct. 16 on Wednesdays and Saturdays only. Hunting hours are 2 p.m. until sunset. The number of hunters on the dove field is limited to 25.

**Muscadine Farms WMA, Sept. 6:** A youth draw dove hunt will be held on designated fields. Youths must apply online at [www.mdwfp.com](http://www.mdwfp.com). Participants will be selected by a random, online drawing. Drawn participants must check in at the WMA Headquarters on Sept. 6 between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Lunch will be provided. From Sept. 11 to Oct. 17, dove hunting will be allowed on Saturdays, Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2 p.m. until sunset. ■

*For more WMA dove hunting information check out the Dove Program link at [www.mdwfp.com](http://www.mdwfp.com).*



# ROSS BARNETT'S SEPTEMBER SLAB ACTION IS GREAT

**B**rad Chappell cast towards the open water of Ross Barnett Reservoir and slowly let his Bobby Garland Itty Bitty jig-n-grub glide slowly towards the bottom as he watched his depth finder screen. Just as his jig neared a school of crappie surrounding a stump, a massive slab nailed one of the jigs. Chappell whipped the rod back and drove the hook deep into the fish and fought him to the boat before landing him with the dip net. The crappie was a solid 2-pounder.

While many anglers have stowed their fishing gear and winterized their boats, Chappell is enjoying one of the best times to catch crappie on Ross Barnett — and he's got plenty of room to fish. September is a time for catching crappie in deep water, and Chappell spends most of his time searching for fish and guiding anglers.

Chappell has been a guide on Ross Barnett for years. He's got a boat rigged and ready for anglers of any age or proficiency level, and he likes to share his crappie expertise and knowledge with others. Depending upon the weather and location of fish, Chappell can catch them during in September by long-lining, spider-rigging or by casting a jig to crappie around submerged stumps and brush piles.

Chappell has hundreds of stumps and brush piles marked; he likes to fish the main lake from the dam to mid-lake in August and September. The good thing for anglers still searching for crappie is that they are still on their summer pattern through most of September; that means fish are concentrated around stumps and brush.

"There's no use getting to the lake at daylight, because the sun needs to get up above the horizon to put the crappie on the submerged structure," Chappell said. "They'll be scattered and hard to find during the early morning hours."

"Technology has improved so much that it's changed the crappie world, as most of the top anglers use the Live Scopes to help them find and locate big crappie," Chappell said. "I've spent a lot of time on the water learning the Live Scopes, and they are a game changer."

"We spend time fishing where the fish are now and not wondering if there are any on the submerged structure. We cover a lot of water going from stump to stump until we find active fish, and then we'll catch them."

Angler's need to troll around, searching for underwater ledges with structure and shad to find crappie. If you have a good depth finder, it shouldn't be a problem finding fish.

Watching a Live Scope is a little like watching a live video game,



Guide Brad Chappell has big crappie located on stumps and brush piles across Ross Barnett Reservoir through September.

as you can watch the screen and see your lures sink all the way to the fish. Whether you want to fish with jigs or minnows, the crappie are there, and they're ripe for the picking. ■

*For more information or to book a guided trip at Ross Barnett with Brad Chappell, call 601-317-6681 or email [bchappell2680@gmail.com](mailto:bchappell2680@gmail.com).*

# GREAT ACTION: BRANDON WOMAN WRESTLES GATOR

**T**here's nothing much more powerful than an outraged alligator on your line, just inches from the boat. This year's special alligator season is anticipated by people of all ages, but the gators are not tame; they are extremely dangerous, as many hunters have learned when trying to wrestle them into a boat.

Krystin Waller Smith of Brandon is fearless and relishes the opportunity to hunt anything that walks, swims or flies in the Magnolia State. It should come as no surprise that she would hunt and wrestle alligators. She drew a gator hunt last year and had an opportunity to harvest a two alligators, which she had done before.

Shortly after spotting a monster gator, Smith hooked it, and the gator exploded through the water's surface fighting wildly before it dove down to the depths with Smith holding on with all the strength she could muster. With the gator pulling hard, she slid across the boat's deck and narrowly averted being pulled overboard.

"That gator pulled the 20-foot Lowe boat around like it was a cork floating on the water," Smith said. "I was using a Gatortaker hook to catch him, and it took three hooks, a harpoon and two snares to finally subdue him and get him to the boat."

"After getting only 3 hours of sleep in 48 hours, and after Hunter Parrett spent four years trying to catch this one, I finally filled my big gator tag and harvested my personal best at 10 feet, 5 inches, with a belly girth of 44½ inches and a tail girth of 31 inches. He weighed 452 pounds. It was all I could do to hang on and stay in the boat."

Since Mississippi's alligator population has exploded and they have become a nuisance, eating pets and, in some instances, attacking people, their numbers had to be reduced.

"This year, my goal was to harvest both alligators and fill my tags," Smith said. "I wanted a huge, runt gator to beat my personal best, and I wanted to top my season off with a monster gator, too."

Smith quickly caught and dispatched a 6-foot-11½ runt the first night out.

"I was fortunate to hunt with a strong team led by Hunter Parrett and Joey King," Smith said. "Gator hunting is truly a team



Photo courtesy Krystin Waller Smith

effort, and it takes everyone pulling together to be successful."

"On the second night out, we pulled up to the monster gator known as Longhead," King said. "I had located him back in 2016, and my dad hunted him one night in 2018. Well ... we pulled up and saw him again, and the hunt was on."

It took a few hours before they could get close enough to get a good cast on him. Regulations require gators to be hooked before they are dispatched, to make sure you don't lose one and then harvest more than one gator. That entails hooking him and wearing him down and bringing him to the boat, just like a large catfish. It is sho-nuff dangerous.

"We stayed on Longhead from 11:30 to 4:45," Smith said. "Each time we'd approach him, he would dive and stay under about 15 minutes. He played cat and mouse with us for a long time until we got close enough to make a good cast."

As soon as the alligator was in position, Smith knifed it and then followed up with a quick .410 shot for good measure.

Smith had the gator processed by Red Antler Processing near Yazoo City and credited King, Parrett (the owner of Gatortaker) and Shane Smith of Red Antler. She has enjoyed some fine gator sausage since then. ■



# MISSISSIPPI TEAM WINS LADIES' BOWFISHING WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT

**T**he Mississippi team of Romy Whistle, Bailey Garrison and Misty Page won the 2021 Ladies Bowfishing World Championship on Oklahoma's Ft. Gibson Lake in August.

Whistle, from Nesbit, has been bowfishing for the past 5 or 6 years. She saw information advertising the tournament, which was the first all-women's bowfishing event.

"I saw the advertisement and thought it would be fun, so I asked Bailey Garrison and Misty Page if they wanted to go with me and compete, and they were all in," Whistle said. "We represented Mississippi in a field of 22 entries and proudly brought home the team championship, along with a few individual awards.

"We had planned to go have fun, say we were part of the first-ever all-women's championship, meet some new bowfishing peeps and maybe snag a prize or two. But to come home with a load of awards was way more than expected, and we were



Photos courtesy Romy Whistle

**Bailey Garrison took home multiple awards from the first Ladies Bowfishing World Championship Tournament in Oklahoma.**

certainly grateful for the adventure and glad to say we did Mississippi proud."

Garrison, a Byhalia resident who recently set the world record blue catfish by bow in Arkansas, finished second in both the day-shooter and night-shooter divisions. She also won the Molly Carpenter Hagler Memorial Award for her first-place finish as overall top shooter for the tournament.

Garrison also shot the biggest fish, a 25-pound gar.

Page, also from Byhalia, placed fourth in the night-shooter division.

"Randy Woodward is the founder of the tournament and (the) man behind the scenes who made this tournament happen," Whistle said. "He is also the championship director for the Youth Bowfishing Association, and their championship tournament was also held at this same lake. It is a great venue for any kid wanting to participate in the sport, and they had 150 entries this year. He dedicates a lot of time and deserves to be acknowledged for all he does for the sport." ■

**Romy Whistle of Nesbit, Bailey Garrison and Misty Page, both from Byhalia, racked up the awards at the first Ladies Bowfishing World Championship.**



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# Hunting/Fishing SCRAPBOOK



**Sonya Rainey**

Sonya Rainey of Philadelphia caught these huge crappie at Grenada Lake on July 22. She proved fish still bite even when it's smoking hot in the summer.



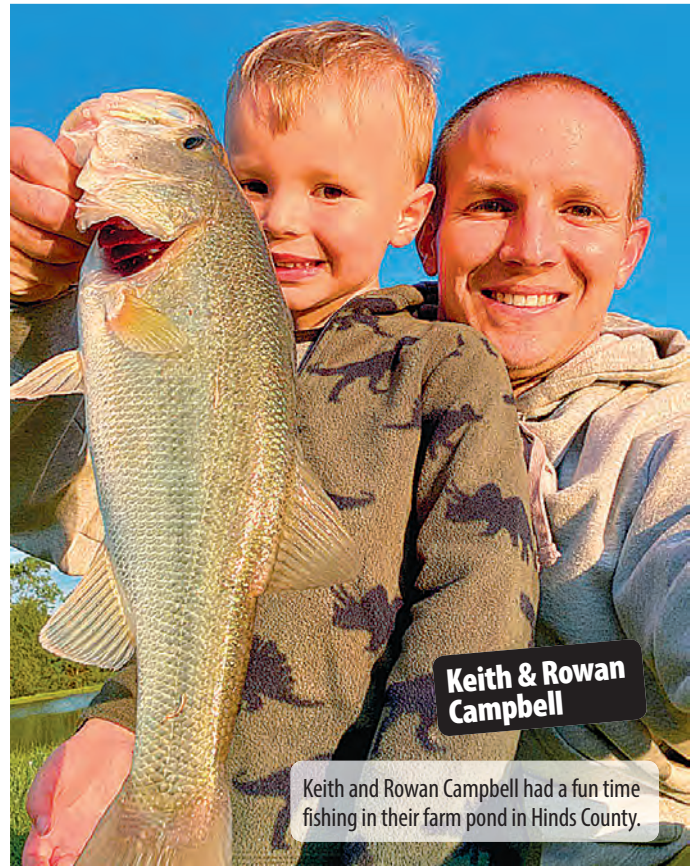
**Manning Moody**

Manning Moody caught this 15-pound red snapper out of Gulfport.



**Mark Chills**

Mark Chills loves to spend his time bass fishing when he's not on the clock. He caught these two beauties from a private lake in Booneville.



**Keith & Rowan Campbell**

Keith and Rowan Campbell had a fun time fishing in their farm pond in Hinds County.

## GOT PICS? We want 'em

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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.

# MISSISSIPPI CERTIFIES FIVE STATE RECORDS

**T**he Mississippi Department of Marine Resources certified five state saltwater fishing records in August. Mason Watts, 12, of Long Beach set the youth record for red snapper (*Litjanus campechanus*) with a fish weighing 19 pounds, 1 ounce. Watts caught the fish using conventional tackle.

David Rogers of Coden, Ala., caught the state-record bull shark (*Carcharhinus leucas*) on conventional tackle. It weighed 377 pounds, 4 ounces. It broke by 23 pounds the previous record, set in July 2017.

Jimmy Boleware of Gautier caught a 16-pound, 8-ounce keel-tail pomfret (*taractes rubescens*) on conventional tackle to set a state record.

Doug Borries of Ocean Springs set two fly-fishing records. The first was for shark sucker (*Echeneis naucrates*) with a fish weighing 3 pounds, 4.8 ounces, and the second was for little tunny (*Euthynnus alletteratus*) with a fish weighing 14 pounds, 2.4 ounces. ■

Photos courtesy MDMR



Mason Watts caught this 19-pound, 1-ounce red snapper to set a state youth record.



David Rogers' 377-pound bull shark set a Mississippi record.



Jimmy Boleware's keeltail pomfret was a conventional tackle state record.



Doug Borries' shark sucker was a Mississippi fly-fishing record.



Doug Borries' little tunny was also a Mississippi fly-rod record.

# NON-RESIDENT, PUBLIC-LAND TURKEY REGS MAY CHANGE

**T** From News Reports  
he Commission on Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks at its July meeting voted to adopt a set of proposals to curb hunting pressure from non-residents visiting public lands during the early weeks of Mississippi's spring turkey season.

With one of the nation's earliest opening days, Mississippi has been a popular destination for traveling hunters hoping to kick off their season before its arrival in their home states. Non-resident license sales during the season's initial weeks have doubled over the past two years, prompting public calls to address the issue.

"Our goal is simply to cap the number of non-resident hunters on public lands to be more in line with historic norms," said Adam Butler, turkey program coordinator for the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks. "Quality hunting cannot be maintained on a limited resource when faced with ever-increasing pressure. This process will allow for some non-resident access but will help keep those numbers at a sustainable level."

Under the proposal, non-residents would not be eligible to hunt open public lands during the season's first 14 days without first receiving a special, no-cost license endorsement. This new license privilege will be offered only in limited numbers via a draw-hunt system.

Hunters desiring to hunt Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) during the existing, permit-only season (March 15-28) may still apply for these hunts. This proposal, and its license requirement, will not apply to non-residents hunting on private lands.

The new non-resident drawing will open for applications in mid-January. Additional details will be released in the coming months. The proposed rule is in a comment period and is set for final adoption at another Commission meeting. ■



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Includes taking 2 hogs and guide services

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Consecutive Friday & Saturday night Hunts: **\$900**  
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# KILL SWITCHES NOW REQUIRED FOR SOME BOATS

**B**y Brian Cope  
Boaters should be aware of a new federal law concerning the use of kill switches, also known as engine cut off switches (ECOS). The law requires that operators wear their kill switches when at planing speed while operating boats less than 26 feet long.

The law that was passed by the U.S. Congress as part of Section 8316 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2021.

Kill switches are typically made up of lanyards that boat operators clip onto their life jackets, around their wrists, or to their clothing. The lanyard has a clip connected to the vessel's cut-off switch. If the operator is thrown overboard, the clip disconnects, shutting off the engine. Wireless cut-off switches are also available. These allow boat operators to move about the boat while in motion but kill the engine if a certain distance is exceeded.

