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Issue 202

November 2010



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Cover Photo

Zach Cales went to Wyoming
County to bag this impressive 10
point buck. It green scored 148
Pope & Young points.

Archery season continues
and the buck gun season is ap-
proaching. Mail in your big buck
and other big game pics to this
magazine. A form is on page 38.
E-mails are acceptable too.

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Big Buck Contest Begins

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. –The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources, Izaak Walton League of West Virginia, West Virginia Bowhunters Association, West Virginia Muzzleloader's Association, West Virginia Physically Challenged Advisory Board, and Toyota are again sponsoring the West Virginia Big Buck Contest for deer taken between Oct. 16 and Dec. 31, 2010. During this time, any hunter who bags a deer in West Virginia with antlers having eight or more points, a 26-inch beam length, and points that are more than eight inches long may have a winning buck. Antlers will be measured according to the official scoring system for North American big game animals, established by the Boone and Crockett Club.

Plaques will be awarded to up to eight overall first-place winners for typical and non-typical bucks in gun, bow, muzzleloader and crossbow (physically challenged) categories at the National Hunt-

ing and Fishing Day Celebration to be held at Stonewall Resort State Park Sept. 24-25, 2011. Gun and muzzleloader hunters whose bucks score more than 140 points typical or 165 non-typical will receive certificates commemorating the entry of their buck into the W.Va. Big Buck Contest and Records Keeping Program. Bowhunters or physically challenged crossbow hunters whose bucks score more than 125 points typical or 155 non-typical will also receive certificates.

There were 80 new entries into the Big Buck Records last year that were taken during the 2009 season. The season total showed 12 bucks taken by gun hunters, zero by muzzleloaders, 67 by bowhunters and one by crossbow. Bucks taken in previous years may still be scored for a certificate (if it meets the minimum score) and entry into the records.

Hunters wishing to have their deer scored for this contest should contact the closest official measurer through any DNR Wildlife District Office. Phone numbers and ad-

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dresses are listed in the 2010-2011 West Virginia Hunting and Trapping Regulations Summary.

Appointments must be made for trophy scoring. Many hunters have their deer scored by official measurers during the W.Va. Hunting and Fishing Show, held in late January at the Charleston Civic Center. Hunters will be required to read and sign a fair chase affidavit and must bring their official game check tags with the antlers to be measured.

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Form Is On Page 38**

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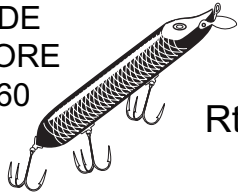
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Carcass Transportation Restricted

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. – Hunters are advised that Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) was detected in Virginia in 2009; therefore, special carcass transportation regulations become effective and whole deer harvested in Virginia may not be transported into West Virginia, according to Frank Jezioro, Direc-

tor of the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (WVDNR). Hunters who harvest deer in Virginia may bring into West Virginia only the meat from which all bones have been removed, the cape, antlers or antlers and skull plate from which all meat or tissue has been removed, cervid canines and finished taxidermy heads.

CWD is a neurological disease found in deer and elk that belongs to a family of diseases known as transmissible spongiform encephalopathies. The disease is thought to be caused by abnormal, proteinaceous particles called prions that slowly attack the brain of infected deer and elk, causing the animals to progressively become emaciated,

display abnormal behavior and invariably results in the death of the infected animal. There is no known treatment for CWD. It is important to note that currently there is no evidence to suggest CWD poses a risk for humans or domestic animals.

The discovery of CWD in Hampshire County, West Virginia, in 2005 represents a significant threat to the state's white-tailed deer. While the disease does not cause an immediate widespread die-off of deer, if allowed to spread, CWD could cause long-term damage to the herd. Those who have tried to predict the outcome of the disease on a deer population have described

continue to the next page



Luke Harper checked in a 7 point archery deer. Photo courtesy of Reese's Country Store in Deerwalk.

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the disease as a 30- to 50-year epizootic. Due to the uncertain ramifications that CWD may have on the state's white-tailed deer resource, WVDNR implemented appropriate actions as described in its CWD Incident Response Plan. Part of this plan includes prohibiting hunters from bringing in whole animals and certain tissues from areas known to have positive cases of CWD.

While there are many scientific uncertainties regarding the basic biology and ecology of CWD that may hinder development of efficient strategies for combating this disease in free-ranging deer, the actions outlined in this plan are designed to accomplish the following goals:

Determine the prevalence and the distribution of CWD through enhanced surveillance efforts.

