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### April 2011











## **Senior Lifetime License**

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. - Resident hunters and anglers who reach 65 years of age on or after January 1, 2012, will need to purchase the new Class XS Senior Sportsman's Lifetime License to hunt, fish or trap in the state, according to Frank Jezioro, director of the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources. The West Virginia Legislature has established the new lifetime license to permit the DNR to capture more federal revenue for its fish and wildlife management programs.

The one-time fee for the Class XS Senior Sportsman's Lifetime License will be \$25. Purchase of the Class XS license will allow seniors to hunt for small game, turkey and bear, and for deer during the archery, youth, buck-gun and muzzleloader seasons. License holders will also be able to fish for both trout and warmwater fish. No other state-issued licenses or stamps will be required for these activities.

Jezioro emphasized that the li-

GAME

cense will not be required for those who are already 65 years of age or older, and it will not change the existing privileges of landowners or those who hold other lifetime licenses. Except for landowners, all seniors currently over 65 years of

continue to the next page



Blayne Christian used a bow for this 325 pound black bear. Photo courtesy of Mountain Heritage Archery in Princeton.





David Lee Crone hunted in Boone County for this big 10 point



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age who wish to participate in antlerless deer seasons or harvest additional deer must continue to buy the required stamps for those options. The pistol license will continue to be required of all individuals who wish to hunt with a pistol.

Class XS Senior Sportsman's Lifetime License holders will be eligible to hunt during the annual Special Split Youth and Class Q/QQ season typically held the last day of October, and for two days after Christmas. Senior sportsmen who are exempt from buying the license may wish to voluntarily purchase the Class XS license to participate in this season.

"This license will help us recover the dollars our citizens have already spent on hunting equipment," explained Jezioro. "The federal government collects a tax on all hunting and fishing equipment sold, and returns it to the states based partially upon the number of license



holders they have and the state's continue to the next page





Donnie Fought would qualify for the senior lifetime license. He bagged a nice 9 point. Photo courtesy of Jarrett's Bait in Elizabeth.



land area. The new license will allow West Virginia to count seniors as license holders and qualify for a bigger share of the federal money. This is expected to bring in muchneeded dollars that are crucial to continued efforts of DNR wildlife programs."

The DNR will spend the additional revenue from the new Class XS lifetime license for activities that especially benefit senior sportsmen, such as additional access for the mobility-impaired, improvements to and operation of the state's fish stocking program, and construction of additional shooting ranges. Responding to legislative intent, the agency also will explore other ways to provide additional benefits to Class XS license holders.

Beyond the planned benefits to seniors, Director Jezioro concluded that, "As a soon-to-be senior



Young Chris Washinger shot a buck. *Photo courtesy of Broken Wheel Campground in Weston.* 



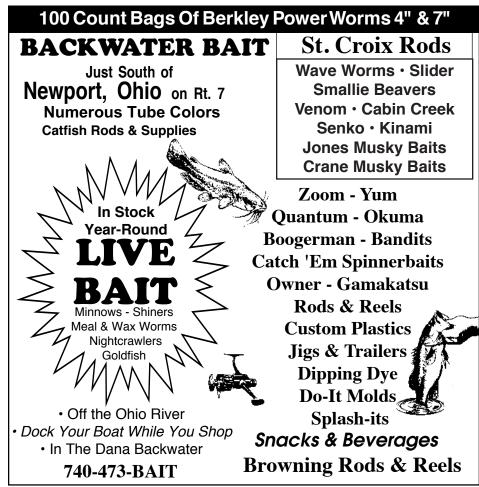
• Online For FREE Rates Are On Page 3



sportsman myself, I take comfort in the thought that my purchase of the new senior lifetime license will help all West Virginia sportsmen, from grandparents to grandkids, to continue enjoying the hunting and fishing tradition that is so much a part of the fabric of our lives. That means a lot to me and, I believe, to most sportsmen in the state."

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# **Big Game Bulletin Available**

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. – The 2010 West Virginia Big Game Bulletin is available at Division of Natural Resources' district offices, the Elkins operations center, and on the agency's website, according to Curtis I. Taylor, Chief of Wildlife Resources.

The Big Game Bulletin supplies hunters and the public with the annual white-tailed deer, wild turkey, black bear, and wild boar harvests. In addition, harvests by season, county, and wildlife management area are displayed in the publication.

"The Big Game Bulletin equips hunters with a wealth of data and information that may help them plan their next hunts. The publication also has updates on current big game research or monitoring," stated Taylor.

To view the 2010 Big Game Bulletin look under hunting on the Division of Natural Resources website at www.wvdnr.gov.



Steve Woods shot a 9 point. *Photo* courtesy of Friendly's Bass & Bucks in Summersville.