Kill switches are not required at idle or when not on plane.

The U.S. Coast Guard is enforcing the law nationwide. Local game wardens and other law enforcement agencies also have the authority to enforce the law.

According to the USCG, boaters are not required to use a kill switch or ECOS if:

- The operator is in an enclosed helm;
- The boat is off plane and not exceeding hull speed;
- During docking maneuvers or while at idle;
- The vessel does not have a kill switch and is not required to have one;
- The boat generates less than 115 pounds of static thrust

(approximately full throttle of a 3HP outboard);

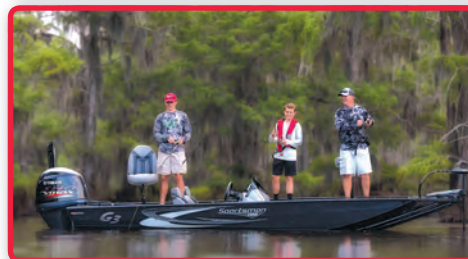
- The boat is at least 26 feet long;

You can visit the U.S. Coast Guard's website ([www.uscg.mil](http://www.uscg.mil)) to learn more about the new law. ■

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**YAMAHA**

Berkley's new Powerbait Gilly won ICAST Best of Show, the first time the award has gone to a fishing bait.

# BERKLEY GILLY STEALS SHOW AT ICAST



Photos by Kinny Haddox

**T** By Kinny Haddox  
he Orlando Exhibition Hall, at 7 million square feet, was full of fishing baits, gear and accessories at ICAST — a Disney World for fishermen.

Nearly 1,000 manufacturers and businesses displayed everything you can think of at the International Convention of Allied Sportfishing Trades annual show, held July 21-23. Picking favorites is almost impossible, but here are a few things that hooked one's attention:

**Berkley's PowerBait Gilly.** This

amazingly lifelike, bass-fishing lure was voted 2021 Best In Show. The soft-plastic lure, shaped like a bluegill and infused with PowerBait flavor, could pass for a live, swimming bream, or it can be retrieved to perfectly mimic a wounded baitfish. It's the first bait to ever win Best of Show, a pretty big accomplishment. Gilly's will be available this month in six standard and six HD colors in three sizes (90mm, 110mm and 130mm), selling for \$6.49 to \$7.49.

**ABU Garcia Ambassadeur Pro Rocket**

**100th Anniversary**

**Reel.** This iconic reel brings back memories. The silver Ambassadeur 5000 was many bass anglers' first open, baitcasting reel. The reel continues the 100 year tradition of success. It's not flashy nor made of space-age components, but it's a positive move back to the future and sure to be a hit with fishermen and collectors.

**Buzbe Soft Sides.**

Buzbe, based in Prairieville, created a buzz with a soft-sided tackle storage line, so new that only prototypes were available at ICAST. Plastic

windows on the boxes are a clear plus to add to their modular tackle-management line. They'll be available in late fall.

**B'n'M Poles 75 series.** Another celebration of longevity: 75 years for the old Broom & Mop Company. This new rod-and-reel combo with diamond shapes and gold colors is almost too good-looking to fish with. It's light and powerful, and the extended grip that allows comfort for a long day of single-poling shows why B'n'M continues to be the No. 1 crappie pole company in the world. The balance and feel of the gear is thump on.

**Bobby Garland Itty Bit Slab Hunt'r.**

Go small or go home seems to be a crappie lure theme, and this 1¼-inch plastic recommended for ¼- and ½-ounce jig heads in all the popular Garland colors will slay some slabs.

**Emma Bean's Pesky Bug Spray and**

**Itch Reliever.** This is an all-natural product that repels everything from no-see-ums to mosquitoes, ticks and flies — and an itch reliever for spots that you might miss and get bit. It really works. And what outdoors lover doesn't need that?

**H&H Tipster.** Lowly catfish don't get much respect at this high-brow show, but Baton Rouge-based H&H is offering a new, floating catfishing system that is so well-designed, easy and economical, why would anybody want to make homemade rigs any more?

**Crappie Tamer.** This year's new innovation in Road Runner-type lures has a ringed body with a flaired tail to double the vibration and create more sound. The



Buzbe's soft-sided tackle boxes were a hit at ICAST. They'll be available to the public this fall.

TTI Blakemore lure runs smooth in the water, too.

**Mossy Oak Wellness Fuel.** The heat of summer was a great time to release hydration powerstick packs. Great tasting, easy to pack and ready to mix in a bottle of water in sugar-free Energy, Focus, Immune and Recovery blends.

**Crappie Magnet Loc n' Knoc.** ICAST featured crappie baits galore, but it was a little chunk of lead that caught my eye. It slips on your line like a slip cork, twists to lock into place and slides down your line to knock-up jig off a stump and save you \$3 every time. Nice.

**Honey Hole.** Angling apparel is a hot, new part of the outdoor market. None is more attractive, durable or "in" than the Honey Hole line, another Louisiana company from West Monroe. There's a fishing cap for every day of the year if you want.

**Catch Some Relief (CSR) cream.** A small application of this gave my achy knees relief in less than 10 minutes. Cannabinoid based cream is controversial, but CBD comes from hemp, not marijuana. If you are an achy outdoorsman, it does help a lot of people. I'm not sure it will relieve the stress of not catching fish, however. ■

*More details on all these products are available from their manufacturers online.*



The Tipster is one of H&H's new products that is sure to catch fish and the eye of catfishermen.









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By Mike Giles

MISSISSIPPI BIOLOGISTS EXPECT GOOD PUBLIC-LAND HUNTING ACROSS THE STATE ON A NUMBER OF WELL-MANAGED PROPERTIES.

# WMA DEER REPORT

**C**rack. Pop. I slowly turned my head to the left and caught movement out of the corner of my eye, about 100 yards to my north at the edge of a thicket.

Focusing on the area, I spotted tall, wide antlers protruding from either side of a tree as a buck entered the thicket, angling towards me. He was a shooter, but would I have a shot? My adrenaline flowed freely as I scanned both sides of the thicket that ran from the north to the south of my stand.

Suddenly, a doe walked through an opening about 50 yards closer, angling directly towards me. I dared not twitch as she passed by only 15 yards to my left; the buck was obviously trailing her. As soon as the buck appeared, I centered the crosshairs on him and squeezed my trigger as he walked into an opening.

Tic-Boom! My .270 Remington roared, and the buck crumpled in a heap, never even twitching. Arriving at the kill zone, I was astonished at the size of the buck, which sported a tall, thick, 20-inch-wide set of antlers with eight points. The time of kill was 10:40 a.m., Jan. 15, 2021. This old, public-land buck was aged at 6½ to 7½ years old, and a hot doe had finally been his demise.

You can't always expect to kill a trophy buck on public land, but there is that possibility on any given day in many of our state's Wildlife Management Areas. Read along, and we'll cover some of the best public-land deer hunting areas Mississippi has to offer.

## SOUTHWEST REGION

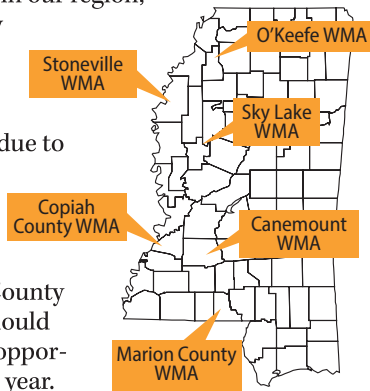
Josh Moree, a biologist with the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks, expects a good season in his neck of the woods.

“It should be a great year in our region, as the rains have definitely helped the deer with lots of browse growth,” Moree said. “There should be a good acorn crop this year due to the weather and rainfall amounts, after last year’s crop wasn’t quite as good.”

Copiah County, Marion County and Canemount WMAs should provide excellent harvest opportunities for deer again this year.

“Copiah County has some good bucks harvested every year, even though there’s a lot of hunting pressure on the area due to its close proximity to Jackson,” Moree said. “The early season archery outlook is good, and there’s usually not a lot of hunting pressure during the early season. We have excellent opportunities to harvest a deer with a bow during October, November and late January.”

Marion County has been averaging 55 to 60 deer harvested the past few years, and additional doe-harvest opportunities have been added for youth hunters from Jan. 4-31. Harvest opportunities should be excellent again this year.



“O’Keefe has 17 food plots; they’re scattered all over the WMA, which has about 6,300 acres — half of it good for deer hunting,” Thompson said. “There’s a lot of older timber on O’Keefe that gives hunters a better opportunity to hunt deer, also.”

## SOUTHEAST REGION

Biologist Drew Arnold pointed to Leaf River, Little Biloxi and Pascagoula WMAs as great places to hunt this fall and winter. “Leaf River would probably be your best bet for harvesting quality and quantity of deer in the Southeast Region,” Arnold said. “There’s a lot of quality forage, and we have really high deer numbers here, too.”

“A sleeper is Little Biloxi, as there’s some decent deer there, as well as at Wolf River.”

This year, an added bonus for this region is the creation of a new hunting unit within the Pascagoula WMA.

“The Land Between the Creeks unit was purchased recently; (it) came into the state’s possession in 2020,” Arnold said. “It will be a draw unit; it was a private hunting camp prior to its purchase, so there should be a good opportunity to harvest a quality deer, if hunters that are drawn out will scout and put in the time and effort to learn the lay of the land and hunt hard.”

## NORTHWEST REGION ➤

WMAs that offer draw hunts or are managed with most-strict antler restrictions offer opportunities at fine, quality bucks.

## NORTH DELTA REGION

O’Keefe, Sky Lake and Stoneville WMAs should be your best bets to harvest a quality deer in this region, according to biologist Weston Thompson.

“Everything is looking pretty good in this region,” Thompson said. “Sky Lake is a draw hunt, and it provides an excellent opportunity to harvest a good buck.”

If you’re looking for a better-quality buck, O’Keefe has higher antler restrictions, and that gives people a little better chance at harvesting an older-aged, quality deer.

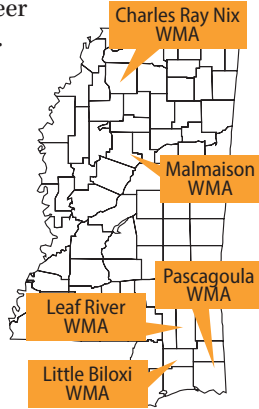


# NORTHWEST REGION

Biologist Brad Holder expects the same kind and quality of hunting this year as last.

“Overall, the 2021-22 season is expected to be similar to last season in terms of deer density and buck quality,” Holder said. “As with most years, buck quality is anticipated to be better on average at Charles Ray Nix and Malmaison WMAs. Hunting pressure and harvest were generally lower in the Northwest WMA region this past season, and that may mean a few more deer running around during the upcoming season.

“Although likely less severe than average winters in the northern U.S., the intense cold that gripped much of the southern United States in late February 2021 and brought record-breaking cold temperatures, plus significant accumulations of wintry precipitation to north Mississippi, likely placed additional stress on deer during an already stressful late-winter period,” Holder said.



“The prolonged cold may have delayed spring green-up and browse availability as well. It’s unknown if or to what extent herds may have been affected, but (it’s) likely dense herds were impacted more severely.”

“Assuming some adverse effects to deer body condition and development, recovery during spring and summer would have likely been better in portions of the Northwest WMA region with lower deer herds and/or better habitat within deer home ranges.”

Ample hunting opportunities exist at George P. Cossar State Park and Upper Sardis WMAs. Draw hunts for deer will be held on Charles Ray Nix and Cossar State Park WMAs. Malmaison and Upper Sardis WMAs are first-come, first-served and generally follow Delta or Northeast Unit regulations.



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

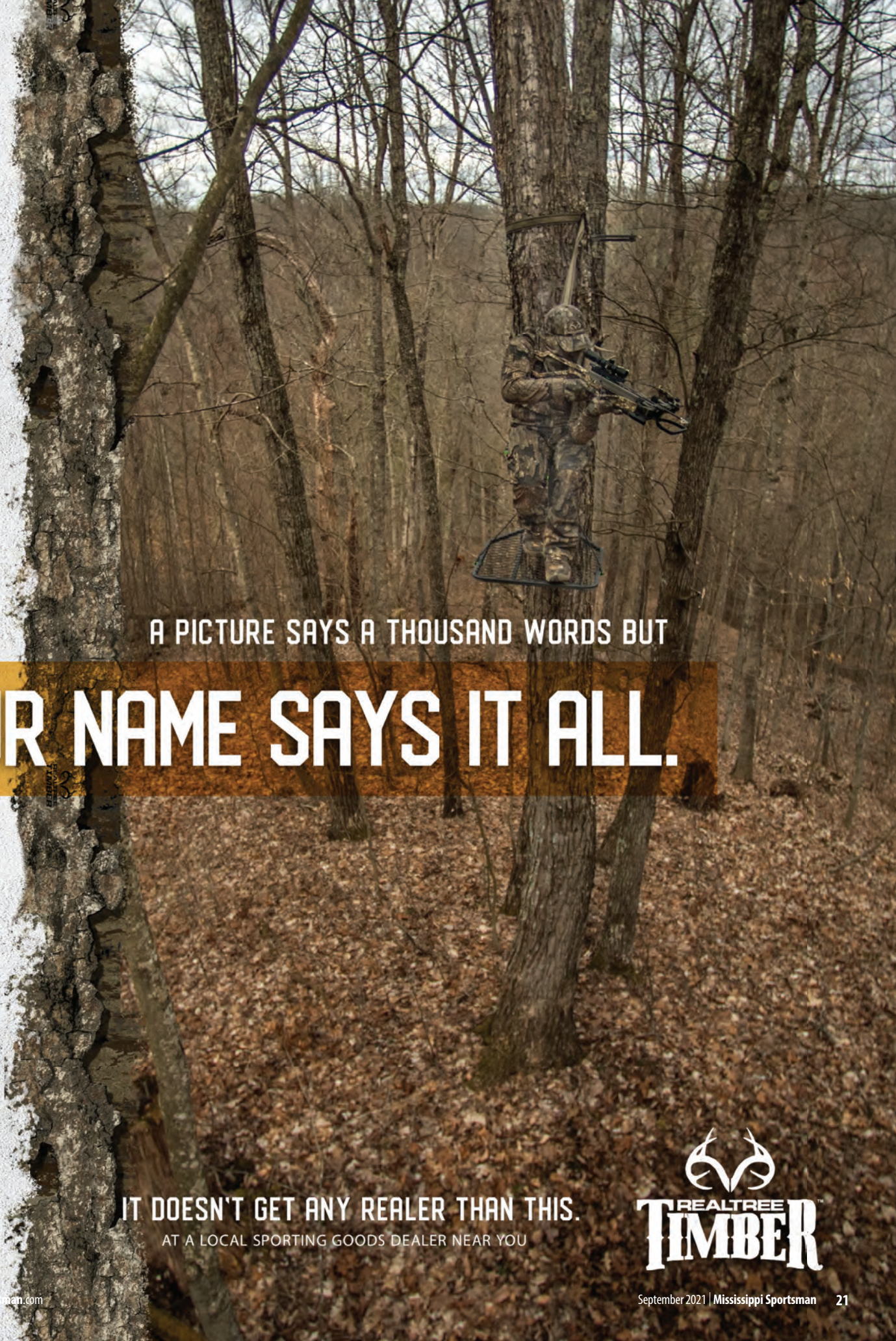
## NORTHEAST REGION >

The bitter cold weather that invaded Mississippi last winter might negatively affect deer habitat in some areas this year.





