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Issue 238

June/July 2014



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SHAWN**

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Cover Photo

A state record rainbow trout was caught recently by Eric Files Sr. of Martinsburg.

Files caught the 33.11-inch, 19.40-pound fish from a private pond in Berkeley County April 30, 2014. He caught the record rainbow using a nightcrawler while fishing for sunfish.

Files' catch establishes a new West Virginia record for weight and length. The previous weight record for rainbow trout was a 17.31-pound fish.

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Interesting Fish Facts

Most fish reproduce by laying eggs, though some fish, such as great white sharks, give birth to live babies called pups.

Starfish are not fish. Neither are jellyfish.

Although the fangtooth fish is only a few inches long, it has teeth about the size of a human's. The mudskipper is a fish that spends most of its time out of water and can "walk" on its fins. It carries a portable water

supply in its gill chambers when it leaves the water. It can also breathe through the pores of its wet skin.

Catfish have over 27,000 taste buds. Humans have around 7,000.

To achieve shimmering effects, most lipsticks contain fish scales. Most brands of lipstick contain fish scales.

Lungfish can live out of water for several years. It secretes a mucus cocoon and burrows itself under the unbaked earth. It takes in air with its lung through a built-in breathing tube that leads to the surface. A lungfish has both gills and a lung. Seahorses are the only fish that swim upright.

Some fish, such as the great white shark, can raise their body temperature. This helps them hunt for prey in cold water. The oldest known age for a fish was an Australian lungfish. In 2003, it was still alive and well at 65 years old.

continue to the next page



Noted angler, Andy Godwin, landed a nice Ohio River smallmouth.

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David Fields, from Delbarton, hooked a 15 3/4" white crappie.

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Fish use a variety of low-pitched sounds to convey messages to each other. They moan, grunt, croak, boom, hiss, whistle, creak, shriek, and wail. They rattle their bones and gnash their teeth. However, fish do not have vocal chords. They use other parts of their bodies to make noises, such as vibrating muscles against their swim bladder.

Fish can form schools containing millions of fish. They use their eyes and something called a lateral line to hold their places in the school. The lateral line is a row of pores running along the fish's sides from head to tail. Special hairs in the pores sense changes in water pressure from the movements of other fish or predators.

Since a fish's jaw is not attached to its skull, many fishes can shoot their mouths forward like a spring to catch startled prey.

Electric eels and electric rays have enough electricity to kill a horse. Sharks are the only fish that have eyelids.

Fish have sleep-like periods where they have lowered response to stimuli, slowed physical activity, and reduced metabolism but they do not share the same changes in



Steve Scholl bagged an 8 point. Photo courtesy of Reese's Country Store in Deerwalk.

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brain waves as humans do when they sleep.

Some fish, such as the herbivorous fish (grazers), often lack jaw teeth but have tooth-like grinding mills in their throats called pharyngeal teeth.

Most fish have taste buds all over their body.

Pollution in water changes the sex of fish

An estimated one third of male fish continue to the next page



Doody Cook went to Webster Co. for a 385 pound black bear.

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in British waters are changing sex due to pollution in human sewage. Saltwater fish need to drink more water than freshwater fish. Since seawater is saltier than the liquids in a fish's body, water inside the fish is constantly flowing out. If they didn't drink to replace the lost water, saltwater fish would dry up like prunes.

The oldest fishhook ever found dates back to about 42,000 years ago.

Most fish have little salt in them. Sharks, however, have meat as salty as the ocean they live in.

Most fish can see in color and use colors to camouflage themselves or defend themselves and their territory. Most fish have the best possible eyesight for their habitat and can most certainly see you peering at them in a fish tank. Some fish can see polarized and ultraviolet light.

A fish's age can be determined by growth rings in its scales

A fish does not add new scales as it grows, but the scales it has increase in size. In this way, growth rings are formed and the rings reveal the age of a fish.

Fish that have thin fins with a split tail indicate that they move very quickly or may need them to cover great distances. On the other had, fish that live among rocks and reefs near the ocean floor have broad lateral fin and large tails.

A ship has a heavy keel in the lower



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part to keep it from capsizing. Fish, on the other hand, have the keel on top. If the paired fins stop functioning to keep the fish balanced, the fish turns over because its heaviest part tends to sink, which happens when it dies.