Communicate and coordinate with the public and other appropriate agencies on issues relating to CWD and the steps being taken to respond to this disease.

Initiate appropriate management actions necessary to control the spread of this disease, prevent further introductions of the disease, and possibly eliminate the disease from the state.




Joe Jezioro got a big bow elk. Photo courtesy of Boone's Bow Shop in Parkersburg.

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“As we strive to meet this wildlife disease challenge and implement appropriate management strategies, the support and involvement of landowners and hunters remains essential,” said Director Jezioro. “The WVDNR is committed to keeping the public informed and involved in these wildlife disease management actions.”

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Wild Boar Season

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. – West Virginia’s wild boar firearms season is scheduled to open on Oct. 23 and run through Oct. 30 in Boone, Logan, Raleigh and Wyoming counties. The wild boar gun season is open to West Virginia residents only. To hunt wild boar, hunters must possess one of the following licenses or license combinations: Class X, XJ, AB-L, A-L or Class A + BG + CS, or be exempt from purchasing a license. Boar of either sex may be taken; however, only one boar may be taken per year. Each animal that is harvested must be field tagged and checked at an official game checking station in the county of kill within 24 hours of the time of kill.

Hunters harvested thirty-five (35)

wild boar in 2009 during the combined gun and archery seasons.

“Wildlife biologists are predicting the 2010 wild boar harvest will be lower this fall,” noted Curtis I. Taylor, Chief of the Wildlife Resources Section of the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources. “Poor mast conditions in 2009 reduced reproduction, and this year’s bumper crop of acorns will keep hogs widely scattered and more difficult to hunt.”

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Jason Cain, from Ripley, caught a big bass at Elk Fork Lake.



Aaron Fewell, from Winfield, hooked a musky.



Eric Shock used a dog to find this early season black bear..

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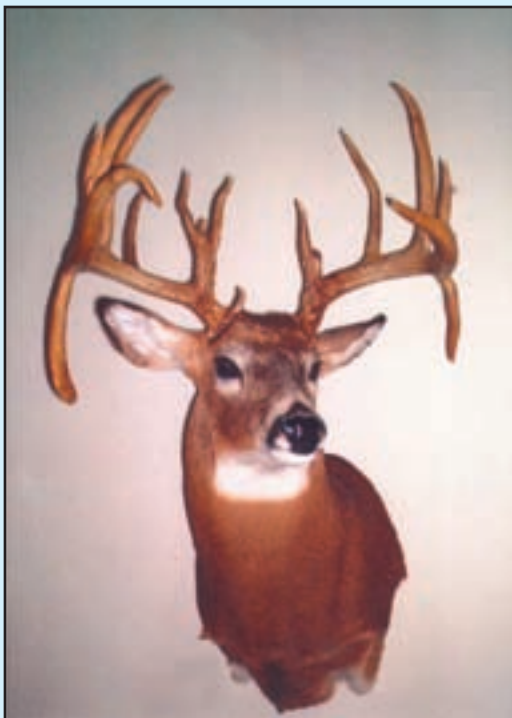
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A Whitetail taken by Andy Border, owner of the Great Outdoors in Ripley, shows the deer taking a drink of water. Just under the lilly pads is a small green frog. The piece was finished with ripples created from the water dripping from the deer's mouth. We added a crayfish claw for good measure.



These were shed antlers found by Sam Lambert. We bought a cape and created this stunning whitetail mount.

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Nathan Owens used a bow for this 8 point buck. Photo courtesy of Reese's Country Store in Deerwalk.

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Jeff Eddy, from Parkersburg, went to New Mexico to bag this huge elk. He downed it with an arrow. Photo courtesy of Boone's Bow Shop in Parkersburg.

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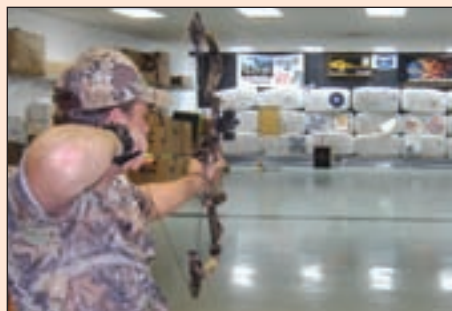
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Gun Safety Tips

There are six basic gun safety rules for gun owners to understand and practice at all times:

Treat all guns as if they are loaded. Always assume that a gun is loaded even if you think it is unloaded. Every time a gun is handled for any reason, check to see that it is unloaded. If you are unable to check a gun to see if it is unloaded, leave it alone and seek help from someone more knowledgeable about guns.