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A PICTURE SAYS A THOUSAND WORDS BUT

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The author killed this 8-point, 200-pound, 20-inch buck this past January on a hunt at Canemount WMA.

## NORTHEAST REGION

Nathan Blount, a biologist serving the Northwest Region, is happy about prospects for the 2021-22 deer season.

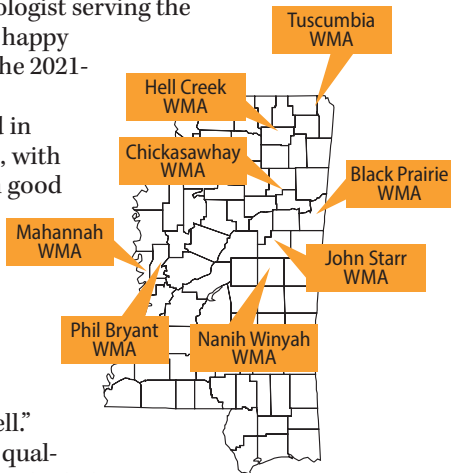
“We’re looking good in the Northeast region, with forage and browse in good shape,” Blount said. “The habitat is in good shape, and we’re seeing good antler growth. The acorns that are already on the trees look promising as well.”

Hunters looking for quality bucks shouldn’t overlook the WMAs along the Tenn-Tom Waterway.

“Canal and Divide Section grow some of the larger deer in the region and offer opportunities to harvest a quality buck,” Blount said. “Although access is harder along the Tenn-Tom, several bucks in the 130- to 140-inch range are harvested each year.”

“Hell Creek WMA has a good draw opportunity; we’ve got a lot of beans and corn growing there this year. Hunters must harvest a mature doe first, and then, they can harvest a buck.”

“Tuscumbia WMA is managed for waterfowl, but we have a new primitive weapons hunt in October, and the deer numbers are high,” Blount said. “This will be a draw hunt, with four hunts being held in October. “Chickasawhay WMA is probably the best bet to harvest a deer, as the numbers have risen there after 3 years with no doe harvest. There’s plenty of deer there.”



## EAST CENTRAL REGION

Biologist Chad Masley is confident that at least one East Central WMA will provide good hunting this season.

“Black Prairie is the best Draw Hunt opportunity in the region,” Masley said. “It has 6,000 acres of diverse habitat, with 1,600 acres of soybeans planted this year, and it has got everything a deer wants from agriculture to browse to mast-producing hardwood.”

Mature deer average from 190 pounds to 215 pounds, with several 4- and 5-year-old bucks harvested each year.

“We’re protecting the 3-year-old bucks and older,” Masley said. “Recent camera surveys show that we have quality mature bucks on Black Prairie now.”

“John Starr and Nanih Waiya are your best bets for harvesting a deer, as both have ample opportunities to harvest antlerless deer this year.”

Trim Cane is managed for waterfowl, but it has some really good, bucks and it’s open for youth and handicapped hunts on Saturday afternoons, by draw only. A few years ago, a young hunter harvested a trophy buck that sported a 160-inch rack.



A handful of Mississippi WMAs are offering draw hunts restricted to primitive weapons or just archery equipment this fall.

## SOUTH DELTA REGION

Although this region was adversely affected by flooding the past few years, it has some of the best habitat and almost everything a deer needs to thrive, and prospects are looking up once again.

Mahannah WMA continues to produce quality bucks and lots of deer almost every year, and it's probably considered the crown jewel of the South Delta due to the quality of the deer as well as its size.

Phil Bryant is the newest WMA; it features only a draw hunt for deer, and it's situated in prime Delta hunting land. Purchased just a few years ago, the WMA was open to limited hunting last year. The area was formerly home to private deer clubs that concentrated on growing mature bucks and harvested only quality bucks, so the future is bright, and we expect to see many trophy deer harvested there in the coming years.

## CONCLUSION

Biologist Holder warns hunters to make sure they are aware of regulations particular to the WMA they are hunting.

"Regulations can be vastly different among WMAs," Holder said. "Always be sure to read WMA-specific regulations before your visit. We recommend WMA visitors download our WMA Check-in app onto their mobile Apple or Android devices."

Online draw-hunt applications are available through Sept. 1.

Hunters in the Northwest WMA Region, as well as other areas where Chronic Wasting Disease has been found, must comply with all Chronic Wasting Disease regulations, which can be found at [www.mdwfp.com](http://www.mdwfp.com). The MDWFP



strongly recommends that each deer harvested be tested for Chronic Wasting Disease. The MDWFP has sample submission locations around the affected regions. ■

# BUY WITH CONFIDENCE SELL WITH SUCCESS



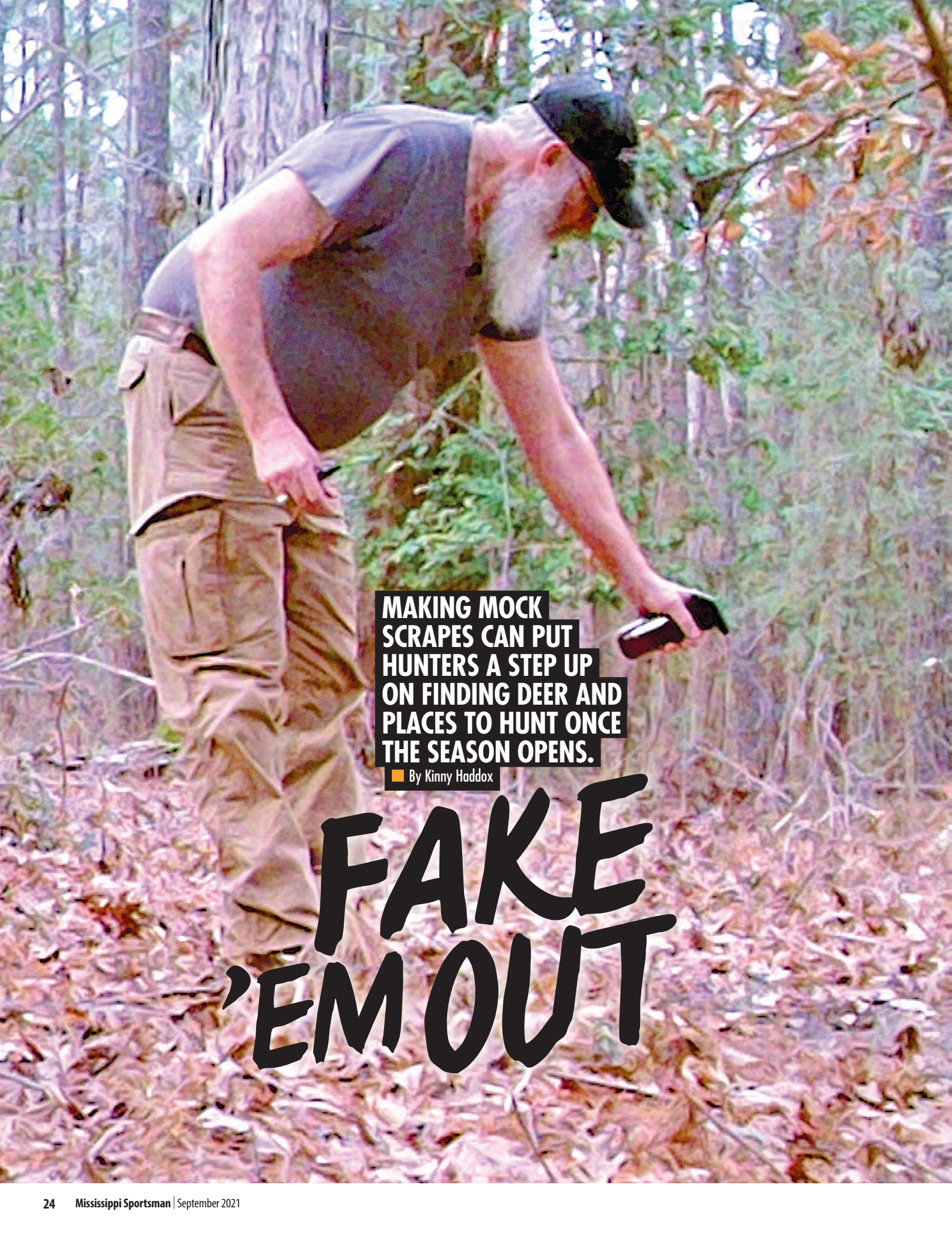
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**OPPOSITE PAGE:** Conditions are excellent this year for deer in northeast and east-central Mississippi.



**MAKING MOCK  
SCRAPES CAN PUT  
HUNTERS A STEP UP  
ON FINDING DEER AND  
PLACES TO HUNT ONCE  
THE SEASON OPENS.**

■ By Kinny Haddox

# FAKE 'EM OUT

# EVERY EXPERIENCED DEER HUNTER HAS A FEW GOOD TRICKS UP HIS SLEEVE

to pattern deer and get the best possible action during the season. Dan DeWitt of Dry Prong, La., is no exception — for the most part. But his tricks are exceptional, especially when it comes to drawing deer out. Among his main tools are mock scrapes.

Why?

“They work,” he said. “It’s as simple as that.”

DeWitt is a master of the outdoors. His father was a full-blooded Creek Indian, hence the name for his approach to deer hunting and the name of his company — Old Indian Tricks — that produces synthetic deer scents.

“I maintain mock scrapes most of the year, but most people don’t have time or patience for that because in the spring, they are busy with ball for the kids, fishing or chasing turkeys,” DeWitt said. “But that’s okay. It’s still not too late to use this technique to not only bring more deer into your shooting woods, but to be able to pattern where they are going to come and go.”

Basically, making mock scrapes is beating the deer to their own punch. It’s a combination of making scrapes and rubs

that mimic the same type of trails deer make. DeWitt likes to follow old scrape lines when he puts out mock scrapes because he knows that is an area the deer already like to travel. People think of bucks working scrape lines, but does work them more than the bucks do, except maybe when bucks become more aggressive in the heat of the rut. But they aren’t just a “deer season” pattern. Deer use these trails all year because they become comfortable with their surroundings. And scrapes are what DeWitt calls “social arenas for deer” where they come to see other deer and in the rut, to find a mate.



*Kinny Haddox has been writing magazine and newspaper articles about the outdoors for 45 years. He and his wife, DiAnne, live in West Monroe, La.*

## TWO PARTS >

Not only bucks, but does also visit scrapes and deposit scent. Think of them as a whitetail’s social media site.



## TWO PARTS

An actual scrape consists of two parts — an area on the ground that the buck paws away all the debris and marks as his territory. It usually comes under a “licking branch” that is anywhere from 4 to 6 feet off the ground, above the actual scrape. Deer chew on these branches and leave their scent by rubbing their preorbital glands on them.

To make a mock scrape, hunters simply take a heavy stick and clear out a 2-foot circle on the ground, put some kind of scent in the scrape and on the limb. A line of these will attract deer.

As DeWitt said, “It works.”

But hold on just a second. You can't just go to the woods and start making mock scrapes wherever you feel like it. They have to be deer-worthy.

DeWitt likes to find old scrape lines. Those work best. They are areas deer walk all year, being creatures of habit. Several deer will walk the same lines, although bucks want to be territorial.

“When I find a spot that I like, the first thing I do is make sure it has a good, sturdy, overhanging limb,” he said. “I dig out the scrape with a stick and then spray the limb and the actual scrape. I basically am just refreshing what they've already done. They are conditioned to think another deer did it, and they are more likely to come back and visit it more regularly. You can also put in mock scrapes near their old trail lines, and once you get them coming to them, they will become regular paths.”

Don't just make one. The more mock scrapes you make — without getting carried away — the better chance you have of bringing more deer in and patterning them on a regular basis. When hunting season approaches, you have to see which ones are being used the most and which areas are producing more deer photos on trail cameras.

“When it comes time to hunt, you simply set up your stand near the ones that are the most active. It's just common sense,” DeWitt said. “I always like to hunt out of lean-to or climbing stands so I can be flexible. I like to pick spots on the northeast side of where I think I'll see the deer, because we usually have prevailing winds from the southwest until it gets cold.”

Sometimes, there are no trees suitable for stands in an area, so DeWitt hunts out of ground blinds when he has to. The most amazing part of his mock scrape strategy is that he hunts primarily on public land, including the Kisatchie National Forest in Louisiana or the Homochitto National Forest in Mississippi. He reminds hunters to make sure that they are following rules and regulations, even regarding mock scrapes. Some areas do not let you put anything on the ground to keep deer from congregating in one area. In that case, you can use a dripper or other hanging dispenser over your scrape that you can remove when you leave.

DeWitt does not hunt out of box stands. He said box stands can lead to one of the biggest no-no's of deer hunting.