On average, flying fish can glide 160 feet (50m), but have been known



Brooklyn Starky harvested a 23 pound gobbler.

to glide as far as 660 feet (200 m). And they can reach heights up to 19 feet (6m).

An inflated porcupine fish can reach a diameter of up to 35 inches (90 cm). It puffs up by swallowing water and then storing it in its stomach. The stomach increases in size with more water. If the fish is taken out of water, it can inflate in a similar way by swallowing air.

A fish can drown in water. Like humans, fish need oxygen, so if there isn't enough oxygen in the water, they will suffocate.

The fish in the middle of a school control the school. The fish on the

continue to the next page



Tom Reed reeled in a 17 pound catfish. Photo courtesy of PC Bait & Tackle in Hinton.

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outside are guided by those in the middle. Only bony fish can swim in highly coordinated groups.f Most fish cannot swim backwards Most fish cannot swim backwards. Those that can are mainly members of one of the eel families.a

Fish would suffocate if they tried to chew because chewing would interfere with water passing over their gills.

The biggest fish in the world is the giant whale shark, which can grow to nearly 60 feet, or the length of two school buses. It weighs over 25 tons and eats mainly plankton. It has over 4,000 teeth, though they are only 3 mm long.d

The most poisonous fish in the world is the stone fish. Its sting can cause shock, paralysis, and even death if not treated within a few hours.

The word "piranha" is from the

Tupi (Brazil) pira nya and means "scissors." Found in freshwater rivers in South America, piranhas have razor-sharp teeth. They typically eat fish, insects, seeds, fruit, and even larger animals such as horses. While there are no proven reports of piranhas killing a person, they do eat human carcasses.

The fastest fish is the sailfish. It can swim as fast as a car travels on the highway.

The slowest fish is a seahorse. It swims so slowly that a person can barely tell it is moving. The slowest is the Dwarf Seahorse, which takes about one hour to travel five feet. It even looks like it is simply standing up, not swimming.

Some fish do not have scales. Sharks, for example, have rough sandpapery skin instead of scales.

Fish have multiple Christian and
continue to the next page

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Marlene Riggs harvested a large gobbler. Photo courtesy of Holbert's Store in Big Bend.



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pre-Christian overtones. For example, the Greek word for fish is Ichthys, which is an acronym for "Jesus Christ, God's Son, Savior" and was used to mark early Christian tombs and meeting places. Because of their association with fertility, fish have also been linked to Isis and Aphrodite.

In Japanese, "fugu" literally means "river pig"

In Japan, the fugu, or puffer fish, is a succulent but lethal delicacy. It contains tetrodotoxin, a deadly poison. However, it is so delicious that Japanese gourmets risk their lives to prepare it. To make this high-risk dish, chefs must have a certificate from a special school that teaches preparation of this toxic fish.

Hammerhead sharks can live in schools of more than 500 sharks. The strongest female swims in the

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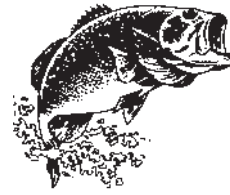
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continue to page 13



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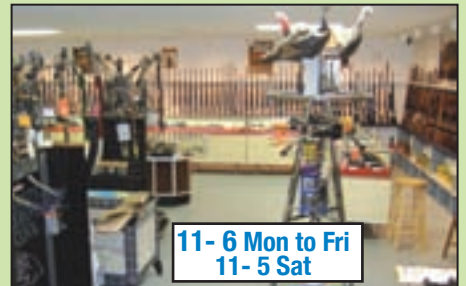
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Don Salisbury, long time hunter, brought in a nice gobbler. *Photo courtesy of Crossroads General Store near Newark.*

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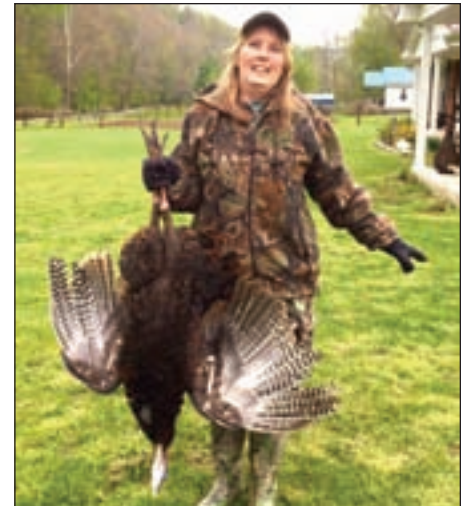
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Haper & Harper landed a 5lb., 7 oz. largemouth at Stonewall.