Mason Bragg, from Buckhannon, had a 1st buck - 11 point.





# The West Virginia Sportsmen's PAC Endorses And Supports

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# State Senator Clark Barnes Candidate For Governor Of West Virginia

Senator Clark Barnes has a record of support for hunting, fishing and all recreational sports. The West Virginia Sportsmen's PAC encourages all hunters, anglers and lovers of the outdoors to support Clark in the upcoming Gubernatorial election.

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Andy Godwin & brother Mark won the recent Bass Sporstman tournament at Burnsville Lake with a 6 fish limit of 14 pounds, 14 oz. Mark caught the 5 pound, 6 oz. bass on a Jewel jig. Look for an entry form on page 23 on the Kings of the Lakes \$2,000 1st place guaranteed event.This 2 day event in August will have a 50 boat limited field.



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Thomas Tenney hooked a 12 1/2 pound trout at this pay lake. *Photo courtesy of Sure Catch Fish Farm in El-kins*.







Larry Callihan landed this 18 pound musky on 4 pound test while trout fishing at Mountwood Park. *Photo courtesy of Reese's Country Store in Deerwalk*.



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### **Migratory Bird Harvest HIP**

What is HIP?

The Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program (HIP) is a method by which your state wildlife agency and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) are developing more reliable estimates of the number of all migratory birds harvested throughout the country. These estimates give biologists the information they need to make sound decisions concerning hunting seasons, bag limits, and population management.

If you hunt ducks, coots, geese, brant, swans, doves, woodcock, rails, snipe, sandhill cranes, bandtailed pigeons, or gallinules, you are REQUIRED to participate in the HIP Program.

How does HIP work?

HIP is based on a voluntary survey of selected migratory bird hunters in the United States. In simplest terms, the state wildlife agencies



collect the name, address, and some additional information from each migratory bird hunter in their state, and send that information to the Service. The Service then randomly selects a sample of those hunters and asks them to provide information on the kind and number of migratory birds they harvest during the hunting season. Those hunters' reports are then used to develop reliable estimates of the total harvest of all migratory birds throughout the country.

What does HIP require of hunters?

To comply with HIP, first you must identify yourself as a migratory bird hunter and provide your name, address, and date of birth at the time you purchase your license--something most hunters do continue to the next page



Gary Dailey - 70 years old - from Elizabeth, kileed his biggest deer - an 8 point.

<ul> <li>WANTED ~</li> <li>Game Photos From 2010</li> <li>Send In Your Photo (or email)</li> <li>Deer (big bucks - no does), Bear or Other Game</li> <li>Animals Taken During The 2010 Season.</li> </ul>				
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already. You must do this in every state in which you hunt migratory game birds.

Second, you must have proof of your participation in HIP with you whenever you hunt migratory birds in that state. The state wildlife agency will provide you with a card, stamp, or other proof of participation when you sign up.

In addition, when you sign up for HIP, you will be asked to voluntarily answer several questions about your hunting experience during last year's season. Your answers to these questions are not used to compile harvest estimates, but are simply used to identify what types of birds you usually hunt. This allows the Service to mail its surveys to the appropriate hunters. For example, most surveys about dove harvest are sent to hunters who usually hunt doves, while most waterfowl harvest surveys are sent to hunters who usually hunt ducks and/or geese.

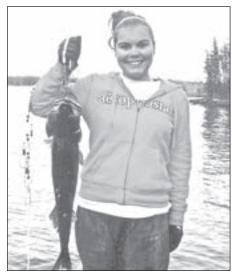
If your name is one of the few selected for the national harvest survey, you'll be asked to voluntarily complete a detailed survey about your harvest during this year's hunting season. You will receive a hunting record form and will be asked to keep a record of the number of migratory birds you harvest during the season. You will also be

continue to the next page





Darlene Wiszczor shot a nice 8 point buck while hunting in Doddridge Co..



Nicole Walker, from Morgantown, went to Canada for this 8 1/2 pound walleye



given an addressed, postage-paid envelope to return your hunting form at the end of the season. Responses from hunters who choose to participate will be kept strictly confidential and will not be used for any other purpose. As soon as the survey is completed, the Service will destroy all hunter names and address records. This survey provides the information used to develop nationwide harvest estimates. Basically, that's all that HIP requires. How do I sign up for HIP?

HIP sign-up procedures vary from state to state. There are five basic methods for collecting the HIP information:

1. License - HIP questions are added to the existing state hunting license form. Some form of the question, "Will you hunt migratory birds this season?" and the hunter's answer to that question must be on the copy of the license that the hunter carries in the field. A "yes" answer serves as proof of compliance with the HIP requirement.