“If you aren't careful and you hunt out of the same box stand all the time, you can pattern the deer to know that you are there,” he said. “I had a group of hunters in Mississippi who were seeing tons of big deer on their game cameras but never saw them out in the green fields or at the feeders when hunting. What I found out was, they drove their side-by-sides to within 30 yards of the stand, got in the stand and hunted and never went anywhere else. The deer had been conditioned to avoid them. But when we got out and walked the perimeter of where they were hunting, we found buck sign everywhere — rubs, scrapes and trails where the deer were literally walking circles around where they were hunting.”

**FIRST, BE BAD ➤**

## PROOF POSITIVE “IT WORKS”

If Dan DeWitt's success hunting deer along mock scrape lines isn't enough to prove it works, dozens of photos from his trail cameras offer proof positive — and not just pictures of deer, but also of bobcats, coyotes and foxes.

“If you know the outdoors, you know that nothing is more scent wary than a bobcat or a fox,” he said. “If Cooter Juice can fool them into walking the exact line you've laid out for the deer, then it can fool any deer. Case closed.” ■

When scent-wary predators like this coyote follow the trail you've laid out for deer without spooking, you know you're on to something.



This hunter is proud of her hunting success and "trophy buck" even if it isn't a Boone & Crockett.



## EVERY DEER IS A TROPHY DEER

There are folks who won't agree, but Dan DeWitt values deer hunting simply for the experience of being outdoors and the goodness of a useful harvest.

"In my opinion, every deer you kill is a trophy deer," he said. "You spend time preparing and hunting, and you go into the deer's territory. Whether it is a big, old doe or a 6-point buck, it can be a trophy to you. It doesn't have to be a Boone & Crockett.

"It's real simple. When you are blessed with a harvest, fill your freezer with God-given fresh meat and you have met your expectation, it's a trophy. Thank the good Lord for your harvest. If that's a heartfelt blessing, then that is what it is all about." ■

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# DAN DEWITT: A LEGEND

## FIRST, BE BAD

“Reading social media, you might get the impression that there are hundreds of mock-scrape experts out there that just went out and became overnight sensations at it,” DeWitt said, “but that is rarely the case. Here’s the thing about making and hunting mock scrapes: if you want to become great at making mock scrapes, first, you have to become good at it. And before you can become good at it, you’ve got to be bad at it. And before you can be bad at it, you have to go out there and try. The short version is the more you put into doing this and learning about it, the more you are going to get out of it.”

DeWitt has always known about mock scrapes, but “years of aggravation” finally led him to get serious about them about 10 years ago when he was motivated to develop his own “Cuzz’s Cooter Juice.”

“I met an old man at an archery trade show who told me synthetics were going to be the future of scents,” he said. “I investigated it and started working on a blend that I knew would work because I tested it over and over again in the deer woods. I started giving it to others, and they found out how good it was and told me I needed to start selling it. So I did. I’m not in it to make a bucket of money. I just want to help people enjoy deer hunting more and be more successful.” ■

*You can find out more about Cuzz’s Cooter’s Juice and DeWitt’s other products online at <https://oldindiantricksllc.com/> or by following DeWitt on Facebook. You can learn more about mock scrapes on the Mock Scrape Nation Facebook page as well.*

Dan DeWitt isn’t just your ordinary, weekend outdoorsman. He won’t tell you and doesn’t want to talk about it, but the quiet, humble Dry Prong resident is a legend: a member of the inaugural class of the Louisiana Legends of the Outdoors Hall of Fame.

He has been a professional outfitter and guide for more than 35 years, leading hunters on trips across the globe for deer, turkey, elk, hogs and exotic game. He has been featured on numerous hunting television shows and has taken more than 150 people on their first successful hunts. He directed for 17 years a youth outdoor summer camp and founded Preachers Need Friends, Too, a ministry to carry preachers hunting to help give them rest and relaxation away from their ministries. ■



Dan DeWitt

Dan DeWitt’s success killing deer, like this big buck, along his mock scrape lines is proof positive the tactic works.





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IT DOESN'T TAKE HUNDREDS OF  
ACRES OF LAND TO KILL A BIG BUCK,  
IF YOU KNOW HOW TO FIND THEM  
AND WHAT TO LOOK FOR.

■ By Bradley G. Williams

# SMALL TRACTS, NICE RACKS

# M

ost people will lead you to believe that it takes a large tract of forested land with the right mixture of woodland forage, crops and supplemental food-plot plantings to produce nice bucks.

In a perfect world, every hunter would have such a place to hunt.

Realistically, many hunters just don't have access to large, private tracts of land with large deer populations. Thankfully, a deer doesn't respect boundaries and fences. They tend to stay where there is adequate food and enough cover to provide security. On small tracts, it is often difficult to find all of these ingredients on the same piece of property, whether 10 or 100 acres.

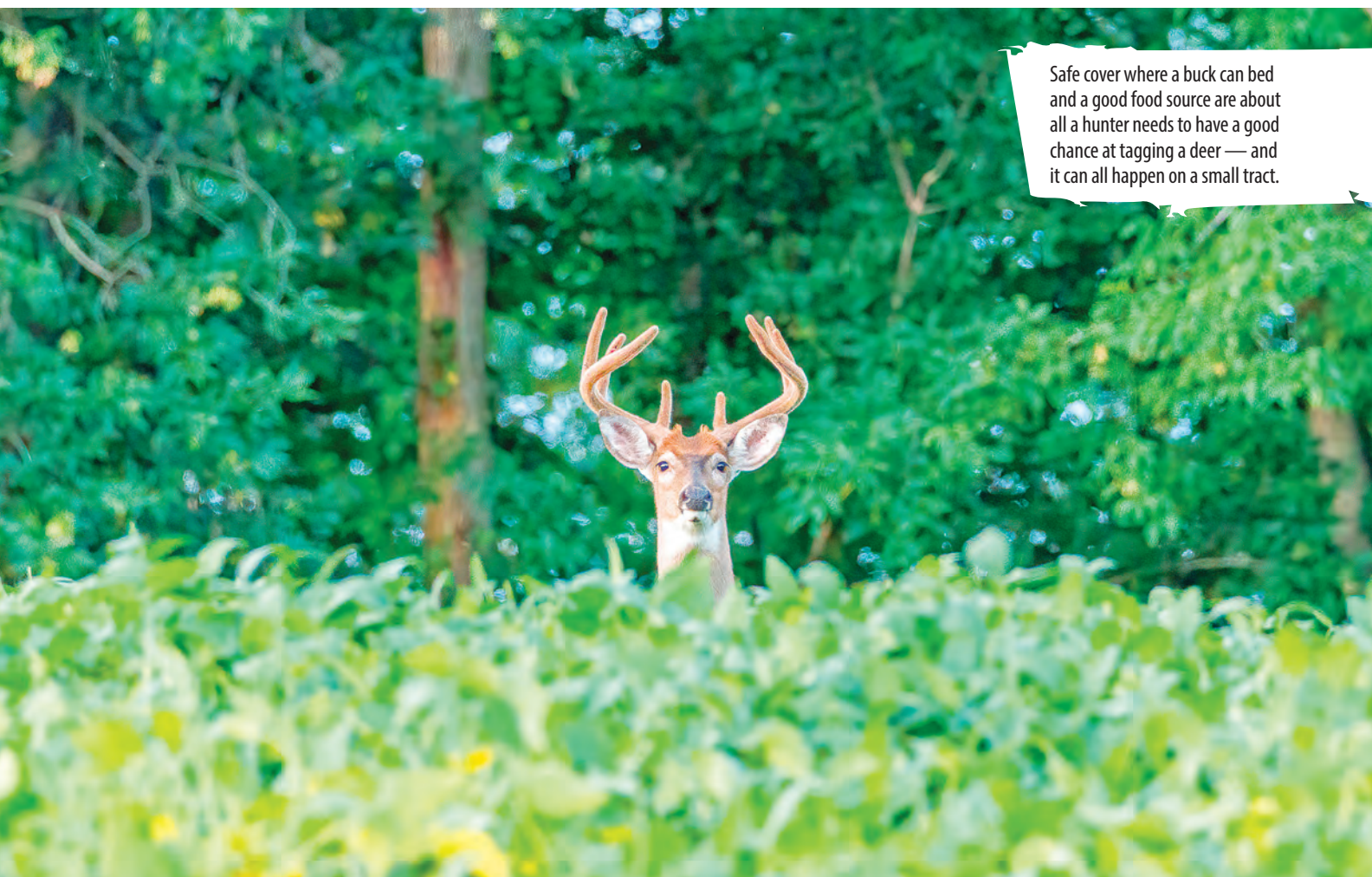
On the other hand, it doesn't take much land to hold a deer. Even a small patch of woods may be hiding a nice buck. If you don't have the luxury of regular access to large tracts of prime hunting land, don't despair. Look close to home for those forgotten, small blocks of land that may be tucked away in some very desirable hunting areas when you look at the bigger picture.

First, spend some time looking at aerial photographs and topographic maps. Take note of areas that potentially possess

some or all of the ingredients necessary to hold deer. Next, make a trip to your county courthouse and look at the tax maps and land rolls to identify individual tracts that might be of interest. Don't set foot on anyone's land without the landowner's consent. Obviously, some will not want you on their land; respect their wishes. But don't get discouraged; you may be pleasantly surprised to find land not being used and not being hunted.

Obviously, if you own a small tract of land or have family or friends that own land, explore those areas first. As a last resort, you may be forced to lease a small tract of land if no landowners are willing to let you hunt for free.

Once you have located and obtained permission to hunt a particular piece of property, begin scouting the land and studying the surrounding area. Often, a landowner can tell you where there have been repeated sightings of deer on the property. Take note of food sources, including agricultural crops, acorns, honeysuckle and other tender underbrush around thinned timber or near cutovers. Look for any heavy cover that deer might use for bedding areas. Food sources and bedding areas are the two most-important pieces to the puzzle in determining where to hunt.



Safe cover where a buck can bed and a good food source are about all a hunter needs to have a good chance at tagging a deer — and it can all happen on a small tract.

**A**lso, it is often very helpful to examine fence lines to see where the deer are crossing. Inevitably, deer will leave behind hair on some of the barbed wire, which can provide valuable clues as to where the deer are entering and leaving the property. Tracks, droppings, hair on fences and visible trails are important clues to routes deer are using between food sources and bedding areas.

On small tracts, it is very rare to have all of the necessary ingredients to sustain a deer population. Deer naturally range over large areas. The average fence does little to restrict movement over their natural range, which knows no boundaries.

When you begin planning your first hunting trip to a particular small tract, recreate in your mind a map of all of the important information gathered by scouting. Your tactics may vary between trips depending on time of year, wind direction or weather conditions. What works early in the season and pre-rut may not pay off in the late season during the rut or when the rut is slowing down.

The two most-important considerations will always be food sources and bedding areas. Regardless of the impacts of the rut, a deer must eat and feel reasonably safe to frequent an area. If there is heavy hunting pressure on adjacent properties, deer may become more nocturnal, and you may be forced to concentrate efforts near bedding areas, hoping for a glimpse of a

nice buck in the fleeting moments at dusk. If there is little or no hunting pressure, deer may have grown accustomed to moving freely at various times of day. In that case, hunting oak flats, edges of fields and near other food sources may pay off big.

Don't forget about the travel routes that are necessary for the deer to move between heavy cover and available food supply. You will most likely end up hunting on or near one of these travel routes. Your stand placement or positioning for a particular hunt will primarily depend on wind direction. Place your stand or sit downwind of the trail or direction from which you think the deer will be coming.

As a general rule, it is good to have the wind in your face. I only break this rule a few times during the rut when using estrus doe scent to attract rutting bucks. Bucks will wind the scent from downwind and will sometimes come in quickly to investigate. If you have placed the scent in front of you and you have the wind blowing in your face, the buck will most likely show up at your back. Along with winding the doe scent, the buck will likely wind you during his approach. When using estrus doe scent during the rut, place the scent in a location crosswind to your position. The buck has the opportunity to wind the scent and make his approach, all in your field of view and in a way that, hopefully, your scent will not be an issue.

Don't forget about those fence-crossing locations. These can be excellent places for a stand. Maybe you will be lucky enough



Little tufts of hair left on barbed wire fences can clue you in on spots deer are using to enter and leave your small hunting property.

to be there when that big buck makes his way through that hole in the fence.

Be sure to key on locations where you have found evidence of deer trails entering or leaving heavy cover, including cutovers, cane thickets and even abandoned, grown-up home places.

The next time that you are sitting around, complaining about there being nowhere to hunt, search out those small, forgotten tracts of land tucked away in your area. Do your homework, be patient and don't be surprised when you see that buck you've been searching for jumping the fence in front of you or easing out of the thicket just before dark. ■

### STICKS & STRINGS ➤



**Bradley Williams** is a life-long Mississippi resident and freelance outdoor writer living in Brandon. His passion for the outdoors and his love for hunting and fishing in the Magnolia State began as a child and continues today.

Trails that deer, especially bucks, use to go between bedding and feeding areas are key spots to watch once deer season arrives.