Jone Kincaid went to Nicholas Co. for a good gobbler.

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Big Fish Pics
Form On Page 38**

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sharks to move away so she is the center of attention.

Some desert pupfish can live in hot springs that reach temperatures greater than 113° F.

A male emperor angelfish lives together with up to five female mates. If the emperor angelfish dies, one of the females turns into



Walleye fishing has been successful. *Photo courtesy of Sparky's Charters in NY.*

a male fish and becomes the leader of the group.

There are approximately 32,000 different kinds of fish in the world today, which is more than all the other kinds of vertebrates combined. Scientists are discovering new species all the time.

The batfish plays dead when danger is near. It floats motionless on its side when scared, making it look like a dead leaf floating on the surface of the water.

Anableps, four-eyed fish, can see above and below water at the same time.

Sometimes tornadoes pick up fish while traveling over water and carry them over land, where the fish rain down. These “fish showers” have been happening for thousands of years. Roman writer Pliny the Younger describes this phenomenon in the 1st century A.D.

Lampreys and hagfish are the most primitive form of fish still living today.

Male anglerfish are much smaller than the female. While the female can reach up to 24 inches long, the males barely reach 1.6 inches long

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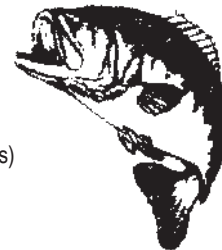
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and live as parasites on their mates. They stay together for life. As the male ages, he gets smaller and smaller. The female anglerfish's light is always "on."

Close to 99% of the ocean remains unexplored

Scientists have explored only 1% of the ocean depths. They believe millions of new kinds of animals and fish are down there, waiting to be discovered.c

Empty dogfish gg cases sometimes wash up onto the beach. Some people call them mermaid purses.

Humans have been amazed for centuries that salmon, after journeying across the ocean, can find the river where they were born. In the Yukon River in Alaska and in Canada, certain tagged Chinook salmon covered nearly 2,000 miles in 60 days. Salmon also have adapted to live in a variety of aquatic environments, including rivers, lakes, estuaries, coal reefs, and the open sea.

Fish were the first vertebrates with bony skeletons to appear on Earth. Unlike today's fish, early fish had no scales, fins, or jawbone, but they did have a dorsal fin.

Hagfish are some of the slimiest animals on earth. An Atlantic hagfish can make enough slime in one minute to fill a bucket.

Unlike bony fish, sharks and rays do not have swim bladders. They continue to the next page

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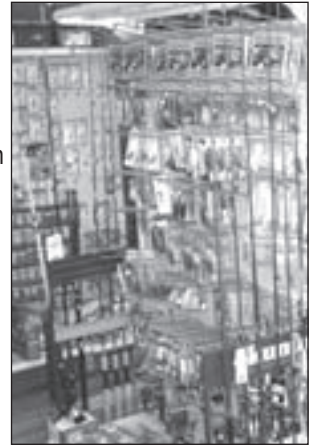


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Eric Riffle, from Parkersburg, bagged a 7 point buck.



John Setliff, from Culloden, shot a Cabell Co. 134 5/8 class buck.



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have to swim all the time, even when they are sleeping. Otherwise, they will sink to the bottom of the ocean.

A seahorse can move each of its eyes separately. One eye can look forward while the other looks backward. Seahorses can also change their color to match their surroundings.

Most types of seahorses pair for life. Female seahorses lay their eggs inside a pouch on the male seahorse's belly. When the babies are ready to hatch, the male holds onto a piece of seaweed with his tail and rocks back and forth until the babies pop out of his pouch.

Unlike most other fish, the ocean sunfish does not have a tail. A female sunfish can lay 300 million eggs each year. Each egg is smaller than the period at the end of a sentence.

The term "fish" is used when referring to one species of fish (e.g., 10 salmon are 10 fish). The term "fish-

es" is used when referring to more than one species (e.g., 10 salmon, 3 trout, and 1 angel fish are 14 fishes).