2. Permit - The hunter completes a separate form to obtain a migratory bird hunting permit, and then receives a sticker or stamp to display on his/her license to show proof of compliance. Or, the hunter must purchase a separate migratory bird

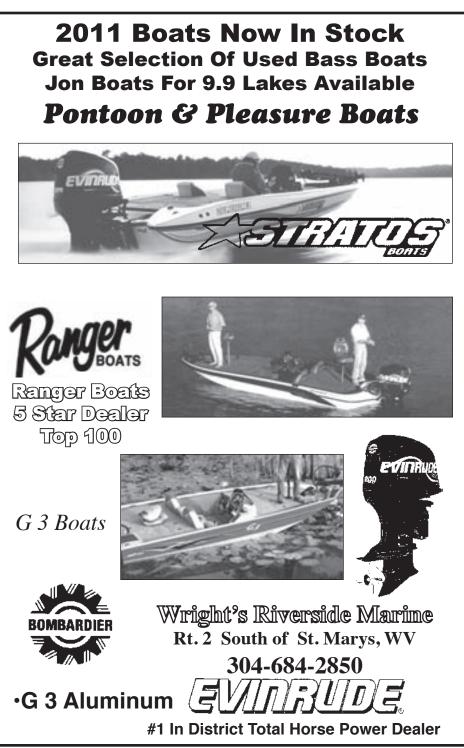


Cdy Hardbarger & Shawn Martin got a bobcat. *Photo courtesy of Jarrett's Bait in Elizabeth.* 

stamp.

3. Electronic license - States with electronic licensing systems add the HIP questions to the list of questions license vendors must ask each license purchaser. Hunters who answer "yes" to the question, "Will you hunt migratory birds this season?" get a line item added to the printout of their hunting license, which serves as proof of compliance.

4. Telephone - Migratory bird hunters in states using this system are required to make a toll-free telephone call to provide the HIP information, after they have obtained the state's hunting license. After they have provided the required incontinue to the next page



formation, they are given a unique registration number to write on their hunting license, which is their proof of compliance.

5. Internet - Several states currently sell licenses and/or provide HIP registration on the Internet. The process is similar to the electronic license process, except that the hunter interacts with a personal computer instead of a license vendor. Not many licenses are sold by this method, but it is cost-effective and convenient for hunters, so quite a few states are interested in it and will probably get involved with Internet licensing in the next few years.

Other considerations

Most of the HIP sign-up methods rely on the state hunting license vendors to ask hunters the appropriate HIP questions. If you plan to hunt migratory game birds, please make sure that the license vendor gets you signed up for HIP when you purchase your hunting license.

Some states may charge a fee to cover their costs of administrating HIP, but the Service will not make any money from the program. HIP is strictly to gather information and is not a means of raising money for conservation programs.

Don't we already have migratory bird surveys?

The Service has conducted annual waterfowl harvest surveys since 1952, and many states have long histories of conducting harvest surveys. These surveys provide some of the information currently used to set waterfowl hunting regulations. Although this information has been very useful, there are problems with the techniques which must be corrected to improve the scope and quality of the information.

Previous federal waterfowl surveys were based on a sample of



hunters who bought the federal duck stamp. In addition to questions about the harvest of ducks, geese, and coots, the survey also included questions about non-waterfowl migratory birds. However, there are about two million people who hunt only non-waterfowl species such as doves and woodcock. Because they are not required to buy federal duck stamps, these hunters were never included in the federal harvest survey. Information from the waterfowl harvest survey has been useful and adequate in the past, but we need to improve on it to meet the management challeng-



Isaac Shortridge - 9, from Smoot, shot a big 8 point in Greenbrier County.

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es of the next century. What do hunters gain from HIP?

Hunters were concerned about wildlife conservation long before it was trendy to do so. They have a long history of taxing themselves, paying license fees, buying stamps--all to ensure the health and vigor of wildlife populations--hunted and non-hunted alike. HIP is just another page in that history. It is simply good conservation. Lonnie Williamson, professional conservationist and writer for Outdoor Life and American Hunter magazines has this to say about the Program: "There is no question that the new harvest survey program is absolutely essential, not only to conserve the migratory bird resource, but also to answer possible future challenges to hunting programs. It will take hunters only a few moments to give wildlife managers the information they need. Those few moments could make a world of difference for the future of migratory bird hunting."

As the threat to and concern for migratory bird populations continue to mount, it is essential to gather the best information possible about the factors affecting these populations. It is in the hunter's best interest to have wildlife management decisions based on scientific evidence, not on opinions, philosophies, or politics. The Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program, through the cooperation of hunters, will provide wildlife biologists with the facts they need to ensure that our migratory bird resources--and hunting tradition--will be around for future generations to enjoy

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# **Trout Stocking Suspended**

ELKINS, W.Va. – The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources announces that trout stockings on Laurel Creek in Clay County have been suspended indefinitely due to poor road conditions.