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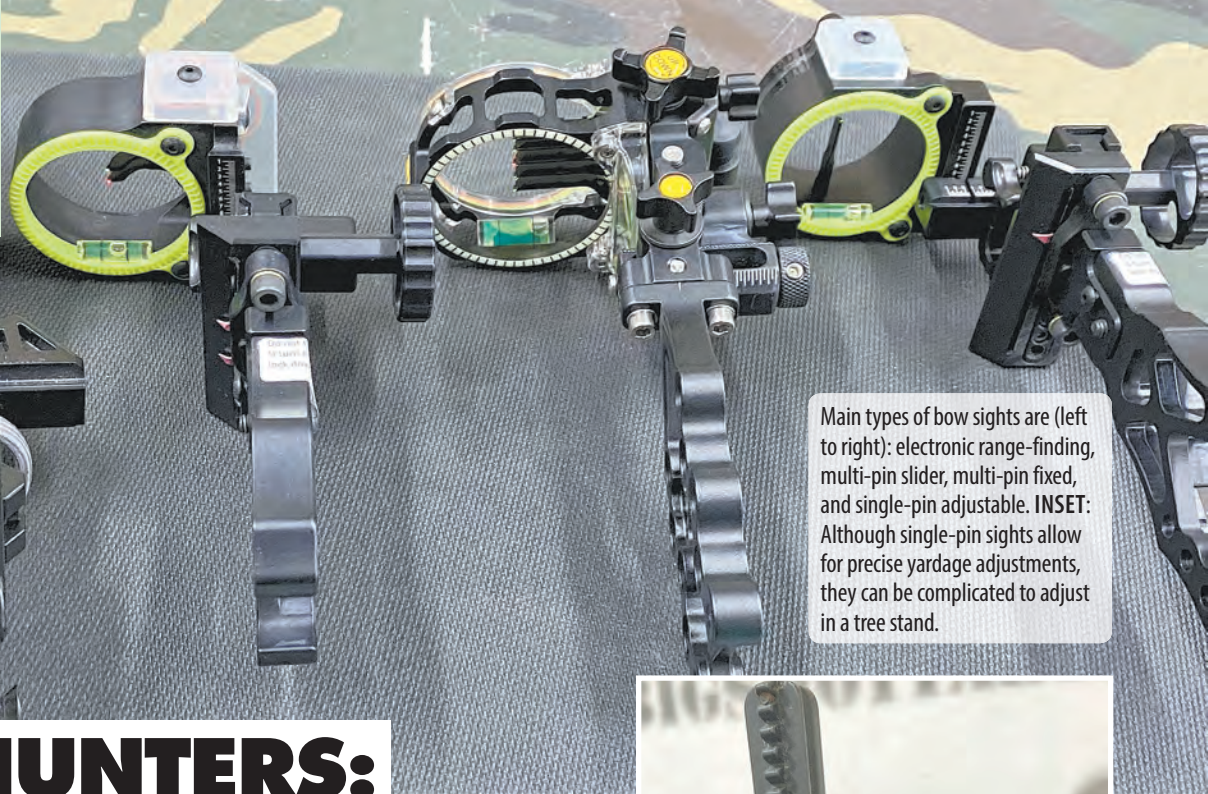
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## STICKS AND STRINGS

Sammy Romano



Main types of bow sights are (left to right): electronic range-finding, multi-pin slider, multi-pin fixed, and single-pin adjustable. **INSET:** Although single-pin sights allow for precise yardage adjustments, they can be complicated to adjust in a tree stand.

# BOWHUNTERS: SET YOUR SIGHTS

DECIDE WHICH SIGHT SUITS YOUR HUNTING SITUATION AND BUDGET, BUY IT AND LEARN EXACTLY HOW IT WORKS TO ENSURE YOUR SUCCESS

**M**odern compound bows are outfitted with many accessories, each serving to increase performance and/or accuracy, but the accessory that is most-individualized and most-frequently changed is the sight.

Bow sights are available in a mind-blowing array of designs. Although most work well, the design of many new sights is specialized. To get the most out of their sight, each archer should find the model that best suits their individual needs and hunting style.

In order to move forward, it is often helpful to glance back into history. The first bow sight was likely a matchstick or something similar taped to the handle of a recurve bow. Although crude and difficult to adjust, it served its purpose as an aiming reference point, allowing the archer to aim with more consistency.

Although sights have come a long way, with machined aluminum brackets, fiber-optic pins, battery powered lights, and even rangefinders built in, for the most part, they serve the same function.

To be effective, a bow sight needs only be clearly visible to the archer without obscuring the target, providing an aiming point that is adjustable to cause the arrow to impact the target in the desired

spot consistently. All other features are a bonus.

That being said, many factors, including the age of the archer, hunting methods, terrain and species targeted factor into choosing the best sight for a particular situation. An eastern whitetail hunter in a tree stand overlooking a feeder in thick cover has different needs than an antelope hunter on the open prairie out west.

## FOUR OPTIONS

When choosing a bow sight, I find it easiest to simplify things by breaking sights down into four categories:

- Multi-pin fixed;
- Single-pin adjustable;
- Multi-pin slider;
- Electronic range-finding.

Multi-pin fixed sights are the simplest, with multiple pins and an immovable bracket. These sights are ideal for hunting dynamic situations such as trails in wooded areas and unfamiliar stands with unknown shot distances. Once the archer reaches full draw, there is no need to let down to adjust the yardage, the bow is simply elevated or lowered to place the corresponding pin on the animal. This reduces movement by the hunter, and leads to less task-loading



Sammy Romano

before and during the shot process.

Single-pin adjustable sights feature a single aiming point with an adjustable bracket. They are an excellent choice for hunting in thick cover with limited shot distances, over feeders or bait and in open fields where game animals are feeding slowly. Single-pin sights offer an uncluttered view, which really helps when aiming, especially for the aging archer who has trouble with multi-pin sights “clustering” — blurring and making it difficult to focus when aiming. The disadvantage of a single pin adjustable sight is that the bow must be let down to adjust for different shot yardages. This



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

can lead to rushed shots and even missed opportunities in dynamic hunting scenarios.

Multi-pin slider sights offer the best of both worlds, offering fixed pins with a less-cluttered view. The archer designates one pin — usually the bottom pin — and the adjustable bracket is used to dial this pin in for longer shots. This way, a 3-pin sight can be used to shoot far beyond 40 yards. These sights are gaining popularity, especially among western hunters who typically face much-longer shots but need fixed pins for surprise, close-range encounters. The disadvantage here is that the archer must have the presence of mind to remember to re-zero the dial. If not, a missed shot at point-blank range is inevitable.

Last are the newest, electronic range-finding sights by Garmin and Burris. They incorporate laser rangefinders and use a ballistic computer to illuminate the correct pin for the shot yardage. Although they are deadly effective, they are very costly, and their legality varies from state to state. I have been shooting a Garmin Xero A-1i for the past several years and love it. It has made hunting fun due to less pre-shot task-loading and anxiety. If these are legal where you hunt and you can justify the high price, I highly recommend them.

Regardless of which sight you choose, learn to shoot comfortably with it. Also, be sure to learn all of its features and how to adjust your sight should the need arise. Familiarity with your setup and learning how to shoot it well are the single most important factors when it comes to being successful in the field. ■

**COOKING ON THE WILD SIDE >**

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## COOKING ON THE WILD SIDE

Jerry Dilsaver

# VENISON EGG ROLL BURGERS

A UNIQUE WAY TO USE THAT  
LAST BIT OF LAST YEAR'S DEER

Grilling burgers always provides just a bit more taste than baking them, but venison egg roll burgers are good either way. **INSET:** A burger that weighs around a quarter-pound is the perfect size for this recipe.



**D**are to be different! Many folks live their lives according to that motto, but they eat the same foods time after time. Dare to be different on the dinner table, too. This recipe is different but easy to make, and I believe most folks will like it.

This is a very easy, tasty and unusual way to prepare venison, and it fits the season. Once past Labor Day, fall and deer season is only a couple of weeks away.

Fall is a mixed time for sportsmen. There are choices to be made on whether to set forth with rod or gun, and both include excellent opportunities. Some of the year's best fishing is beginning and will continue for several months. And excited hunters will be returning to their comfort zones.

I usually provide a dove recipe in September, but I

didn't hunt doves much last year, and there weren't any in reserve in the freezer.

What this means in the long run is y'all get an early venison recipe this year. Since it's earlier than usual and a bit out of place, something unusual should fit the bill well, and I specialize in unusual.

I don't know many folks who don't like egg rolls and even fewer who don't care for venison, so this recipe of venison egg roll burgers came to mind. In trying to be a bit healthier, it isn't a fried egg roll, but a grilled or baked (your choice) venison burger stuffed with egg-roll ingredients. Most readers should have a few packs of venison burger still in their freezer, and I'll recommend this as a fun and tasty way to prepare some of it. ■

# VENISON EGG ROLL BURGER

Give this a try. It is a tasty and fun way to enjoy venison burgers. The first bite is sure to get your attention, as the taste isn't what you expect. I like them, my wife likes them, and all my family and friends who have sampled them like them, too, so the consensus is they're pretty good. I like to be outside and prefer these burgers grilled, but the option of baking them in the oven is good, also. This allows enjoying them when the weather is wet, plus later in the year when it's cold outside.

There is a little prep time, but you can be eating not too long after starting, so it works well whether in a relaxed or rushed preparation. It also works well with hamburger for those folks that don't care for venison or have already used all their venison from the previous season.

Baking the burgers in the oven is pretty simple, and they taste good, but most of my friends agree they're definitely better cooked on the grill. The main thing when cooking them in the oven is to use a rack or broiling pan so they don't sit in their drippings and get greasy. I use a cooling rack over a baking pan to let the grease drop away but be contained for easy cleanup.

Cooking burgers on a grill requires more attention, but I think you'll agree it's worth the effort. The grilled flavor is an excellent addition to the

egg roll seasonings. Grills have different heat at similar settings, so there's the matter of finding the right one for your grill. The key is to cook them slowly enough to get the middle cooked but not to overcook and char them.

This is where cooking the burgers at lower heat and under the foil shines. It allows them to reach medium doneness without charring the edges. Then, removing the foil and raising the heat allows getting a little crisping around the edges to enhance the flavor. This may take a little experimentation. I'll caution again to be careful not to overcook the burgers. Not only does this affect the flavor, but it overcooks the cabbage, and that isn't good.

A quarter-pound is about right for these burgers. It's a reasonable size to be a hamburger steak, and it fits on a bun well for those who think hamburgers should be eaten with bread. This is a mild-flavored burger that tastes much like an egg roll. Warming and crunching an egg roll wrapper, then sprinkling it on the burger adds to the egg roll taste. This lends itself to being prepared mild and then adding spices. If you prefer this as a burger in a bun, try it with a slice of chilled tomato — you won't regret it. ■

## INGREDIENTS:

**1- to 1¼-pound** venison hamburger

**½** sweet onion

**1 bag (16 ounces)** angel hair (thin-sliced) coleslaw mix

**½ cup** matchstick sliced carrots

**1 tbsp** sesame oil

**1 tbsp** rice vinegar

**1 tbsp** minced garlic

**2 tsp** ground ginger

**¼ cup** Soy sauce

Salt, pepper to taste

Non-stick cooking spray

Aluminum foil

**Optional:** Egg roll wrappers, Chinese spicy mustard, more soy sauce, sriracha sauce, hamburger buns, cheese, tomato and your preferred hamburger fixings.

## PREPARATION:

Dice the onion and sauté onion and carrots in a frying pan in cooking spray until not quite done (still lightly crispy). Mix venison, sesame oil, rice vinegar, garlic, ginger, soy sauce, salt and pepper in a large bowl. Work the cabbage from the slaw mix, carrots and onion into the burger. Knead this with your hands to be sure it is thoroughly mixed.

Form the burgers to your preferred size. My venison burger packs are approximately 1¼ pounds, and I get 6 nice burgers. Cook the burgers by grilling or baking.

If you're grilling, place the burgers on a vegetable tray that has been sprayed with non-stick cooking spray and cover loosely with aluminum foil, then cook over low/medium heat for 8 to 10 minutes without turning. Remove the foil and cook an additional 4 to 6 minutes over medium heat. These times will vary between individual grills and the height of the grill above the fire.

If you're baking, place the burgers on an elevated tray — I use a cooling rack — in a baking pan. Cook them at 425 for approximately 12 to 15 minutes. Do not turn the burgers and be careful not to overcook them. These burgers will reach medium without crusting like grilled or fried burgers. Serve the burgers as hamburger steaks on a plate without bread to preserve the most of the egg roll flavor.

Bake several egg roll wrappers and crush them to be sprinkled on the burgers to add the full egg roll taste. If you choose to do this, be aware the cooking time is much shorter



Jerry Dilsaver

than the directions on the package, as the wrappers won't have any filling. Remove them from the oven as soon as they show any sign of browning, or they will brown too much.

Venison egg roll burgers can also be served on a bun, with a slice of tomato, cheese and your favorite condiments. Be aware that everything you add will mask some of the egg roll flavor.

These burgers have vegetables in the mix. Corn on the cob or a baked potato work well for a side, and I'm always up to add a fresh green salad or lettuce wedge. If you like to add a dessert, a slice of fresh baked apple pie is a great way to go. Adding a scoop of ice cream is a personal choice. Go for it. ■

**DEER STAND TO-DOS >**



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



Whether it's archery, firearms — or both — now is the right time to get those deer stands in tip-top shape for the upcoming whitetail season. **INSET:** A stand that goes unkept from year to year will soon become unhuntable and dangerous to get in.

# TAKE A STAND

CHECKING OUT, CLEANING OUT, FIXING DEER STANDS IS A MUST ON PRESEASON HUNT CLUB TO-DO LISTS

**As** By Andy Douglas  
September rolls around, sportsmen's attention turns to deer camps and fall hunting seasons. Hunt clubs and individuals work hard preparing. Spraying, clipping and disking food plots is done, along with road work and getting deer stands in good order. Most stands and hunting blinds have been left in place for nearly a year and need a little TLC. Here are a few things to think about when getting deer stands ready and in tip-top shape for hunting.

## DON'T DO IT ALONE

Take a hunting partner with you, regardless of what type of stand you are checking. Accidents happen quickly and unexpectedly. You've heard the horror stories — don't let that person be you. Whether you are working on ladder stands, lock-ons, tripods or box blinds,

bring someone with you. If you are climbing, use a safety harness.

## STRAP IT DOWN

All ladder stands left in place from year to year should be checked thoroughly before hunting. If there are ratchet straps present, check them for any rotting or tearing and for good tension. If the stand has chains and binders, inspect them for rust or broken links.

Check the tension on any device securing a stand to a tree. Be aware — a club member or landowner may have loosened the tension after the previous deer hunting season to prevent tree damage or prevent the chains from growing into the tree.

## SECURE THE ANCHOR

Any tripod deer stand, factory made box blind or homemade box stand should be



Photos by Andy Douglas

anchored securely. Check the anchoring device and make sure there's good tension on cable straps, or chains.