The freshwater Pygmy and Luzon gobies of the Philippines, the salt-water Marshal Islands goby, and the tiny rice fish from Thailand all reach a maximum length of 1/2", roughly the size of a grain of rice. They are typically considered the world's smallest fishes.

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Details on page 3**



Dan Cooley II, from Lost Creek, bagged a coyote while turkey hunting in Lewis County.

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Spring Turkey Hunting Results

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. – Preliminary harvest figures for the 2014 spring gobbler season indicate West Virginia hunters checked in 9,017 bearded turkeys, according to Curtis I. Taylor, chief of Wildlife Resources Section of the Division of Natural Resources. This year's harvest represents a 19 percent decline from the 2013 harvest and a 6 percent departure from the five-year average.

Only District 2 had a harvest increase (up 5 percent) when compared to 2013. All other districts had harvest declines when compared to last year: District 1 (down 20 percent), District 3 (down 28 percent), District 4 (down 17 percent), District 5 (down 27 percent), and District 6 (down 16 percent).

Preston (344) and Mason (297) counties led the state in total harvest. Rounding out the top 10 counties were Jackson (294), Wood (268), Harrison (264), Wyoming (263), Fayette (243), Greenbrier (242), Ritchie (237) and Roane (235).

"In most years, a significant portion of the spring gobbler harvest is composed of 2-year-old birds. Poor wild turkey reproduction in 2012 resulted in fewer birds of this

continue to the next page

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age class available to hunters during the spring season,” Taylor said. “According to field reports, hunting pressure also was down from past seasons. This factor likely contributed to the overall harvest decline.”

Earlier predictions, which were based in part on measures of wild turkey recruitment and last fall’s mast crop, led wildlife biologists to anticipate a lower statewide harvest in 2014, according to Taylor. These forecasts for a lower harvest this spring proved to be accurate.

“Biologists are hopeful this spring will continue to provide moderate-to-average rainfall, support above-average reproduction and allow wild turkey populations to expand,” Taylor said.

Leave Young Wildlife Alone

FRENCH CREEK, West Virginia – The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources advises people to leave all young wildlife alone. “The spring season is the time of year when the woods and fields of West Virginia are full of new life,” said Rob Silvester, district wildlife biologist stationed in French Creek. “People have a great opportunity to view and enjoy young wildlife during this season, but it is especially important for the public to understand the need to avoid touching or disturbing these wild animals.”

Attempts to rescue or rehabilitate young wildlife are often counter-productive, according to Silvester. Picking up or getting too close to wildlife greatly increases the chance of harm to the animal and/or the persons involved in this unwise practice. By touching young animals, humans leave a scent that may attract a predator. Wildlife
continue to the next page

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viewing is an enjoyable and perfectly acceptable activity; however, Wildlife Resources Section personnel recommend that this pastime be conducted from a safe distance and with the aid of binoculars.

“In addition to being detrimental to the welfare of young animals, handling wildlife potentially may expose humans to various wildlife-associated diseases, parasites and other health-related risks,” said Silvester. “Rabies, roundworms and other parasites such as lice and ticks can be transmitted to humans through the improper handling of wildlife.”

DNR offices statewide receive numerous calls each year concerning young wildlife, especially fawn deer that have been picked up by well-meaning residents. In almost every case these young animals have not been abandoned. The offspring are often hidden as the adult searches for food and this separation can last for a few hours or all day.

“Humans are poor substitute parents for wild animals, because young wildlife require special diets and learn survival skills from their parents,” Silvester said. “Removing young wildlife from their natural environment almost certainly leads to the death of the animal.”

Many people often mistake a bedded fawn, with no mother in sight, as abandoned, but that is usually not the case. Hiding the fawn and leaving it while the doe searches for food is an important survival tactic. The spotted pattern and coloration of fawns and their lack of scent afford protection to these young animals and make them difficult for predators to detect.

If a predator happens to approach close to a fawn, the young deer

will normally hold very still until the threat passes. If discovered by a predator, the fawn will wait until the last moment before fleeing. The doe will come back to check on her fawn at feeding time.

As a final caution, remember that state law prohibits the possession of wildlife without a permit. When you pick up a young animal in the wild, you have taken it into your

possession. The fines for illegal possession of a fawn deer, black bear cub, baby raccoon, squirrel or any other species taken or possessed during the closed season range from \$20 up to a maximum of \$1,000 and/or up to 100 days in jail.