"Over the years, the access road used for stocking trout has deteriorated to the point where our stock trucks are constantly getting stuck," according to Curtis I. Taylor, Chief of the Wildlife Resources Section. "We cannot afford to have our stock trucks damaged or put our employees in danger of getting hurt while attempting to free their trucks from the mud and soft gravel areas."

Laurel Creek was added to the DNR's stocking schedule in the mid-1990s, at which time stockings could be made throughout much of its length. A number of fords must be crossed to complete the stockings, and over the years these have deteriorated so much, that in recent

www.wvasportsman.net Online For FREE years, only a few of the upper fords could be crossed.



Riley Lanrtz hunted with his gramps for his 1st turkey last year..

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John Beveridge, from Rivesville landed a 29 1/2 pound catfish.



Bernard Paxton shot a wide racked 6 point in Wood County.







Brian Mabe hunted in Virginia for this 172 Pope & Young buck. *Photo courtesy of Sun Valley Cuntry Sore in Speedway.* 



Junior Rooker caught 2 big smallmouth bass on the New *Photo courtesy of Three Rivers Edge in Hinton.* 



Steve Wilson hooked a 4 3/4 pound brook trout at Mountwood Lake. *Photo courtesy of Reese's Country Store in Deerwalk*.



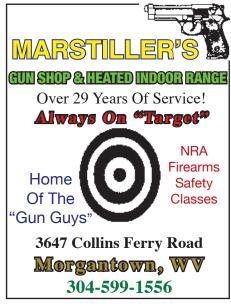
Mathew & Tiffany Huffman brought in a big buck. *Photo courtesy* of Mt. Alto Food Mart.



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These fellows landed some chunky trout at this pay lake in Elkins. *Photo courtesy of Sure Catch Fish Farm in Elkins*.





Chad Seese, from Clarksburg, hooked a 5 pound, 11 oz. brook trout.



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Ryan Talbert hooked a 26" rainbow trout. Photo courtesy of Jarrett's Bait in Elizabeth.





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Nelson White, long time tournament proven, landed the big bass at Burnsville. His fish weighed 5 pounds, 11 oz. His team came in 2nd with 13 pounds, 15 oz.





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# **Spring Gobbler Season**

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. – The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (DNR) encourages hunters to get their gear ready for the upcoming spring gobbler hunting season. The four-week season opens Monday, April 25, and closes on Saturday, May 21, according to Curtis I. Taylor, chief of the Wildlife Resources Section. Hunters may kill two bearded turkeys during the season but are allowed only one per day.

Taylor recommends spring gobbler hunters make sure they are prepared with proper clothing, a shotgun that is appropriately patterned, and adequate hunting gear (e.g., turkey calls, knife, rain gear, compass/GPS unit, matches, maps and a pencil for completing field tags). He urges hunters not to wear clothing with the colors of red, white or blue – the colors of a mature gobbler's head and neck area.

Hunters must be out of the woods by 1 p.m. After putting their firearms or bows away for the day, sportsmen may want to grab a rod and reel to go fishing for trout, which are stocked in more than 100 waters in the spring, or warmwater fish, which become more active as temperatures rise. Youth Spring Gobbler Season

A special one-day, youth spring gobbler hunt is open Saturday, April 23. Youth participating in this hunt must be at least eight years of age and no more than 18 years old on the day of the season.

"Hunters should note that the Natural Resources Commission approved increasing the maximum age to less than 18 years of age for the 2011 youth spring gobbler season," said Taylor. Youth hunters 15-17 years of age must comply with all licensing requirements. Youth between 8–14 years of age must be accompanied by a licensed adult at least 21 years of age, who cannot carry a gun or bow and must remain close enough to render advice and assistance to the youngster. The only legal firearm that can be used by a youth hunter is a shotgun with shot sizes 4, 5 or 6.

The bag limit is one bearded turkey that will count toward the hunter's annual bag limit. For more information please see page 33 of the 2010–2011 Hunting and Trapping Regulations Summary.

Last year, youth hunters harvested 476 toms during the one-day youth



spring gobbler season. "This special youth hunt provides an ideal opportunity for seasoned hunters to introduce young people to the joys of spring turkey hunting," said Taylor. "In addition to having a great day afield, these adult mentors pass along their hunting knowledge, continue to the next page



Cody Bennet landed a 12 pound musky on 4 pound test at Mountwood Lake. *Photo courtesy of Reese's Country Store in Deerwalk..* 







create great memories and keep the fine hunting tradition alive for the next generation of hunters."