If homemade box stands do not have legs cemented in the ground, they should have some type of anchor. This will prevent hunters from showing up after storms or high winds to find a nice stand laying on the ground — it happens.

## CLEAN THEM OUT

Box blinds are very popular and can be store-bought or custom built to suit each hunter. They can be enclosed with windows or be built as open as individuals like.

Check box stands carefully, whether they are set on the ground or elevated;



Take the time when you are doing all your hunting club honey-dos and check all your deer stands.

they can become inhabited by undesirables. Rats, mice, spiders, wasps, hornets, ants and any other insects imaginable can stake claim to a hunter's favorite stand and call it their home.

Early September is the best time to check these stands. If you find a serious problem like an owl inhabitation, you will have time for a remedy that could take several days and trips to the stand. Hopefully the worst you will find is straw or rubbish brought in by a rodent, or maybe a wasp nest or two. Nonetheless, check your stands; you don't want a surprise on the year's first hunt.

## A HELPFUL BOX STAND TIP

If wasps, insects and vermin are not your thing — try a medicated cow tag. Go to the local feed store where you buy food-plot mixes and ask for insecticide cattle ear tags. Take one to your stand and toss it in or hang it about a foot from the ceiling, if possible. This will run out most all types of wasps and insects. Come back in a week or two, and you will be set.

Take the time when you are doing all your hunting club honey-dos and check all your deer stands. For the least impact on your deer hunting, use these tips and have stand maintenance done well ahead of opening day. ■

### HUNTING SEASONS

SPECIES	SEASON DATES	BAG LIMIT	POSSESSION
<b>Doves</b>	Sept. 4-Oct. 17(n), Sept. 4-19 (s)	15	45
	Oct. 30-Nov. 28 (n), Oct. 9-Nov. 7 (s)		
	Dec. 25-Jan. 9 (n), Dec. 19-Jan. 31 (s)		
<b>Quail</b>	Nov. 25-March 5	8	
<b>Rabbit</b>	Oct. 16-Feb. 28	8	
<b>Squirrel (fall)</b>	Oct. 1-Feb. 28	8	
<b>Squirrel (spr)</b>	May 15-June 1	4	
<b>Raccoon</b>	July 1-Sept. 30	1 raccoon per party	
<b>Rac/Opp/Bobct</b>	Oct. 1-Oct. 31 (food/sport)	5/day, 8/party	
	Nov. 1-Feb. 28 (food/sport/pelt)	No limit	
<b>Rails</b>			
King & Clapper	Sept. 1-Oct. 3, Nov. 26-Jan. 1	15	45
Sora & Virginia	Sept. 1-Oct. 3, Nov. 26-Jan. 1	25	75
Gallinules	Sept. 1-Oct. 3, Nov. 26-Jan. 1	15	45
<b>Snipe</b>	Nov. 14 - Feb. 28	8	24
<b>Crow</b>	Nov. 6 - Feb. 28	No limit	No limit
<b>Woodcock</b>	Dec. 18 - Jan. 31	3	9
<b>Wild Turkey</b>			
Fall season	Oct. 15-Nov. 15 (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
<b>Duck</b>	Teal only: Sept. 11-26	6
	Nov. 26-28, Dec. 3-5	6
	Dec. 9-Jan. 31	
<b>Geese (Canada, blue, Ross, white-fronted, brant)</b>	Sept. 1-30	5
	Nov. 12-28, Dec. 3-5,	Canada 3, Brant 1
	Dec. 9-Jan. 31	Snow/blue/Ross 20 White-fronted 3
<b>Light Geese conservation</b>	Oct. 1-Nov. 11, Nov. 29-Dec. 2 Dec. 6-8, Feb. 1-4, Feb. 7-March 31 Feb. 8-March 31	No limit

### DEER SEASON

ZONE	ARCHERY	PRIM WEAPON	GUNS
<b>Northeast</b>	Oct. 1-Nov. 19	Dec. 2-15	Nov. 20-Dec. 1 (dogs)
	Nov. 8-19 (antlerless primitive weapon)		Dec. 16-23 (no dogs)
	Jan. 20-31 (archery/primitive weapon)		Dec. 24-Jan. 19(dogs) Nov. 6-19 (youth)
<b>East Central</b>	Oct. 1-Nov. 19	Dec. 2-15	Nov. 20-Dec. 1 (dogs)
	Nov. 8-19 (antlerless primitive weapon)		Dec. 16-23 (no dogs)
	Jan. 20-31 (archery-primitive weapon)		Dec. 24-Jan. 19(dogs) Nov. 6-19 (youth)
<b>Southwest</b>	Oct. 1-Nov. 19	Dec. 2-15	Nov. 20-Dec. 1 (dogs)
	Nov. 8-19 (antlerless primitive weapon)		Dec. 16-23 (no dogs)
	Jan. 20-31 (archery-primitive weapon)		Dec. 24-Jan.19(dogs) Nov.6-Jan. 19 (youth)
<b>Southeast</b>	Oct. 15-Nov. 19	Dec. 2-15	Nov. 20-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)
<b>Delta/South Delta</b>	Oct. 1-Nov. 19	Dec. 2-15	Nov. 20-Dec.1 (dogs)
	Nov. 9-20 (antlerless primitive weapon)		Dec. 16-23 (no dogs)
	Jan. 20-31 (archery primitive weapon)		Dec. 24-Jan. 19(dogs) Nov. 6-Jan. 19 (youth)



# SPIN UP A BEEETLE BREAN

**TINY SPINNERS CAN  
BE PANFISH KILLERS  
ACROSS MISSISSIPPI,  
ESPECIALLY AS SUMMER  
WANES AND FISH NEED  
A LITTLE CONVINCING.**

■ By John N. Felsher

# TO CATCH BREAM,

most anglers dangle a worm or cricket under a float and drop it next to a log, weed patch or some other cover. Others use fly tackle, pulling feathery creations through the water or tossing floating wood, cork or foam poppers over beds.

Both methods catch bluegills and other assorted sunfish and give great enjoyment to the fishermen involved. However, you can catch panfish many other ways. Anglers without fly rods who enjoy something other than waiting for a bobber to disappear might pick up an ultralight spinning or spincasting outfit loaded with 4- to 6-pound line and work small lures for big rewards.

Fishing for bream with ultralight tackle greatly resembles bass fishing. Throw a temptation to a likely spot and work it out, hoping something clobbers it. Practically any lure type or method that will fool bass will also catch bream. Just downsize the offerings and equipment when targeting pint-sized panfish.

Assorted panfish species frequently hit tiny spinners, crankbaits, jerkbaits and even topwater lures. I've even caught bluegills about the same size as the lures meant for largemouth bass that they so viciously attacked. What those fish were thinking. Were they trying to eat that large "creature" or mate with it?

Among the most-versatile lures on the market, spinnerbaits catch multiple species from top to bottom, and they go many

places where other lures would stay snagged. With vibrating blades giving off flash, spinnerbaits sometimes provoke vicious strikes, even from non-aggressive fish that might refuse other offerings.

Most panfish anglers throw "beetle" type spinnerbaits, also called "harness" or "jighead" spinners. Such baits consist of a wire harness temporarily attached to a jighead. Since the components separate, anglers can easily switch blades, arm sizes, jigheads or trailers to adapt to changing conditions. Onto the jighead, anglers can hook any number of trailer combinations in different sizes, shapes, colors and configurations. If fish won't bite, thread on a different trailer without having to retie and start fishing right away. To make fish attack more aggressively, tip the hook with a scent pellet to add more flavor.

Easy to work, a beetle spinner can catch a variety of panfish throughout the entire water column. Retrieval speed determines how deep the lure runs. Like in bass fishing, simply toss it to good cover, like a grassy edge, lily pad, fallen tree, shoreline structure or another place that might hold bream. Let the lure sink — one foot per second — to reach the desired depth. After it hits bottom or reaches the proper depth, slowly retrieve it just over the bottom or through cover.



Tiny spinners are extremely versatile lures; they'll catch just about any species of sunfish that swims, along with a handful of other fish.

**W**armouth especially like to hit spinners and often engulf bass-sized baits. Also called goggle eyes, these fish with larger mouths than bluegills love thick woody or weedy cover. The fat, little fish thrive in murky, river backwaters and swampy lakes. A warmouth can exceed 2 pounds, but most weigh less than a pound. The Mississippi state record weighed 1½ pounds.

Around thick, grassy patches, buzz beetles over the top so the blades churn the water. Anglers can also wake them just under the surface with a steady retrieve so they make the water bulge. A surface commotion can bring fish up from the depths or pull big bream out of thick grass beds. Sometimes, fish come up and explode on a sputtering beetle spinner like a bass obliterating a topwater bait.

In areas with loose, floating vegetation mats or patchy grass, use the stop-and-go method. Pause the retrieve periodically to let the bait sink a foot or two. As the bait slowly descends, the blades continue revolving, giving off fish-calling flash. Fish commonly hit lures as they sink. Try this method around submerged aquatic grass growing below the surface. Let the bait fall into the grass or run it so the blades just tickle the grass tips.



**John N. Felsher** is a professional freelance writer and photographer with more than 1,700 articles in more than 117 magazines to his credit. He worked as the outdoors editor for several Louisiana newspapers and currently co-hosts a weekly outdoors radio show on WNSP 105.5 FM in Mobile, Ala. You can contact him at [JohnNFelsher.com](http://JohnNFelsher.com).

Beetle spinners work particularly well when run through bream beds. Bluegills spawn several times a year and bed from April through October, perhaps into November in the southern part of the Mississippi or during especially warm years. Keep slow-rolling the bait at different depths over any shallow depressions on the bottom. Occasionally, let the bait sink into the bed. A good bream bedding area can produce fish for weeks.

During summer swelter, the biggest bluegills habitually make beds in deeper water along shoreline shelves. Redear sunfish, also called shellcrackers, prefer slightly deeper water than bluegills throughout the year. For fishing deeper beds, slow-roll a beetle spinner just off the bottom. Barely move the reel handle, just enough to make the blades flutter.

On the hottest days, cast to the coolest, shadiest places. Along a woody, river shoreline, fling a beetle spinner around cypress knees or trunks, fallen logs or stumps. Whenever possible, run a spinner directly into a log or other solid object and stop the retrieve so the bait sinks next to the vertical cover. After it sinks a bit, resume the retrieve. Around shoreline drop-offs, work baits directly over and parallel to the edge of a drop-off or slow-roll it next to the drop or just off the bottom. If necessary, add a split-shot to the line above the lure to make it sink faster. Use the lightest possible rig that will get the job done.

If fish suspend a little higher in the water column, try a yo-yo or helicopter retrieve. Let the bait sink to the bottom, pull it back up to the surface and let it sink again. Also, try popping the bait off the bottom a few feet and letting it sink back down. Keep trying different depths and retrieves to find the most-aggressive fish.

Happy angler Amy Gable shows off a big, fat bluegill she caught on a beetle spinner. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** If you find bream or shellcracker beds, run a beetle spinner over the bed with a consistent retrieve, or stop the spinner and let it sink into the bed.



Magnolia State anglers can catch big bream in just about any freshwater system, from tiny farm ponds to massive reservoirs and the rivers that feed them. Some better places to catch giant bream with ultralight tackle and spinners in the fall include the oxbows off the Mississippi River. During late summer and fall, rivers usually run lower with less current than in the spring, and these backwaters can produce awesome fishing. One of the better active oxbows, Tunica Lake, aka Tunica Cutoff, about 20 miles south of Memphis, floods regularly. Floods frequently refresh and rejuvenate the lake.

“Tunica Cutoff is very fertile and produces good numbers and sizes for bluegill, and other species,” advised Keith Meals, a Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks biologist. “It’s a typical, active oxbow with little aquatic vegetation due to frequent water-level fluctuations. The best fishing occurs during a slow fall with a Mississippi River level at 10 to 15 feet on the Memphis gauge.”

Another great oxbow, Lake Washington near Greenville, covers 5,000 acres. It averages about 6 feet deep but drops to more than 20 feet in places. Highly fertile, the lake grows abundant forage and provides outstanding habitat for bream.

“Lake Washington is one of the oldest and largest natural lakes in Mississippi,” said Nathan Aycock, an MDWFP biologist. “The main levee prevents a direct connection with the Mississippi River. A low dam on Washington Bayou elevates the lake level 4 feet and permits boat navigation through much of the cypress forest. Some huge old cypress trees with lots of gnarly stumps hold good fish.”

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**In** northeastern Mississippi, try Lake Monroe in Monroe County for numbers and Tippah County Lake or Lake Lamar Bruce in Lee County for big bream. Abundant brush piles and vegetation provide excellent habitat on Lake Monroe.

“Lake Monroe is on fertile soil, allowing bream to grow quickly,” said Trevor Knight, another MDWFP biologist. “Tippah County Lake and Lamar Bruce have historically been good bream lakes due to good spawning habitat and abundant bass populations. These conditions often result in large bream. Tippah County Lake produced the state-record redear sunfish at 3.33 pounds.”

Prentiss Walker State Lake in Mize and Roosevelt State Park, aka Shadow Lake, in Morton also produce good action. Prentiss Walker holds some bluegills exceeding 1½ pounds. “Prentiss Walker is the best lake in this region for big



A warmouth, aka goggle-eye, makes excellent sport on light tackle. Warmouth like to live in river backwaters.

bluegill,” said Ryan Jones, an MDWFP biologist. “It’s a highly fertile lake, which contributes to bream growth. Roosevelt has always been a good bluegill lake.”

Smaller lakes can produce can produce big action, such as Lake Perry, a 68-acre lake near Beaumont. The state manages 20 public fishing lakes to provide good fishing. These lakes cover more than 4,000 surface acres all over the state. For more information on the public lakes, see [www.mdwfp.com/fishing-boating/state-fishing-lakes](http://www.mdwfp.com/fishing-boating/state-fishing-lakes).