“We want everyone to enjoy West Virginia’s wildlife,” said Silvester. “They should be left alone.”

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Donavan Walton bagged a 20 3/4 pound gobbler. *Photo courtesy of Crossroads General Store near Newark.*

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Travis Greenlief, from Weston, caught and released a possible state record musky from Stonecoal Lake. He measured it at 54 inches and 47 pounds.



Bo Wolfe went to the New River for this quality smallmouth.



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Seldon Rife, from Hurricane, brought in a 20 pound turkey.,



Daniel Cooley II, from Lost Creek, hooked a 21 1/2" largemouth bass.



Dakota Cyrus landed a nice small-mouth. Photo courtesy of PC Bait & Tackle in Hinton.

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Tiffany Brannon, from Chloe, had success with a 10" beard turkey.



Lorna Canterbury went to the Racine Pool for a giant flathead.



Jansen McCloy & Eugene Dailey brought in a large gobbler.

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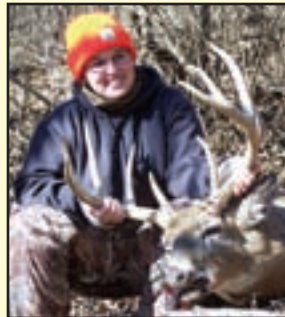
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Return Adventure At Lake Shawn

By Mark Goudy

An excellent fishing adventure is closer than you think to West Virginia. High fuel prices limit many people's budget, looking for a chance to land quality fish. Sometimes a private pay lake can be the answer.

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Glen Tracewell, from Parkersburg, went to Florida for a 9 lb., 3 oz. largemouth bass.

Moundsville, Lake Shawn can provide a fishing trip to remember. This pay lake is 6 miles west of Powhatan Point, Ohio. Started from a strip mine lake in 1962 by Ray Brubaker, the lake has a reputation of being one of the best sport fishing lakes in the surrounding states. Numerous Pittsburgh professional athletes have frequented this lake over the years.

Traveling from Parkersburg, I brought along my longtime fishing buddy, John Oesterle. He has weathered a double lung transplant and still has plenty of spunk to land big fish. We arrived around 7:30am and met the lake manager, Bill.

They provide the fishermen with a 15' john boat with a trolling motor. On board is a big bucket of fish food pellets, some are moist for

putting on hooks. This is mainly used for going after the huge hybrid bass, with some going well over 10 pounds.

continue to the next page



John Oesterle went to Lake Shawn for this 3 lb., 14 oz. largemouth..

We left the ramp area and proceeded on our fishing adventure. We were after largemouth and smallmouth bass with artificial bait. John was using a Banjo Minnow - yes, they work. He landed several keeper size bass immediately. I started with a buzz bait - surface plug. I had caught over 20 keepers a few years earlier on these. Unfortunately, the fish were looking for lower running baits.

We went down towards an earthen dam. I had switched to a Senko and started picking up largemouth. Occasionally, large hybrid blue gills would also bite. They run up to a pound and more in size. Numerous bass were netted and we



Dale Cabell hooked a 19" largemouth. *Photo courtesy of Burnsville Docks in Burnsville.*

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made it to the back of the lake.

We fished that area for awhile with artificial bait and caught bass. Now it was time to dip into the bucket of fish pellets for some line stretching fun. They advise you to use small salmon hooks with a clear water bobber. I had fished there a few years back and landed fish on raw shrimp and Little Smokey Sausage links. We threw a bunch of fish pellets in the water. What happened next was incredible. The big hybrids, largemouth bass and smallmouth literally lunge at the pellets. It's a feeding frenzy like you've never seen before.

We started out with shrimp attached to a number 1 octopus hook. You need to hide the hook as well as possible in the bait. They did not want shrimp this day. Next, we went with Little Smokey links.

The bite was slow, but finally a big hybrid gobbled one up.

Fighting a big hybrid is actually quite a chore. We were both using 10# test line with the drag backed off quite a bit. These big fish would run drag and actually pull the boat. We would occasionally throw more
continue to the next page



James Canterbury landed a big blue catfish.