Keep the gun pointed in the safest possible direction. Always be aware of where a gun is pointing. A "safe direction" is one where an accidental discharge of the gun will not cause injury or damage. Only point a gun at an object you intend to shoot. Never point a gun toward yourself or another person.

Keep your finger off the trigger until you are ready to shoot. Always keep your finger off the trigger and outside the trigger guard until you are ready to shoot. Even though it may be comfortable to rest your finger on the trigger, it also is unsafe. If you are moving around with your finger on the trigger and stumble or fall, you could inadvertently pull the trigger. Sudden loud noises or movements can result in an accidental discharge because there is a natural tendency to tighten the muscles when startled. The trigger is for firing and the handle

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is for handling.

Know your target, its surroundings and beyond. Check that the areas in front of and behind your target are safe before shooting. Be aware that if the bullet misses or completely passes through the target, it could strike a person or object. Identify

continue to the next page

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Form Is On Page 38



Christina Buskirk, from Vincent, Ohio, has a turkey - 11" beard.



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the target and make sure it is what you intend to shoot. If you are in doubt, DON'T SHOOT! Never fire at a target that is only a movement, color, sound or unidentifiable shape. Be aware of all the people around you before you shoot.

Know how to properly operate your gun. It is important to become thoroughly familiar with your gun. You should know its mechanical characteristics including how to properly load, unload and clear a malfunction from your gun. Obviously, not all guns are mechanically the same. Never assume that what applies to one make or model is exactly applicable to another. You should direct questions regarding the operation of your gun to your firearms dealer, or contact the manufacturer directly.

Store your gun safely and securely to prevent unauthorized use. Guns and ammunition should be stored separately. When the gun is not in your hands, you must still think of safety. Use a trigger lock or cable lock, so it cannot be fired. Store it unloaded in a locked container,

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such as a California-approved lock box or a gun safe. Store your gun in a different location than the ammunition. For maximum safety you should use both a locking device and a storage container.

top

ADDITIONAL SAFETY POINTS

The six basic safety rules are the foundational rules for gun safety. However, there are additional safety points that much not be overlooked.

Never handle a gun when you are in an emotional state such as anger or depression. Your judgment may be impaired.

Never shoot a gun in celebration (the Fourth of July or New Year's Eve, for example). Not only is this unsafe, but it is generally illegal. A bullet fired into the air will return to the ground with enough speed to cause injury or death.

Do not shoot at water, flat or hard surfaces. The bullet can ricochet and hit someone or something other than the target.

Hand your gun to someone only
continue to the next page



Matt Whitt went to South Carolina to get this 12 1/2 ' - 800 pound alligator. Photo courtesy of Cardinal Pawnbrokers in Beckley.

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after you verify that it is unloaded and the cylinder or action is open. Take a gun from someone only after you verify that it is unloaded and the cylinder or action is open.

Guns, alcohol and drugs don't mix. Alcohol and drugs can negatively affect judgment as well as physical coordination. Alcohol and any other substance likely to impair normal mental or physical functions should not be used before or while handling guns. Avoid handling and using your gun when you are taking medications that cause drowsiness or include a warning to not operate machinery while taking this drug.

The loud noise from a fired gun can cause hearing damage, and the debris and hot gas that is often emitted can result in eye injury. Always wear ear and eye protection when shooting a gun.

top
GUNS AND CHILDREN--HAND-
GUN OWNER RESPONSIBILI-
TIES

Summary of Safe Storage Laws
Regarding Children

You may be guilty of a misdemeanor or a felony if you keep a loaded firearm within any premises that are under your custody or control and a child under 18 years
continue to the next page



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obtains and uses it, resulting in injury or death, or carries it to a public place, unless you stored the firearm in a locked container or locked the firearm with a locking device to temporarily keep it from functioning.

You Cannot Be Too Careful with Children and Guns

There is no such thing as being too careful with children and guns. Never assume that simply because a toddler may lack finger strength, they can't pull the trigger. A child's thumb has twice the strength of the other fingers. When a toddler's thumb "pushes" against a trigger, invariably the barrel of the gun is pointing directly at the child's face. NEVER leave a firearm lying around the house.