Anglers casting lures like beetle spinners probably won’t catch as many bluegills and other bream species, but they will likely catch bigger ones than people using natural baits. Pound for pound, or more appropriately, ounce for ounce, bream family members will outfight anything in freshwater. Couple that pugnacious attitude with ultralight tackle and anglers can enjoy incredible fun. ■



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A woman with blonde hair, wearing a straw hat and a red tank top, is smiling and holding a large black drum fish. She is on a boat, and the background shows a body of water and a distant shoreline with green vegetation under a blue sky with light clouds. The fish is held vertically, showing its scales and fins.

# DRUM UP SOME BUSINESS

■ By John N. Felsler

**BLACK DRUM MAKE A GREAT SEPTEMBER TARGET ALONG MISSISSIPPI'S GULF COAST, ESPECIALLY IF YOU WANT TO BATTLE A HUGE, STRONG FISH.**

# Not everyone can afford to buy a big boat or hire a charter captain to take them on an

# EXCITING OFFSHORE ADVENTURE,

but even anglers without boats can experience thrilling, tackle-busting action from one of the largest fish in inshore waters without breaking the budget.

Often ignored or even scorned by anglers, black drum can reach and exceed 100 pounds. Mississippi's state-record drum is a 70-pound, 5-ounce fish. Mississippi anglers frequently catch drum in the 20- to 45-pound range and some bigger ones.

"Drum are great fighting fish and easy to catch," said Kyle Johnson with Coastal Waters Outfitters out of Point Cadet Marina in Biloxi. "People can catch really big fish in inshore waters or even off the dock. They are great for children. Catching a huge drum is something a child will never forget."

Anglers typically catch drum while targeting redfish, speckled trout, flounder or other species, but drum offer outstanding opportunities to battle monsters. Many people catch large drum from shore or docks. Anglers regularly see enormous drum swimming around marinas, particularly near fish clean-

ing stations. Jetties and seawalls also make fantastic places to look for colossal fish. Several artificial reefs sit within easy paddling distance for kayak anglers.

"Drum hang around any type of structure, like concrete or wood docks and bridge pilings," Johnson said. "The piers behind the Palace Casino in Biloxi are good places to catch big black drum. At night, people usually have a better chance of catching big drum."

"For people with boats, the Bay St. Louis bridge and the Highway 90 bridge to Ocean Springs are great places to fish for drum. Katrina Reef is a super spot right outside the pass into the bay. The rocks outside the Beau Rivage are also very good places to fish for drum."

Related to red drum, aka redfish, black drum eat very similar forage but tend to like dead things more than live ones. Black drum scour the bottom looking for any morsels they can suck up, particularly crabs, shrimp and clams.



Black drum hang around Katrina Reef, which was created in the Mississippi Sound near Biloxi from bridge debris left over from Hurricane Katrina.



“**B**lack drum have several great big, fleshy, barbels hanging from the underside of the lower jaw and are predominantly bottom-feeders with no great preference for any particular foodstuff,” said Dr. Bob Shipp, a marine biologist and author of *Dr. Bob Shipp’s Guide to Fishes of the Gulf of Mexico*. “Although they graze on (the) bottom, shelled animals are a main feeding strategy. Drum are especially proficient at digesting thick-shelled animals like clams and crabs by using a set of heavy, crushing teeth that are borne on the bones that support the gills.”

Drum sometimes hit jigs tipped with soft-plastic trailers that resemble shrimp or crabs. They also hit spoons, spinnerbaits and other lures that tempt speckled trout or redfish. Some anglers fish for them with flies or streamers that resemble shrimp, crabs or minnows.

“We catch black drum all the time when we’re targeting trout,” Johnson said. “We’ll catch them on hard baits like a MirrOlure MirrOdine, but we catch more on soft plastics if we’re working something like a paddletail in shallow water. Sometimes, they pick it up. We call them ‘big uglies’ when we’re fishing for speckled trout and a drum grabs the bait.”

For people who like to throw lures, try Gulp! baits shaped like shrimp, crabs or minnows threaded on a jighead. Made of natural foods, but in the shape of a lure, Gulp! baits give off a scent. Drum normally follow a scent trail to find food, rather than responding to motion.

“At times, a Gulp! works wonders on days when we can’t find good bait,” Johnson said. “They have a great scent to them, (and) drum like a lot of scent. When fishing with a Gulp! I use a heavier jighead. Normally, I use a ¼-ounce jighead, but for drum, I like a ¾-ounce or heavier. I work it slowly along the bottom, just kind of bouncing it. I make a couple quick pops here and there and let it sit. Black drum are pretty lazy. People don’t really have to work a bait crazy to catch them. They’re looking for an easy meal.”

When targeting “big uglies,” most people use live or fresh shrimp for bait. Drum might also hit frozen shrimp, squid and small baitfish such as mullets, cocahoe minnows, pogies or small live croakers. Fish chunks or strips can also attract attention, but the big fish salivate over crabs. Fiddler crabs also make excellent drum baits.

“People can catch a lot of drum with live or dead shrimp, but the problem with shrimp is it attracts everything else too,” Johnson said. “We catch a lot of catfish, croaker and pinfish with shrimp. Instead of shrimp, I normally use blue crab, which is a drum’s absolute favorite food.”

Half of a blue crab cracked open and oozing juice often proves too tempting to resist for any drum moving through an area. Anglers can also quarter the crab to make more baits. When fishing with half a crab, remove the top shell and break the remaining body into two nearly equal pieces. Remove one of the legs from one piece. Run a hook through the meaty part of the crab chunk so that the point comes out of the leg hole.



**John N. Felsher** is a professional freelance writer and photographer with more than 1,700 articles to his credit. He worked as the outdoors editor for several Louisiana newspapers and currently co-hosts a weekly outdoors radio show on WNSP 105.5 FM in Mobile, Ala. You can contact him at [JohnNFelsher.com](mailto:JohnNFelsher.com).

Drum weighing 50 pounds or better are not uncommon in Mississippi Sound and other areas of the Gulf coast. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** A big chunk of crab will tempt black drum perhaps like no other bait. Run a hook through the area where the leg connects.



Giant drum habitually drop into deep holes, particularly during temperature extremes. For tempting big drum in deep water, fish a whole crab on a Carolina rig. Keep the top shell attached, but crack it to let the juices ooze out. Drum might also hit a small, live crab hooked through the back near the rounded swimmer fin.

"I like to use a Carolina rig with a 1-ounce weight," Johnson said. "That keeps the bait where it should be, and people can feel the bite a little better. For drum, I use a shorter leader, about a foot long. I usually use 20- to 30-pound monofilament for the leader and 20-pound Fins Windtamer braid for the main line. I've caught some massive fish on that 20-pound braid. I get all the castability of a smaller braid without worrying about breaking it."

Sometimes, hot action comes in spurts as a school of drum moves through an area. Many anglers fish multiple rods at different depths with various baits to see what works best. The baits might sit on the bottom for a long time when suddenly, every reel starts screaming.

"Black drum hit baits in different ways," Johnson said. "Sometimes, they absolutely slam it and run hard. Sometimes, there's just a quick thump or they just sit there with the bait in their mouths. People think they hooked a snag, but then the snag starts running."

Drum also prowl inland waters like the marshes between Waveland and the Louisiana border, Bay St. Louis, Biloxi Bay and the Pascagoula River delta. When fishing shallow, marshy shorelines, use popping corks baited with live or dead shrimp, crab pieces, live minnows or fiddler crabs. Set the cork so the bait hangs just off the bottom and drifts along the shoreline with the tide or wind current.



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“September is the perfect time of year to fish for big black drum, but everything depends upon the weather” Johnson said. “The great thing about drum is they’re in the bay systems. I mainly target broken-down piers in the Back Bay. We might pull up to a spot and catch four or five drum and then move to another spot. In October and November, we see big schools of giant black drum tailing on the flats in the shallows around the islands. They are digging for crabs.”

Many people probably avoid drum because they don’t think such ugly creatures could taste good on a plate. Larger drum commonly carry white, wormy parasites that look hideous, but they don’t affect the taste of the fish; the worms disappear in the cooking process. Smaller “puppy” drum taste delicious, very similar to redfish. In fact, many



Dustin Bounds shows off a black drum. Large, powerful fish, big black drum can give anglers big-game action on light tackle without going far offshore.

people have probably eaten drum without realizing it if they have ever ordered a redfish dish in a restaurant.

“Smaller drum taste great,” Johnson said. “As far as eating quality, there’s not much difference between a puppy drum and redfish of similar size. I think someone could put sheepshead, redfish and puppy drum fillets next to each other, and it would difficult to tell the difference in taste. When I’m specifically fishing for puppy drum to eat, I use live shrimp on a Carolina rig. I like to conserve the big ones. I want to get it in the boat as quickly as possible, take a picture and get it back in the water so that big fish swims off healthy to fight another day.”

While most anglers catch drum by accident, the huge fish can provide outstanding, rod-bending sport, particularly on days when redfish and trout won’t cooperate. Any cast could produce the catch of a lifetime, often for little cash investment. ■

*For more information about Kyle Johnson of Coastal Waters Outfitters in Biloxi, visit [www.fishcoastalwaters.com](http://www.fishcoastalwaters.com) or call 228-669-3553.*

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## SPECIES SPOTLIGHT

Brian Cope

Big king mackerel are often referred to as “smokers” for their ability to “smoke” line off a reel.



# SPECIES SPOTLIGHT: KING MACKEREL

SPEEDY, SHARP-TOOTHED BRAWLER IS A FAVORITE OF MANY ANGLERS ALONG THE GULF, ATLANTIC COASTS

**K**ing mackerel (*Scomberomorus cavalla*) have long, slender bodies. They are usually gray on the back with silvery sides. Their stomachs are often silver to white. When small, they tend to have spots similar to Spanish mackerel, but the spots disappear as the fish grows. They have sharply dipped lateral lines, and their dorsal fins are gray in color.

They are a fast-growing species and can reach lengths of almost 6 feet and weights of almost 100 pounds. King mackerel can live for about 20 years, but most die before they are half that age. Females grow larger than males and can reproduce at age 2, when they lay between 50,000 and several million eggs in the open ocean. The eggs are then fertilized by males.

Spawning takes place along the outer continental shelf, mostly between May and October. Two distinct stocks of king mackerel exist: the Atlantic stock and the Gulf of Mexico stock. These two stocks are biologically identical, but they rarely intermingle. Infrequently, they mix briefly off Florida's southern coast

in what is known as the Winter Mixing Zone, where waters from the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico meet.

## MOVERS, RESIDENTS

Although they are known as migratory fish, some small populations travel very little, sticking to smaller areas throughout the species' range, which runs from New England to Mexico to Brazil. These fish become known as resident fish. One of the larger populations of resident king mackerel lives off the Louisiana coast. Biologists aren't sure why some of these fish become resident fish, but they believe some resident fish become migratory and vice versa.

King mackerel aren't too picky with their diets. They prefer shrimp, squid and other fish. When young, they are preyed upon by larger fish. As they grow, they get closer to the top of the food chain, but they are still vulnerable to sharks, large tuna and even bottlenose dolphins.

## SMOKER TIME

Nicknames for king mackerel include kingfish and kings. Larger ones are known to anglers as “smokers” — due

to their ability to peel line from a fishing reel, making the reel “smoke.”

Kings are sometimes misidentified as wahoo, and, especially when young, Spanish mackerel.

These fish are prized among anglers who fish from Gulf piers. They fish for them with a double-rod setup using live bait, usually bluefish or blue runners. Boat anglers also love catching king mackerel, and usually do it by trolling with a spread of rigs.

Louisiana's state-record king mackerel weighed 82 pounds and was caught by W.D. Lamb in December 1980. Mississippi's state record, a 74-pound, 1-ounce king, was caught on Nov. 20, 2009, by Barrett McMullan. Steve Graulau caught the world-record king mackerel, a 93-pounder, off the coast of San Juan, Puerto Rico, on April 18, 1999. ■



**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.

## LURE REVIEW

Don Shoopman



# MISTER TWISTER SASSY STINGUM

LOUISIANA GUIDE SAID THIS SOFT-PLASTIC LURE WILL REALLY PUT THE CRAPPIE IN THE COOLER

**C**harlie King loves to catch crappie, as well as watch his clients catch crappie.

That love affair extends these days to a Mister Twister soft-plastic bait that hit the water last year with less fanfare than usual because of COVID-19 restrictions and concerns. Nevertheless, King has been smitten with the Sassy Stingum.

King, who operates Charlie King Professional Fishing in northwest Louisiana, is quick to heap accolades on the panfish bait that is growing in popularity in-state and out-of-state.

“Sassy Stingums just came out about a year ago,” he said. “They wanted me to try it. It works real well. Funny thing is, (panfish) prefer it over live bait.”

It’s slaying the crappie now, but the best, perhaps, is just ahead for the Sassy Stingum.

“That’s going to be a killer in the winter,” he said, noting that he has caught doubles on tandem-rigged Sassy Stingums.

King is looking forward to the winter, because after getting his hands on baits from Mister Twister in January, he had hip-replacement surgery 2 weeks later and barely got to try out the Sassy Stingum in cold weather.

“I’m excited about it. This winter, I (just) got a taste of it before I had surgery,” he said.

It was a good taste, as the panfish bit and bit consistently.

This winter he plans to tie Sassy Stingum on multiple rods in a spider-rig pattern on his favorite north Louisiana lakes, including what he regards as his home lake, Lake Bistineau. Crappie will get a chance to eat Sassy Stingums from around Thanksgiving to the end of January.

King, who focuses his guiding trips on bass in the spring on Lake Bistineau, Caddo Lake and Red River, returns to crappie fishing early summer through fall at Toledo Bend and Sam Rayburn, fishes the 2¼-inch soft plastic on a plain silver or black ⅛-ounce jighead tied to 10-pound Vicious flourocarbon.

He’ll often tip it with a tiny crappie nibble-type bait that add scent and color to the soft plastic or hair jig on the business end of a line. He’ll add a minnow or, he said, he’ll fish it “naked.” The Sassy Stingum produces any way it’s fished, he said.

King fishes Sassy Stingums over brush piles of willow and/or sweet gum trees in 20- to 25-foot depths. He plants them regularly so they are as fresh as possible. His favorite colors are grenada gold, Cajun cricket and electric chicken. He’s learning about other colors that help fill ice chests with crappie.