Cash Rewards for Poaching Information

Taylor also reminds citizens that the West Virginia Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation will pay \$200 cash rewards for information leading to the arrest and conviction of persons who illegally kill or possess a wild turkey. "This cooperative effort between the NWTF and the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources is designed to curtail illegal activities associated with the state's wild turkey resource," said Taylor.

The public is urged to contact their local natural resources police

Send In Your BIG GAME PICS *Form On Page 38* Email 0r Mail



officer or their local DNR district office if they see someone illegally killing a turkey or know of a person possessing an illegally killed turkey. The informant's identity will remain confidential. By reporting poaching incidents, the public can make a significant contribution to West Virginia's wild turkey management program.

The baiting of wild turkey also is illegal in West Virginia. The West Virginia Chapter of the NWTF pays a reward of \$100 for information that leads to the arrest and conviction of persons attempting to kill wild turkeys through the use of bait or who willfully destroy the nest or eggs of wild turkey. Baiting, along with trespassing, continue to be the most common hunting violations reported in the Wildlife Resources Section's Annual Spring Gobbler Survey.

"Baiting turkeys is not only illegal but also unethical and creates disrespect for the great sport of spring gobbler hunting," said Taylor. "I encourage turkey hunters to report any such activity to their local natural resources police officer."



Elliot Millione landed a 7 poind rainbow in Franklin. *Photo courtesy* of Woods & Water Taxidermy in Fairmont.

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### Prespawn Wisdom

GUNTERSVILLE, Ala. — Terry Scroggins had just launched his boat on Lake Guntersville for the first time this season.

"I bet we can catch 'em just around the corner," he said that cold, damp afternoon, a week before competition was to begin in the Alabama Charge on Pickwick Lake, about 100 miles to the northwest.

Terry Scroggins identified a strong prespawn pattern rather quickly on Lake Guntersville, about 100 miles from Pickwick Lake, site of the 2011 Alabama Charge.

He dropped his trolling motor into the 50-degree water about 75 yards off shore, pointed to a pipe sticking out of the bank near a bridge, and said "cast right there."

Within seconds, we both hooked into 3-pound bass and it was like that for the next 30 minutes; one good fish after another, with some weighing up to 5 pounds. How did he know?

"This is a classic prespawn spot textbook, actually — for this time of year," the Florida pro shrugged.

It was a spot where he has caught them before this time of year, yet his ability to call the shots without making a cast distinguishes one of the many differences between pro



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and amateur anglers.

As we looked around the lake, other bass anglers were thrashing grass and banks with a variety of shallow running lures. Yet, we sat over 16 feet of water, casting deeprunning Fat Free Shad crankbaits to an old roadbed that meandered across a creek.

"If the water warms up next week, those fish we're catching will be trying to spawn in the back of this creek," Scroggins surmised. "But the water's too cold, so they're staging here. It's a premier spot to find them when the water is in the 50s."

The roadbed was covered with broken cement, rocks and other debris. It rose to about 7 feet on top before tumbling into the creek channel. The bass were feeding on shad that could be seen flitting on the surface throughout the day

We were sitting about 3/4 of the way back into the creek, and the spot offered the last deep water before the creek petered out onto the flats in the rear.

"The other thing that makes this good is current," Scroggins concontinue to the next page



Brain Howes hooked a 5 pound trout at Cedar Creek. *Photo courtesy Willies Sport Shop in Glenville*.





tinued. "They're pulling water through the causeway, and that creates a feeding frenzy. Every big fish in this creek is ganged up here waiting to head into the back to spawn."

You could feel the crankbait bang along the road, and each time we paused it to allow it to float free of debris, a bass would smash it.

"That's another key this time of year — deflect the bait off objects," Scroggins added. "Even though our baits run 15 feet deep, we can bang them over that shallow road and make them move erratically, and that's what triggers a lot of strikes."

Will this be a pattern he will employ on Pickwick during the Alabama Charge?

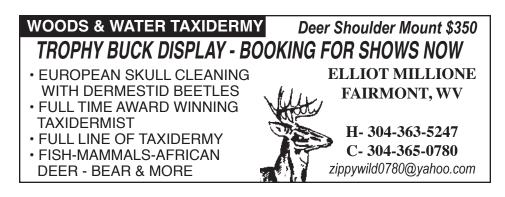
Scroggins smiled.

"If the water temperature stays in the 50s, I guarantee you the guy who finds something like this is going to catch 'em good," he said.

#### www.wvasportsman.net



Mike Morningstar, noted musician in WV, landed a 25" rainbow trout. *Photo courtesy of Willie's Sport Shop in Glenville*.



## 3-9x40 Scopes

It's not unusual for rifles and shotguns to seem like they are missing something without there 3-9×40 scopes or some kind of sighting device. It is getting increasingly popular for handguns to have them, as well. The primary cause is that it makes it easier to hit your target, when it is additional away, even though the guns might have the iron sights built in. By aiming via a magnifying scope or using a red dot laser sight, it's simpler to see your target and get a much more precise shot.