Child safety precautions still apply even if you have no children or if your children have grown to adulthood and left home. A nephew, niece, neighbor's child or a grandchild may come to visit. Practice gun safety at all times.

To prevent injury or death caused by improper storage of guns in a home where children are likely to be present, you should store all guns unloaded, lock them with a firearms safety device and store them in a locked container. Ammu-



Donald Westbrook arrowed an 8 point buck. Photo courtesy of Reese's Country Store in Deerwalk.

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GAME CHECKING

nition should be stored in a location separate from the gun.

Talking to Children About Guns

Children are naturally curious about things they don't know about or think are "forbidden." When a child asks questions or begins to act out "gun play," you may want to address his or her curiosity by answering the questions as honestly and openly as possible. This will remove the mystery and reduce the natural curiosity. Also, it is important to remember to talk to children in a manner they can relate to and understand. This is very important, especially when teaching children about the difference between "real" and "make-believe." Let children know that, even though they may look the same, real guns are very different than toy guns. A real gun will hurt or kill someone who is shot.

Instill a Mind Set of Safety and Responsibility

The American Academy of Pedi-

atrics reports that adolescence is a highly vulnerable stage in life for teenagers struggling to develop traits of identity, independence and autonomy. Children, of course, are both naturally curious and innocently unaware of many dangers around them. Thus, adolescents as

continue to the next page

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adolescents as well as children may not be sufficiently safeguarded by cautionary words, however frequent. Contrary actions can completely undermine good advice. A "Do as I say and not as I do" approach to gun safety is both irresponsible and dangerous.

Remember that actions speak louder than words. Children learn most by observing the adults around them. By practicing safe conduct you will also be teaching safe conduct.

Safety and Storage Devices

If you decide to keep a firearm in your home you must consider the issue of how to store the firearm in a safe and secure manner.

There are a variety of safety and storage devices currently available to the public in a wide range of prices. Some devices are locking mechanisms designed to keep the firearm from being loaded or fired, but don't prevent the firearm from being handled or stolen. There are also locking storage containers that hold the firearm out of sight. For maximum safety you should use both a firearm safety device and a

locking storage container to store your unloaded firearm.

Two of the most common locking mechanisms are trigger locks and cable locks. Trigger locks are typically two-piece devices that fit around the trigger and trigger guard to prevent access to the trigger. One side has a post that fits into a hole in the other side. They are locked by a key or combination locking mechanism. Cable locks typically work by looping a strong steel cable through the action of the firearm to block the firearm's operation and prevent accidental firing. However, neither trigger locks nor cable locks are designed to prevent access to the firearm.

Smaller lock boxes and larger gun safes are two of the most common types of locking storage containers. One advantage of lock boxes and gun safes is that they are designed to completely prevent unintended handling and removal of a firearm. Lock boxes are generally constructed of sturdy, high-grade metal opened by either a key or combination lock. Gun safes are quite heavy, usually weighing at least 50

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pounds. While gun safes are typically the most expensive firearm storage devices, they are generally more reliable and secure.

Remember: Safety and storage devices are only as secure as the precautions you take to protect the key or combination to the lock.



Young Taylor Stewart got her 1st bow deer. *Photo courtesy of JBC Archery in Shady Spring.*

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Bill Asbury used a bow for this 8 point. *Photo courtesy of Crossroads General Store near Newark.*



Jim Duckworth used a bow for this Ohio buck. *Photo courtesy of Crooked Creek Archery in Williamstown.*



Chris Newell used a bow for this 8 point. *Photo courtesy of Reese's Country Store in Deerwalk.*

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Dominick Cunningham used a bow for this nice buck. *Photo courtesy of JBC Archery in Shady Spring.*



Pete Sutton caught a 14 pound steelhead trout. *Photo courtesy of MAD Sporting Goods in Boaz.*



Danny Frazier hooked a 6 pound, 2 oz. smallmouth bass. *Photo courtesy of PC Bait & Tackle in Hinton.*



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James Statler bagged a bow buck.
Photo courtesy of Johnson's Sporting Goods in Summersville.



Brad Berga caught a 22" bass.



Mike Long hooked this 4 pound bass to help his team win the Kings of the Lakes bass tournament.

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Roxie Parson went to Fayette County to bag a bow black bear. Photo courtesy of Crooked Creek Archery in Williamstown.