“It was red thunder,” he said. “A friend of my caught some the other day and they had a box (full) on that color.”



Charlie King caught this nice crappie in early August on Toledo Bend, using Mister Twister’s Sassy Stingum (above left).

According to a Mister Twister spokesman, red thunder was one of many colors introduced at first. It was discontinued when the color chart was pared but will be reintroduced in the next two months.

The shape and texture of the soft plastic appealed to King from the start. Obviously, a Sassy Stingum’s shape and texture appeals to crappie wherever they are targeted by anglers.

A Mister Twister spokesman said the Sassy Stingum has a super-soft formula that maximizes the artificial lure’s action in the water. King agrees with that, because the bait’s spear-shaped tail twitches and dances at the slightest movement.

“(Mister Twister) had the designer to put a little longer tail,” King said. “It’s a little-bit longer tail. It also has a little, minute ball on the end of it, a little bump on the tip. I think it adds more thump to it.”

He’s ready to put it to work, overtime. ■

*For more information on the Mister Twister Sassy Stingum and other Mister Twister products go to [www.mistertwister.com](http://www.mistertwister.com).*



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

## GETTIN' FRESH

Hal Schramm

Stream-dwelling smallmouth bass occupy rocky habitat in or near swift current. In impounded rivers, they prefer areas with rocks and riprap.

# WHERE BASS LIVE

HABITAT SELECTION LARGELY DETERMINES PLACES YOU CATCH ALL THREE SUBSPECIES

**L**argemouth, smallmouth, and spotted bass live together in many middle-America waters, from Tennessee and West

Virginia in the east to eastern Kansas and Oklahoma in the west. In Mississippi, the three black bass co-occur in Pickwick Lake and, potentially, Bay Springs Lake. Ecological theory predicts that these very similar fish should differ in how they use their shared environment.

Differences in food resources used, both for adult and juvenile stages, is a common way to achieve peaceful coexistence and sustained populations. But in Mississippi waters, and throughout much of their co-occurring range, adults of all three black bass species feed predominantly on the abundant shad; the juveniles share similar invertebrate diets until they transition to shad.

When diets overlap, segregation by habitat is a common ploy to allow coexistence. A recently published study by Dr. Steve Miranda and doctoral student Nicky Faucheux at Mississippi State

and Kurt Lakin at the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) assessed habitat segregation of largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted bass.

## THE STUDY

The data were 21 years of fall electrofishing catches by TVA biologists in 10 main-stem reservoirs of the Tennessee River. Numerous samples at randomly selected shoreline stations were sampled in each of the reservoirs. At the completion of each sample, the biologists categorized the prevalent habitat as sediment, gravel, natural rock, riprap, brush, or aquatic plants.

Across all reservoirs, largemouth bass made up 67% of all black bass that were collected, smallmouth 14% and spots 19%.

Adult largemouth selected aquatic plants and riprap habitat. Adult smallmouth and spotted bass selected rock and riprap but avoided aquatic plants. Also, adult smallmouth avoided habitats that were predominantly sediment, and

spotted bass avoided gravel habitat. All three species neither selected nor avoided brush habitat.

Juvenile habitat selection largely mirrored that of adults, but the young of all three species avoided areas with a lot of sediment.

Measures of co-occurrence for adult bass showed no evidence of one species avoiding the other in five of the habitats. In the brush habitat, all species were more likely to occur together than predicted by chance.

Juvenile bass, however, had a high likelihood of being collected together in all habitats except aquatic plants. In other words, they tended to congregate.



Hal Schramm is an avid angler and veteran fisheries biologist.



## LUNKER LINES

Paul Elias

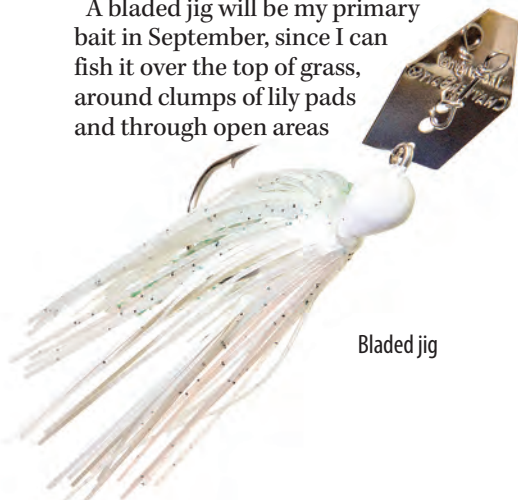
Paul Elias fishes cypress trees on the north side of Bogue Homa Lake. They're often found along the edge of grass lines.

# BE READY AT BOGUE HOMA

A BLADED JIG ROCKS, BUT HAVE FOLLOW-UP BAITS READY ON SEPTEMBER TRIPS

**B**ogue Homa Lake near my hometown of Laurel is shallow and contains a lot of vegetation. In September, that vegetation dies back, opening up waters for fishing that anglers weren't able to reach during the summer. Baitfish are moving from deeper water to more shallow water, and the bass will follow the bait fish.

A bladed jig will be my primary bait in September, since I can fish it over the top of grass, around clumps of lily pads and through open areas



Bladed jig



Mann's SpringR Worm

of grass and lily pads. I like to fish a 3/8-ounce white/chartreuse bladed jig with a white crawfish trailer.

I'll start off fishing the edges of the grass lines, looking for isolated clumps that appear outside of the grass, with a 7-foot-6, medium-heavy cranking action FX Custom rod with a 7.3:1 ELS Bruin reel and 20-pound White Peacock fluorocarbon line on a medium retrieve. I'm trying to kick the bladed jig off those clumps of grass. Most of the time, the strike will come when the bladed jig hits a clump and then breaks free — generally in 1 to 3 feet of water. Also at this time of the year, you'll see bass attacking shad in the grass and on the edges.

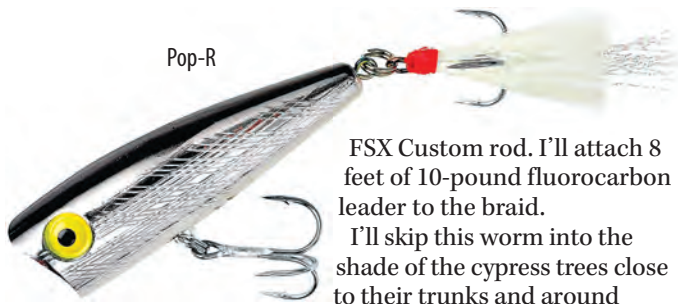
I prefer to fish the northern side of the lake during September. Bogue Homa also has cypress trees standing in the water and often along the grass lines. I'll be throwing the bladed jig around the cypress trees as I fish the grass lines.

## FOLLOW-UP BAITS

I always like to have a follow-up bait when I'm fishing in or around vegetation. Often, bass will blow up on lures like a frog or a bladed jig and not take the bait. My follow-up bait will be a junebug-colored Mann's SpringR Worm, rigged wacky style. I'll primarily fish it under cypress trees, skipping the worm under the branches and letting it free-fall. I use a weedless, No. 1 drop-shot hook in the middle of the worm. On my spinning reel, I'll have 15-pound braid attached to a 7-foot-4, medium-action



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.



Pop-R

FSX Custom rod. I'll attach 8 feet of 10-pound fluorocarbon leader to the braid.

I'll skip this worm into the shade of the cypress trees close to their trunks and around

the cypress knees. If a bass boils on the bladed jig and misses it, I can catch that same bass by skipping the worm right to the spot where the bass has missed the bait. Then, I let it fall, snatch it up off the bottom and let it fall again. I'll snatch the worm off the bottom several times during the retrieve, then make another cast.

I'll tie a Pop-R to 20-pound braid with a 6- to 8-inch leader of 28-pound Tarantula monofilament tied to the bass braid. My rod will be a 6-foot-9, medium-action FX Custom rod with an 8:1 ELS Bruin reel. I'll tie the leader on my bass braid to keep the hooks from the Pop-R from getting tangled up in the line while fishing around the grass edges, the edges of isolated grass clumps, cypress trees and the open water under the cypress trees. When the Pop-R hits the water, I'll pop it and keep it coming back to the boat, popping it again, using a fairly fast retrieve.

## BAIT = BASS

Remember, in September, baitfish will move into shallower grass, and the bass will follow the bait. I use these three lures to cover as much water as possible, attempting to locate spots where schools of bass are holding. Once I get several bites in one place, I'll put down my Power Poles, pull up my trolling motor, slow down my fishing and fish that water thoroughly. I may catch two to four bass out of one location. When the fish quit biting, I'll move down the grass line and the bank and fish until I get another strike.

In September, most Bogue Homa bass will weigh 1½ to

3 pounds, and occasionally you'll catch a 7- to 8-pound bass. However, September is not really a big-fish month. If I catch 15 bass in a day's fishing, I'll feel I've had a really good day. Because Bogue Homa is very shallow, you must cover a lot of water to find where the bass are. ■

*I use these three lures to cover as much water as possible, attempting to locate spots where schools of bass are holding.*



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**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.

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2021 SEP		BEST DAYS			
		POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCL. VALUE
Wed 1					49
Thu 2					50
Fri 3					60
Sat 4					69

Sun 5					78
Mon 6					80
Tue 7					69
Wed 8					56
Thu 9					44
Fri 10					37
Sat 11					34

Sun 12					36
Mon 13					44
Tue 14					32
Wed 15					27
Thu 16					27
Fri 17					38
Sat 18					48

Sun 19					59
Mon 20					64
Tue 21					56
Wed 22					47
Thu 23					39
Fri 24					36
Sat 25					38

Sun 26					41
Mon 27					48
Tue 28					60
Wed 29					51
Thu 30					47

25 50 75  
AVERAGE

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LUNAR PERIODS					
TIMES OCCURRING AT NIGHT ARE SHADED					
MOON RISE	PRIMARY MOON OVERHEAD	MOON SET	PRIMARY MOON UNDERFOOT		
1:14 AM	<b>6:57 am - 10:37 am</b>	4:21 PM	<b>7:22 pm - 11:02 pm</b>	High	
2:04 AM	<b>7:49 am - 11:29 am</b>	5:12 PM	<b>8:14 pm - 11:54 pm</b>		
3:01 AM	<b>8:44 am - 12:20 pm</b>	5:57 PM	<b>9:09 pm - 12:45 am</b>		
4:02 AM	<b>9:41 am - 1:07 pm</b>	6:38 PM	<b>10:06 pm - 1:32 am</b>		
5:07 AM	<b>10:39 am - 1:51 pm</b> ☀	7:14 PM	<b>11:04 pm - Midnight</b>		
6:12 AM	<b>11:38 am - 2:30 pm</b> ☀	7:47 PM	<b>Midnight - 2:16 am</b>	New	
7:19 AM	<b>12:35 pm - 3:11 pm</b> ☀	8:18 PM	<b>12:03 am - 2:55 am</b>		
8:25 AM	<b>1:35 pm - 3:47 pm</b>	8:48 PM	<b>1:00 am - 3:36 am</b>		
9:33 AM	<b>2:34 pm - 4:26 pm</b>	9:19 PM	<b>2:00 am - 4:12 am</b>		
10:42 AM	<b>3:35 pm - 5:07 pm</b>	9:53 PM	<b>2:59 am - 4:51 am</b>		
11:52 AM	<b>4:38 pm - 5:50 pm</b>	10:30 PM	<b>4:00 am - 5:32 am</b>	Perigee	
1:03 PM	<b>5:42 pm - 6:40 pm</b>	11:13 PM	<b>5:03 am - 6:15 am</b>		
2:13 PM	<b>6:46 pm - 7:34 pm</b> 🌄		<b>6:07 am - 7:05 am</b> 🌄	Half	
3:19 PM	<b>7:47 pm - 8:33 pm</b>	12:04 AM	<b>7:11 am - 7:59 am</b> 🌄	Low	
4:18 PM	<b>8:46 pm - 9:34 pm</b>	1:02 AM	<b>8:12 am - 8:58 am</b>		
5:09 PM	<b>9:40 pm - 10:36 pm</b>	2:05 AM	<b>9:11 am - 9:59 am</b>		
5:51 PM	<b>10:28 pm - 11:36 pm</b>	3:12 AM	<b>10:05 am - 11:01 am</b>		
6:28 PM	<b>11:10 pm - 12:36 am</b>	4:19 AM	<b>10:53 am - 12:01 pm</b>		
6:59 PM	<b>11:49 pm - Midnight</b>	5:25 AM	<b>11:35 am - 1:01 pm</b> ☀		
7:28 PM	<b>Midnight - 1:31 am</b>	6:28 AM	<b>12:14 pm - 1:56 pm</b> ☀	Full	
7:54 PM	<b>12:23 am - 2:25 am</b>	7:28 AM	<b>12:48 pm - 2:50 pm</b> ☀		
8:20 PM	<b>12:58 am - 3:16 am</b>	8:28 AM	<b>1:23 pm - 3:41 pm</b>	Fall	
8:48 PM	<b>1:29 am - 4:09 am</b>	9:26 AM	<b>1:54 pm - 4:34 pm</b>		
9:16 PM	<b>2:04 am - 5:00 am</b>	10:24 AM	<b>2:29 pm - 5:25 pm</b>		
9:48 PM	<b>2:39 am - 5:51 am</b>	11:22 AM	<b>3:04 pm - 6:16 pm</b>		
10:24 PM	<b>3:18 am - 6:44 am</b>	12:20 PM	<b>3:43 pm - 7:09 pm</b>	Apogee	
11:06 PM	<b>4:00 am - 7:36 am</b>	1:17 PM	<b>4:25 pm - 8:01 pm</b> 🌄		
11:54 PM	<b>4:48 am - 8:28 am</b> ☀	2:12 PM	<b>5:13 pm - 8:53 pm</b>	Half	
	<b>5:38 am - 9:20 am</b> ☀	3:04 PM	<b>6:03 pm - 9:45 pm</b>	High	
12:47 AM	<b>6:31 am - 10:11 am</b>	3:51 PM	<b>6:56 pm - 10:36 pm</b>		

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

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