All hunting scopes possess a sizing program that is known as a quantity variety, which refers to the magnification ranges and the objective lens diameter. The very first numbers of a 3-9×40 scope would mean it's a variable scope capable of three times closer than the naked eye and as much as 9 occasions the naked eye in magnification. The crucial here is how lower the magnification, not how high because the greater magnification, the less light you get via the eyepiece.

The last quantity may be the goal lens diameter, measured in millimeters, and usually they are 40 to 45 millimeter, even though some continue to the next page





of the extreme models go up to 75 millimeters, even though it isn't required. The greater the quantity with the goal lens, the greater light you get through your eyepiece. It's this delicate balance of magnification and objective lens diameter than determines the greatest detail, which is important for the most precise shot.

Selecting magnification variety is determined by how much magnification you'll need. Should you keep in mind that the lower the magnification, the better detail, you also have to bear in mind whether you will be shooting small targets from long distances. So, you might choose 3-9×40 scope for deer hunting, but for pheasant or squirrel hunting, you may need 6-20x or 8-25x variable rifle scope because you is going to be shooting targets from a lengthy range distance.

The objectives could be adjustable or variable, also. External parallax adjustments can adjust the diameter of variable objective hunting scopes, which can make a difference on scopes that go more than 10X magnification. You will not usually discover them on scopes below that magnification.

Lenses are typically waterproof, fog-proof and are coated with single or multiple-layered coatings that help reduce glare and loss of lumination. Usually, the more layers of coatings-the sharper the contrast and the clearer the image will be. Fully, multi-coated scopes are usually regarded as having the very best lenses since they generally mean better lumination transmission and sharper contrast for that user. Field of View is another term you'll hear when searching at various hunting optics. This measurement refers to how many feet left to right you are able to see whenever you are searching via the scope. Usually, you may have about a 30 foot Area of Look at or FOV at a 100 yard range on three times magnification. Since the magnification goes down, the Area of View goes up. At 9 occasions magnification, the Field of View would only be about 14 feet.

Understanding the measurements of the rifle scope is essential when choosing the very best general scope for the type of hunting you will be doing. As you can see, the measurements could make quite a distinction in how precise your shots will be. Look into one of these scopes for your next trip. www.catfishparadiseohio.com For More Info

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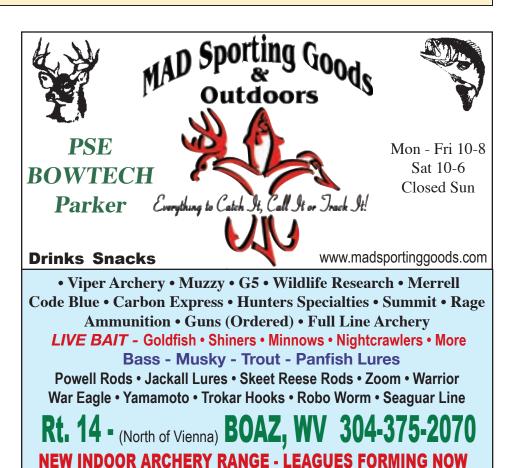
During your stay be sure to visit *Hickory House Restaurant* near Historic Jackson's Mill, where you'll find the Best BBQ in WV! *"The Hickory Wood makes it Good!"* 

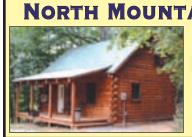


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Mike Spence arrowed a nice buck. Photo courtesy of Crooked Creek Archery in Williamstown.





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Shawn Staats & Jeremy Deems got 2 rams at Double DD Ranch in McArthur, OH. Photo courtesy of Reese's Country Store in Deerwalk.





Mail or eMail **BIG GAME PICS** Form On Page 38



Hunter Hatfield went to Boone County for this great 10 point.



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April 2011 ~ Page 31



Matt McDougal & Rob Moore won the 1st Bass Sportsman event in Moundsville. Rob hooked a 2 pound, 14 oz. smallmouth.



Glen Tracewell, from Parkersburg, caught a 9 pound Florida bass.

#### MAIL/EMAIL YOUR PICS INFO ON PAGE 38



Tim Terry landed a 21 pound New River musky. *Photo courtesy of Three Rivers Edge in Hinton*.



April 2011 ~ Page 32

### **Taxidermy Tips For Turkey Season**

Turkey Hunting Tips - If you would like to preserve your turkey kill as a trophy hunt, there are several steps you should take before and after the hunt in order to get the best results from your taxidermist. Here are the steps you should take to prepare your turkey kill for taxidermy.