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ish pellets in to entice them further. Finally, John landed a 3 pound, 12 ounce largemouth. The hybrids were running between 6 to around 8 pounds. Sometimes a large blue gill would hop on a bait too.

Our arms were getting tired from all the catches. We decided to move off to catch bass on artificial bait again.

John switched to a cotton candy worm that was Texas rigged. I started throwing tubes. The bass were after both of these offerings.

We moved towards an area near a big stone high wall. John caught a nice largemouth bass that went 3 pounds, 9 ounces. His cotton candy worm worked well in the clear water. Other keeper largemouth were also landed. A green pumpkin tube was working well for me. We both

saw a huge largemouth that had to be over 7 pounds.

The large stone wall was where we attracted the biggest hybrids. We threw several cups of pellets there and the water was boiling with huge fish. We ended up catching more hybrids over 7 pounds there. I had a monster pull my drag severely, away from the boat. Unfortunately, this one ended up

continue to the next page



Nelson Spradling landed a 12 3/4 lb. crappie. *Photo courtesy of Burnsville Docks in Burnsville.*



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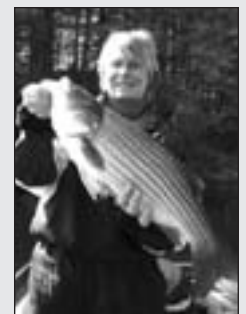
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breaking me off. It had to be well over 10 pounds. I caught one that weighed 7 pounds, 10 ounces, and John caught one the same size a bit later. We had a tie, I thought. Oh well, he hooked another that went 7 pounds, 12 ounces. Drats!

We went back to regular fishing and had more keeper largemouth on the hook. It was getting near our departure time and we headed back to the ramp. We did not care, though, because it was a riveting experience once again.

Lake Shawn information can be acquired on their web site. www.lakeshawn.com They also have cabin rentals available. There is an ad on page 25 of this magazine, with their phone number listed in the ad.

I believe that was my 4th trip to this outstanding lake. No fishing license is required. This lake is a great place to take the family too. Overnight guests have great luck with night time catfishing.

Try Lake Shawn - you'll be glad you did!



Mark Goudy reeled in a 7 lb., 10 oz. hybrid bass at Lake Shawn.

Green Bank Special Deer Hunt Permits

GREEN BANK, West Virginia – The National Radio Astronomy Observatory (NRAO) in Green Bank, West Virginia, has announced that applications are now available and are being accepted for the special resident-only controlled deer hunt at the NRAO site. This controlled hunt is organized and planned in cooperation with the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (WVDNR).

Submitting an application enters the hunter in a drawing for a maximum of two days on the NRAO site. Applications for the drawing must be received by NRAO on or

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before Aug. 1, 2014. Successful applicants will be notified by mail and issued a special NRAO letter of authorization to deer hunt. Only hunters who have applied and have received a letter for a particular day or days can hunt. "Walk-ons" will not be permitted to hunt.

The controlled hunts, held for two days (Oct. 17 and 18, 2014) under the auspices of the WVDNR, will take place on four delineated areas ranging in size from 132 acres to 1,000 acres. Each area is designated: BOW ONLY; or MUZZLE-LOADER & SHOTGUN WITH SLUGS; or MUZZLELOADER
continue to the next page

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ONLY. On the application, the hunter must choose a bow or the type of firearm they wish to use during the hunt.

The maximum bag limit during the NRAO hunt is two antlerless deer (one per day), except that an on-site lottery will be held each day of the hunt which will allow five hunters to hunt an either-sex deer. These are BONUS deer and do not count toward the hunter's annual licensed deer bag limit. However, participating hunters must possess an appropriate base West Virginia hunting license (A, AH, AHJ, X, XJ, Lifetime) or be exempt from having to purchase a license. All deer harvested must be checked at the official game checking station located on the NRAO site.

Due to the nature of the work at the observatory, gasoline-powered vehicles are strictly controlled on the site. Hunters may park only in designated parking areas, and all vehicles will be issued a "pass" for display on the windshield. Transportation from hunter check-in to some hunt areas is provided by the NRAO. For purposes of safety and biological study of harvested deer,

all hunters must pass through the check-in station each morning before the day's hunt. At the end of the day's hunt, all hunters must exit through the checkout station.