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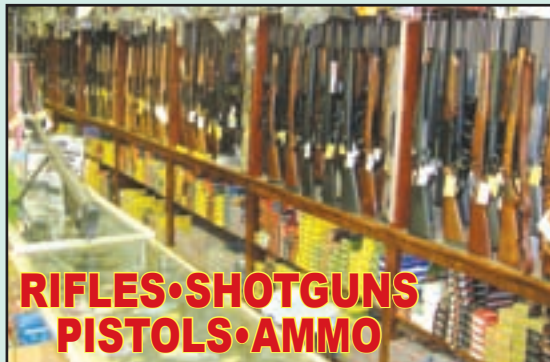
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Nov. 2010 ~ 23

EPA Turns Down Ban

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has denied the petition calling for a ban on the manufacture, use and processing of lead used in fishing gear.

In a letter to the petitioners, a consortium of environmental groups, the EPA indicated that the groups weren't convincing in their contention that the requested rule is necessary to protect against an unreasonable risk of injury to health or the environment, as required by the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA). The EPA said that the increasing number of limitations on the use of lead fishing gear on some federal and state lands, as well as various education and

outreach activities, call into question whether a national ban on lead in fishing gear would be the least burdensome, adequately protective approach to address the concern, as called for under TSCA. EPA's letter also notes that the prevalence of non-lead alternatives is increasing and suggests a gradual move toward nontoxic components. The fishing tackle industry had united with anglers in general in opposing the lead ban, saying it would be costly to implement now.

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On Aug. 3, the American Bird Conservancy and a number of other groups petitioned EPA under Section 21 of the Toxic Substances Act. *continue to the next page*



Colby Dight used a bow for this 8 point. *Photo courtesy of Reese's Country Store in Deerwalk.*



A huge Ohio buck was killed by a vehicle. This deer would have had an outstanding score. *Photo courtesy of Pro1 Taxidermy in Summersville.*

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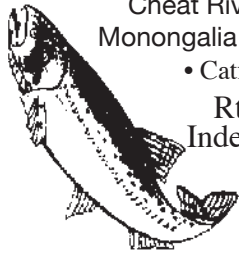
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Control Act to “prohibit the manufacture, processing, and distribution in commerce of lead for shot, bullets, and fishing sinkers.” On Aug. 27, EPA denied the portion of the petition relating to lead in ammunition because the agency does not have the legal authority to regulate ammo under TSCA.

Environmental groups have tried to ban lead from fishing weights, jigs and other tackle components before. However, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has indicated in the past that, while ingesting lead fishing weights might be responsible for the deaths of some waterfowl, such fishing tackle does not pose a serious threat to wildlife populations as a whole.

Send In Your
BIG GAME PICS
Form On Page 38
Email Or Mail

Hunters Helping The Hungry

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. – The Division of Natural Resources anticipates that hunter-donated venison to the Hunters Helping the Hungry (HHH) Program this season will allow the total meals over the lifetime of the HHH Program to surpass one million. HHH is a DNR-sponsored program allowing hunters to donate venison from legally-harvested white-tailed deer to needy West Virginians during the various fall hunting seasons.

“We are ecstatic that the HHH Program has enjoyed so much success since it first began back in 1992,” noted HHH Program Coordinator Jerry Westfall. “Thanks to generous West Virginia hunters who donated deer to the HHH Program over the years, many needy West Virginians have received highly nutritious meals. The DNR, along with their partners, Mountaineer Food Bank and Huntington Area Food

Bank, truly appreciate the generosity shown by these hunters and continue to the next page



Don Powell got a fall bird with an 11” beard. Photo courtesy of Jarett’s Bait in Elizabeth.

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knowledge that without their help, this program could not exist.”

Under the HHH Program, two-pound packages of ground venison are collected from participating certified processors by the Mountaineer Food Bank located in Gassaway and Huntington Area Food Bank. These food banks then distribute the packaged ground venison to participating statewide distribution centers, such as food pantries, soup kitchens, senior centers, community centers, churches, orphanages and other institutions that provide the needy highly-nutritious venison meals. Although it may be too late for non-enrolled distribution centers to receive venison in 2010 (because of the minimum 60-day application review process), those interested are encouraged to enroll now so they may receive venison starting in the winter 2011. Contact Mountaineer Food Bank at 304-364-5518 to discuss the application process needed to receive venison.