Shop Around for the Best Taxidermist You Can Find

The first step to preserving your trophy hunt should take place weeks before the actual hunt. You want to begin by shopping for the best taxidermist you can find. Shop around your area for professional taxidermists. Get a feel for the quality of work that they do. Ask how much they charge. If you live in a smaller area, there may be fewer taxidermists to choose from. However, if you cannot find an adequate taxidermist in your local area, scout other taxidermists across the country. There are many fine taxidermists that you can find simply by asking other hunters or doing a bit of research. Taxidermy



Tim White caught a 6 pound, 1 oz. rainbow at Cedar Creek. Photo courtesy of Willie's Sport Shop in Glenville.



is one of those fields where you don't want to skimp. Paying a little extra can often go a long way. Considerations Before the Hunt – Things to Pack

There is a lot of prep work to be had previous to the hunt. There is a list of things that you should pack with you for the hunt. There are many things you should consider packing, which includes a large plastic bag, a cooler, paper towels, and cotton balls and used pantyhose. Some taxidermists recommend used panty hose so that it can

be used to keep the birds feathers in place. To use panty hose, simply cut out a section from the thigh area and tie it up on one end. After shooting the bird, make sure to slip the bird carefully into the hose or bag headfirst. Using a plastic bag is another alternative.

The secret to getting the best possible taxidermy mount is to keep the animal in good condition before getting it to the taxidermist. There are special considerations that you should take in order to en-

continue to the next page



sure the best possible results at the taxidermist. A lot rides on how you shoot the wild turkey.

Tips for Shooting Wild Turkeys for the Best Taxidermy Results

If you are hoping to mount your kill, always aim for a clean neck or headshot. In general, avoid shooting the bird head-on while it is strutting, as this can cause the tail feathers to become easily rumpled or shred them entirely. In general, avoid shooting a strutting bird. The best shot for mounting a bird later is to take a clean side shot, ideally while the bird's neck is stretched upwards. In general, you should avoid getting shotgun pellets near the wing feathers or the tail. Most taxidermists will find it much easier to repair the head or neck than the tail and wing feathers. For the best results, there is evidence that 25 to 30 yards is a good distance for hunting turkeys. This amount of space allows for a clean kill without the messy patterns that can result with closer patterns. Avoid having to take a second shot, but if you have merely wounded the bird, try taking a second shot at the head from a sufficient distance. Many turkeys



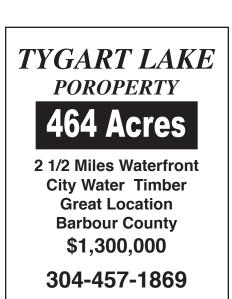
will thrash around after being hit, thus losing many feathers. If this is the case with your kill, collect all the loose feathers you can so that the taxidermist can replace them. Considerations During the Post-Kill Period

There are many important considerations to take during the post-kill period. Use napkins to keep the bird from spilling blood or body fluids on the feathers. Limit damage to the feathers, and keep the bird as cool as possible after the kill.



Mark Edwards brought in an 8 point bow buck. *Photo courtesy of Mountain Heritage Archery in Princeton.* 





March 2011 ~ Page 34



Wyatt Myers hunted this boar at WV Safari in Ripley. Photo courtesy of Mt. Alto Food Mart.

#### Hunt Safely In 2011



# **10 Turkey Hunting Tips**

Tips for spring turkey hunting are mostly common sense techniques, but there are a few you might not have in your bag of tricks or may have forgot about. Using these back to basic turkey hunting tips will increase your odds of success while chasing spring gobblers this season.

Don't push it. If you can't call a reluctant tom in close to you, back off and wait. Give him some time and come back later. Most of all, don't aggressively call a turkey that is not responding. A lot of times, that big gobbler who ignored you all morning might just charge you in the afternoon when his hens are ignoring him. Making a few gentle hen calls might just be enough to entice him.

Don't lose focus when it's quiet. Jakes do strut and gobble but they're less likely than a dominant tom to show off, especially later in the breeding season when they've been whupped on by the big toms. If you don't hear any gobbling any-

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1/2 Mile from Audra State Park in WV 304-472-4279 *LIVE BAIT*  where, don't assume there are no turkeys around.

Hunt the edges. Just like with deer hunting, you'll often find turkeys along the edges between wooded habitat and open fields or meadows. Turkeys year-round are looking for good feeding areas with their primary food sources of insects, berries, seeds, or nuts. For a while in the spring, the breeding birds will focus a bit less on food sources and a bit more on each other, but you'll do well to focus on areas close to good feeding areas. If you're out in rainy weather, pay special attention to fields and open areas. Turkeys do exhibit mating behavior on rainy days - they're just a whole lot quieter about it.