Applications may be picked up at any WVDNR district office or may be requested by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the National Radio Astronomy Observatory at P.O. Box 2, Green Bank, WV 24944, Attention: Hunt Coordinator. Applications are also available on the WVDNR website at www.wvdnr.gov. An application, detailed instructions and regulations will be provided to each ap-

plicant. For information, call 304-456-2011 or 304-637-0245.



Ryan Skidmore won the WV B.A.S.S. Nation Jr. State Championship.

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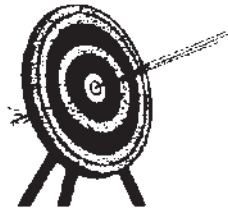


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Johnny Adams went to North Bend for this 4 pound largemouth.



Nathan Bostic, from Hinton, reeled in a 50 pound carp.

www.wvasportsman.net



Christopher Martin bagged a 20 pound bird. Photo courtesy of Crossroads General Store near Newark.

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Clinton Hudkins caught the lunker bass at Burnsville Lake.

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Mark Godwin hooked a fine Ohio River smallmouth bass.



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A big rainbow trout was brought in. Photo courtesy of Middle Mountain Sporting Goods in Elkins.



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Jacob Alkire landed a 52 pound catfish. Photo courtesy of Bel Meadows Fishing Preserve in Lost Creek.



Beth Mynes, from Mt. Nebo, caught a 21 1/2" largemouth bass.



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This fellow hooked some keeper trout. Photo courtesy of Bel Meadows Fishing Preserve in Lost Creek.

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Nathan Patton, from Poca, reeled in a 36" blue catfish.

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Develop Your Musky Night Sense

During summer and into early fall, one of the most reliable muskie fishing opportunities across the muskie range exists when fishing after dark. Simply put, fishing after dark can yield fantastic results, and the experience can be nothing short of magic. However, for those who haven't fished after dark, or experienced a good night bite, fishing after dark can take you outside of your comfort zone. Fishing after dark requires you to rely on your other senses besides that of sight. You can hear the lure hit the surface and feel the vibration of the lure's vibration. Although your vision is impaired, your other senses become overly-heightened, and that experience alone can be thrilling.

There is something about that first night bite. Quite often you will lose contact with the lure as the muskie



Zeb Dorsey caught a 40" musky. Photo courtesy of Crossroads General Store near Newark.

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GAME CHECKING

overtakes the bait and creates a split second of slack. During the day, you rarely feel this as you are visually focused on other things, sometimes actually watching the lure during the retrieve. At night there is no watching the bait, just feeling it. It's absolutely incredible to feel your rod load under extreme pressure after the lure momentarily disappears. That sequence of events is a game changer and can make anyone a night stalker.

I love fishing after dark. There is something about the tranquility of the dark and the heightened sense of awareness and anticipation that gets me really excited to fish after dark.

One of the most important aspects of any successful night angler is developing a sense of feel or an overall "night sense" of what's happening around you. You need to be able to feel if your lure is fouled with weeds, or the blade is not spinning. You need to be able to feel the increase in resistance and the lure's presence as it approaches the boat,

continue to the next page

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Jacob Smith hooked a 20" New River smallmouth..

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to begin your figure eight. Yes, you have to figure eight after dark, and of course they bite at boatside after dark. A figure eight strike after dark at first seems like you have hooked into an anchor, which is immediately followed by whitewater furry and pandemonium. It's night fishing at its finest.

My point is whether you are fishing a bucktail after dark across the top of shallow rocks, or cranking a deep weed edge with a Depthraider, you need to be in connection with your lure, and not waste casts.



Jonny McCourt shot a big gobbler. Photo courtesy of Trapper's Den in Cowen.



Jeremy King won the catfish jackpot. Photo courtesy of Bel Meadows Fishing Preserve in Lost Creek.

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Today's equipment makes staying in contact with the lures after dark much easier. I use a G. Loomis muskie rod with a super smooth Shimano Calcutta 400D reel. This outfit allows me to not get distracted by noise and stay in total contact with the lure. Spool up with 100-pound PowerPro and you can feel a muskie breathe on the line! Together this combination really enhances your ability to feel what's happening in the dark. Concentrate on feeling the lure away from the boat and notice the subtle dif-

ference as it approaches the boat. Once you get your mind focused on these things, fishing after dark becomes much easier.