“Although the DNR is very grateful for hunter-donated deer, the HHH Program still requires monetary donations to offset processing and distribution costs,” said Westfall. The DNR is restricted from using sportsmen’s license dollars

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to fund this program and is completely dependent upon monetary donations by concerned individuals, businesses, conservation organizations, foundations, churches, and fund-raising events such as the Governor’s One Shot Hunt. “Without this donated monetary funding, we simply could not continue the HHH Program,” said Westfall.

The DNR accepts monetary donations to the HHH Program year-

round. To make a monetary donation to the HHH Program, please visit online www.wvdnr.gov/Hunting/HHH.shtm or call Billie Shearer at 304-558-2771; Billie.J.Shearer@wv.gov. Hunters can also consult the website or pick up an HHH brochure at DNR offices to locate participating meat processors around the state. For HHH Program general information, consult the website or contact Program Coordinator Jerry Westfall at 304-558-2771; Jerry.A.Westfall@wv.gov.



Brian Lowe brought in a coyote. Photo courtesy of Jarrett’s Bait in Elizabeth.

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Hunter Education Blitz Weekend

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. – The gun seasons for deer open soon in West Virginia, and to meet the needs of young or new hunters, the Law Enforcement Section of the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources will be sponsoring a Hunter Education course “Blitz Weekend” across the state November 13 and 14. During that weekend, there will be at least one Hunter Education class offered in nearly every county. Some counties will offer the course the week before, Nov. 8-12. Any person born on or after Jan. 1, 1975, must complete a Hunter Education course before purchasing a hunting license.

Many Hunter Education courses are being offered throughout West Virginia now and will continue through the Sunday before the deer buck season, which begins Nov. 22. However, during the Blitz Weekend, some counties will have as many as three courses run-



A big New River catfish was caught. Photo courtesy of PC Bait & Tackle in Hinton.

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ning at the same time. There is no charge to take the Hunter Education course, but you should register in advance to make sure you can get into a class.

“Classes held between Jan. 1 and

Aug. 31 are generally small, while classes held September through November could be as large as 200 if we had the available space and instructors,” said Lt. Tim Coleman

continue to the next page

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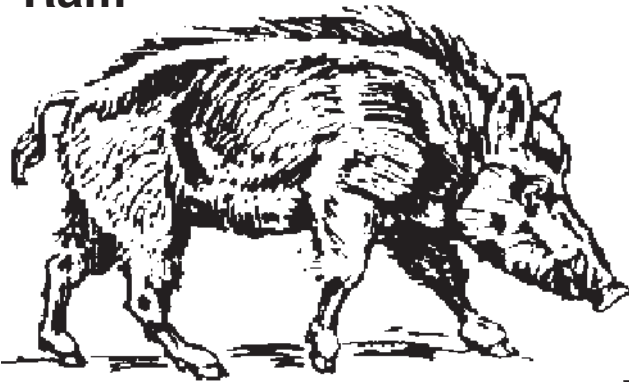
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of the DNR Law Enforcement Section. Coleman is state coordinator of the DNR Hunter Education Program. "So don't miss out on these extra opportunities available during the Blitz Weekend. You will have only yourself to blame if you cannot hunt this year because you did not take the Hunter Education course."

As an alternative, classes are continuously offered online at www.wvdnr.gov.

[wvdnr.gov](http://www.wvdnr.gov) for a fee, and the required practical exam that must be taken in person will be offered in various locations across the state during Blitz Weekend.

For information about class locations, go to www.wvdnr.gov, scroll to "Law Enforcement" and click on "Hunter Education," and then "Class Search," or call the DNR District Office in your area:

- Farmington 304-825-6787
- Romney 304-822-3551
- Elkins 304-637-0245
- Beckley 304-256-6945
- Nitro 304-759-0703
- Parkersburg 304-420-4550
- Charleston 304-558-2784

The Hunter Education program is important for learning how to be prepared in the woods. Good luck this season. Hunt safely in the 2010 and 2011 season.



Rodny Starcher, from Washington, is enjoying his archery season. He brought in a nice 8 point.

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Hunter LeMasters, from Friendly, arrowed a buck.



Mike Grimm, from Sistersville, shot a 39 pound coyote.

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Robert Hurst, from Lost Creek, hooked a 5 1/4 pound brook trout.



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Bob Hill bagged a big bow buck.
 Photo courtesy of PC Bait & Tackle in
 Hinton.