Try to put turkeys to bed. If you are out late in the day and you can identify roosting trees where turkeys are spending the night, you're way ahead of the game. Come back a couple hours before dawn and set up in a spot where you're likely to

continue to the next page







Brian Matthews, from Normantown, trapped a 24 pound bobcat.



Skyler Dowell got a nice 10 point in Upshur County.



have a shot when they come off their roost.

Calling a reluctant tom. This technique works only with a hunting partner. The shooter should be set up in a spot where he is well hidden - backed up against a big tree, root wad, or a tangle of brush. The caller sets up about 10 yards behind the shooter and is also well hidden. The goal is not to call the bird to the shooter, but past the shooter. If the turkey's attention is focused on the call, he's far less likely to detect the shooter. Make sure you are ready - some shooters have nearly been run over using this maneuver.

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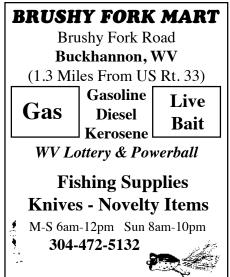
Call like a turkey.

Use clucking sounds. A cluck is a turkey's way of getting another turkey's attention. Hens cluck to let a tom know they're waiting for him. Purring, if you do it right, is a soft and contented sound that hens make when all is well with their world.

Do not make turkey putt sounds. A turkey putt is an alarm call, consisting of several quick notes. It signals danger to the other birds. A hen's yelp means just about the same thing, but it can have other meanings during the breeding season.

A squealing hen call mimics a breeding hen getting mounted by a tom and could start a breeding frenzy.

Don't use a fly-down call. Turkeys make this cackling noise when they fly down from roosting trees in the dark or right at first light. They make the same sound when they fly over a creek or take off from a ridge or high spot. It signals movement, so don't use it. You should, however, be very familiar with this call because when you hear turkeys do it at dawn – you know they're likely to be on the ground.

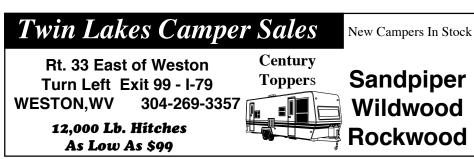


Decoy safety tips. Never transport an uncovered turkey decoy – it's a great way to get shot. Be sure you set up in a spot with a tree or other large object behind you that is wider than your shoulders and taller

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Fred Jaco Jr., from Morgantown, took a nice 8 point buck.



than your head. Set up your decoy about 20 yards from your spot and make sure you have a clear line of sight for at least 50 to 100 yards if possible. If you spot another hunter, call out and let them know where you are.

Take care of your calling tools. If you use a box call, keep it clean and keep your fingers off the striking surface. Do not use sandpaper on a box call. Don't use anything but chalks on box calls - carpenter's chalk or teacher's chalk works fine but don't use it on the beveled edges. If you use a slate call, keep your fingers off the striking area. A slate call (which might actually be made of aluminum or glass) will last for many years if you keep it clean and store it in a plastic bag in a cool dry place. You can sand the surface of a slate call with sandpaper, a stone, or steel wool but don't rub it back and forth - you should sand in just one direction.

Make safety a priority. According to the National Safety Council, hunters suffer fewer injuries than athletes involved in tennis, cycling, and even bowling. The most common turkey hunting accident is a hunter who gets shot - because he was mistaken for a turkey. According to the International Hunter Education Association, there were only 5 fatal accidents (across Canada, the U.S. and Mexico) involving turkey hunters, and 107 nonfatal accidents. Just 6 percent of two-party hunting accidents were fatal, but you don't want to be a statistic.

Basic safety rules for turkey hunters:

Don't aim anything but binoculars at a turkey before you identify its head and beard.

Be certain of your target but also of

what's behind it.

Don't ever shoot at movement or sound. Until you see a turkey, assume it's a hunter.

When you're moving around before or after you set up in a stand, wear orange.

Flag your stand with orange tape –

whether it's an actual ground blind, tree stand, or just the spot where you're sitting.

Do not wear turkey colors – hunters wearing red, white, or blue are more likely to be shot.

Good luck this season and hunt safely.



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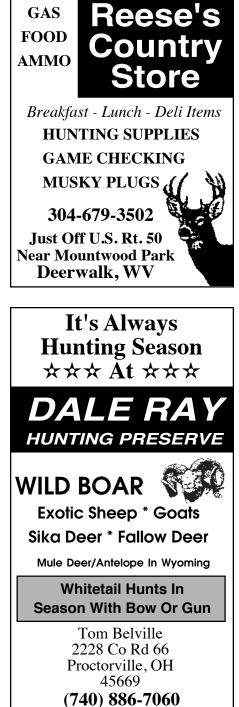
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