Finally, when selecting spots to fish after dark, remember that your best daytime spots are often your best nighttime spots. You'll just have to slow your boat speed through an area and possibly try a little shallower, particularly if conditions are calm. Muskie may roam shallow flats after dark, but often they are still creatures of the

continue to the next page



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edge. Major weed flats, points and humps will all hold muskie after dark. Likewise, so will shallow rock humps. Generally, I focus on keeping by boat outside the weed edge and look for muskie cruising the edges, but when fishing rocks, I always make sure my lures are coming across the top of the reef. The muskie might be on the edge of the reef, but more often than not,

after dark the muskie are right on top.

Muskie fishing after dark is not for the faint at heart. It is a great way to consistently catch muskie in midsummer, particularly on a scorching summer such as this one. Remember to focus on your sense of feel and boat control, and simply fish your top spots, just fish them under the cover of darkness. Be

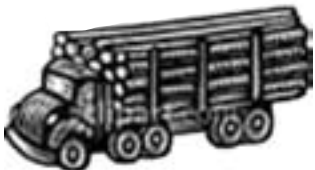
safe both navigating after dark and casting large lures, and your summer might be the best one yet...just don't expect to come home with a tan!



Scott and Roger Snyder both got gobblers on the same day. *Photo courtesy of the Trapper's Den in Cowen.*



Steve Mayle, from Fairmont, landed a 6 pound rainbow trout.

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A Safe Turkey Season in 2014

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. – The 2014 spring turkey hunting season was a milestone in West Virginia. For the first time since spring turkey hunting was instituted in the late 1960s, no fatalities and no injuries were reported to the Law Enforcement Section of the Division of Natural Resources (DNR).

The four-week spring gobbler season began April 28 and concluded May 24. Historically, the spring turkey season has been associated with unfortunate hunting-related incidents, such as mistaken for game shootings. Spring gobbler season is a calling sport, with camouflaged hunters imitating the call of hens as they attempt to lure male turkeys into range. Thanks to hunter education classes that became mandatory in 1990 for any hunter born after Jan. 1, 1975, the number

of hunting incidents has steadily decreased over the years. The last spring turkey season hunting-related fatality occurred in 2009.

A “hunting incident” is defined as
continue to the next page



Colt Corder landed a 36” musky.
Photo courtesy of Old & New Sports in Ravenswood.



George Kuhn shot a nice buck.
Photo courtesy of Reese's Country Store near Deerwalk.



Hope Stanly bagged a nice spring gobbler.

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a case where a hunter is injured or killed while hunting or preparing to hunt. Lt. Tim Coleman of the DNR Law Enforcement Section credits the Hunter Education Program for the steady improvement.

“In the early 1990s, spring turkey hunting incidents had double digit figures with near double digit figure fatalities before hunter education became mandatory,” Coleman said. “Thanks to the volunteer instructors and natural resources police officers of the West Virginia Hunter Education Program, and to the hunters who have made safety a part of their culture, incidents and fatalities for the spring turkey season were eliminated this year.”

Hunter education classes are scheduled throughout the year across the state. Hunters can find information about classes in their area at the DNR website www.wvdnr.gov/lenforce/education.shtm. Lt. Coleman encourages hunters who have already taken the course to take a refresher to learn about updates in hunter safety and hunting laws.



Kerry Dunbar caught and released a 45” musky from North Bend Lake.. Photo courtesy of Outback Jack’s in Coolville, Ohio.



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U	L	A	M	E	O	N	R	E	N	W	O	A	R	C	E	E	K	K	K
G	E	F	R	A	P	A	L	A	D	D	W	M	A	D	T	D	A	N	O
M	S	F	B	E	R	K	L	E	Y	G	U	O	O	I	H	J	R	L	O
T	S	D	R	A	Z	Z	U	T	R	E	E	O	S	P	E	I	T	O	H
R	L	G	N	I	R	I	P	P	E	R	W	Z	G	A	M	G	Y	V	W

WORD SEARCH

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Minnow • Biograde • Scum • Frog • Panfish • Aglia • Panther

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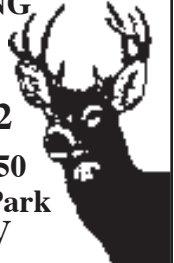
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