Andy Calvanese, from Charleston,
 hooked a big smallmouth bass.

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 Form On Page 38**



Mike Smith used an arrow for this
 impressive 16 point Wirt County
 buck. Photo courtesy of Crooked Creek
 Archery in Williamstown.



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Deer Certificate

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. – To commemorate a hunter's accomplishment in harvesting his or her first deer, the Division of Natural Resources has created an online First Deer Certificate to memorialize the special occasion, according to Curtis I. Taylor, Chief of the Wildlife Resources Section of DNR.

The colorful certificate, which is suitable for framing, is a great way to mark this special deer hunting experience and provide the successful hunter with a permanent reminder of the memorable day. The certificate is easy to complete and is designed to include the hunter's name and other important information. Hunters can even include a photo of themselves with their first deer. Because it's online, the certificate can be printed free at home. The First Deer Certificate can be found online on the DNR's website at www.wvdnr.gov.

"West Virginia is very fortunate to have a strong hunting heritage and the DNR is working hard to



Rick Crawford used a bow in Cabell County for this 9 point. *Photo courtesy of Justin's Hunting & Fishing In Huntington.*

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maintain this interest by providing parents with opportunities to take kids afield," said Taylor. "We're hoping parents take advantage of the special antlerless deer seasons and introduce their kids to the joys of hunting. Although the certificate was developed primarily for our youth hunters, we also recognize that individuals can be introduced to hunting at any age. I would like to encourage anyone who takes his or her first deer this fall to print a certificate as a way to remember this special occasion."

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Earl Ball, from Huntington, hooked a 7 pound largemouth bass.

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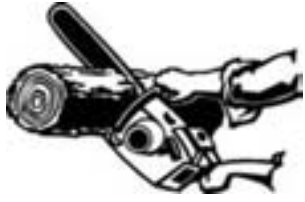
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Deer Hunting Tips

Deer meat is not a low cost solution to your empty freezer. In fact, going out and hunting simply to get a deer for the meat is something that was done back in the days of the pilgrims and Indians when other meat sources were scarce. Nowadays, it's actually cheaper and more cost effective to go purchase a side of beef and butcher it yourself. Deer are elusive creatures and even the most experience deer hunter does not bag a tasty buck every deer season. It also takes a lot of time and effort to scout out a good place to hunt where you will have the most success in getting a deer. If you are looking for cheap meat then you probably also have a full-time job you can ill afford to take time off from to scout out the perfect hunting spot.



Jim Carpenter got a fall turkey. Photo courtesy of Jarrett's Bait in Elizabeth.

Venison is, however, very delicious and healthful, low in fat and with its own distinct flavor. That's assuming it has been properly dressed after being taken. Bagging your deer for consumption adds a flavor of its own to the meat and that alone should be one of the reasons why you get up in the morning to go hunting. The flavor of wild venison cannot be duplicated by ranch-raised deer, but no matter what, deer meat is some of the best meat to be naturally found across the United States. If you're not going to take the meat and you only want the deer for the

prize rack of its antlers, then you have no business being out in the woods in the first place. Save your money on hunting equipment and simply stay home.

Places for the Perfect Deer Hunting

You can read a million magazines on deer hunting and digest a bunch of deer hunting tips about where to hunt and how to go about doing it, but unless you live out in the country, you'll have to take some time out of your busy schedule to go scout out your own location. You'll

continue to the next page

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Gene and Roseanna Hines

need to take some walks through the woods and look for deer signs of deer in the area. These signs can include deer droppings, deer trails, scrapes and rubs, and other indications that the buck is in rut and ready to service his friendly does. The more signs you see the more active the area is.

If you live in the city, contact your friends who live in the country and see what kind of areas they can suggest for you to hunt in. Check all of the land they suggest to see if there are active bucks around and

if there is, and you like the area for hunting, then you need to secure permission from the land owner to hunt on their property. Always ask for the permission in writing and when you get it, make sure you carry it with your hunting license. You may wish to offer a portion of the deer you take to the landowner as a thank you for allowing you to hunt on their land.

If you have problems securing permission to hunt on private land, here's another hunting tip for you: look into hunting on public lands. You can take a really nice deer from one these public sites and you can begin researching your options by contacting your local Wildlife Resources Commission or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Let the person you speak to know that you are new to the hunting community and are looking for assistance in finding public areas to hunt in.

These professionals will help you narrow down your choices to two areas. Here are some other deer hunting tips, you should choose two areas to hunt as a minimum simply because you will want to move between the two. The next

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step would be to visit a hunting and camping shop and purchase
continue to the next page



Doug Britton has an 8 point archery deer. Photo courtesy of Reese's Country Store in Deerwalk.

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topographic quadrangle and terrain maps for the area you want to hunt in. Use the rest of the year and your new maps to scout out the areas that you want to hunt in. When hunting season opens, make sure you wear the required blaze orange so that other hunters see you. Note all of the deer signs that are present as you make your way to your hunting site. After a few months of this, you'll enter the woods that



Wesley Blake, from Wheeling, got a fall wild turkey.

you chose to hunt being well prepared and ready to take your deer. Choosing the Right Weapon

If you are still trying to determine your hunting weapon of choice when hunting season comes in, wait until next year to actually take to the fields. You want to make sure that you are both familiar and proficient with the weapon you choose and the safety requirements that surround it. By doing this, you'll be assuring yourself both an ethical and safe hunt. The deer will be there next year and it's highly advised to give yourself time to practice with your weapon and develop some measure of accuracy.

If you choose to use a rifle, they should remain somewhere between a .243 caliber and larger. Bows should have at least a 45 pound pull. Some hunters enjoy using black powder weapons and they should be .45 caliber and higher. Shotguns should be a specialized 12 gauge 'slug' gun with a rifled barrel and modern 'sabot' type slugs. This type of shotgun will

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give you a better range and accuracy, although a 20 gauge or larger will work just as well.

Make sure you practice shooting for a variety of different positions. You will not always be aiming at your deer straight on. Sight in from a bench that could pose as a fallen log, shoot seated, prone, leaning against a tree - basically in any position that you may find yourself in when in the field. The same goes for practicing with a bow. And if you can safely practice from off the

continue to the next page

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ground - like from your garage roof
- try that too to simulate shooting
downward from a tree stand.

Some more deer hunting tips is
to never shoot at game that is out-
side the range of your weapon and
the furthest you have shot it during
practice within a 6' target. That
means bow hunters will shoot at
about 30 yards or less, black powder
from 60 to 80 yards, shotgun
slugs from 60 yards or less, and
rifles from 100 yards or less for la-
dies, and 150 yards or less for men.
Granted, these numbers are conser-
vative, but if you have shot further
than this in practice, then by all
means, shoot within your comfort

range.

Into the Woods You Go

Once you have located the perfect
place to hunt and you have prac-
ticed with your weapon and are now
proficient using it, it's time to head
out to the woods. Assuming that
you are hunting white-tailed deer,
you are going to want to get into
the woods early enough to get to
your spot and set-up. Don't forget
to wear you orange, this is a safety
measure so that other hunters can
see you from a distance and don't
shot at you. Once you have set-up
and climbed into your tree stand
or climbed into your ground blind,
the best thing for you to do is to sit
down and don't move. Deer do see
so the stiller you sit the better off
you will be. Wait. Just sit and wait.
Do not make any fast movements,
not even if you are swatting at an
annoying fly. If you've brought
a book along with you, turn your
pages slowly and as quietly as pos-
sible so that the deer doesn't hear
or see you.

This is really the basis of deer
hunting. There is a lot of sitting
and waiting involved. Of course,
you can make yourself even more

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invisible by wearing special cam-
ouflage clothing and makeup on
your face and hands that help you
appear invisible to the deer. You
camouflage can be in blaze orange
continue to the next page



Jason Taylor had bow success.
*Photo courtesy of Boone's Bow Shop in
Parkersburg.*

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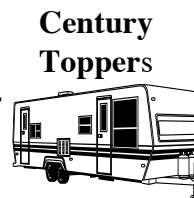
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and while you may not blend into the woods to another hunter, you will definitely blend into your surroundings the seer. Deer are color blind so they will not see you sitting there as long as you are still. Camouflage is especially handy for the bow hunters who want to get in close to the deer for the best kill.

You can also hide your scent thanks to the many different scent covering products that are available on the market. There are two types. The cover-up products hide your scent. The attractant covers your scent but also sends out an odor that brings in the deer. It does help if you start out clean when you head into the woods. It's best to make sure your clothing is washed in baking soda and then packed in a plastic bag with a piece of the foliage or greenery that you found around your hunting site.

When you get ready to go out, take a shower and wash your body with baking soda as well. This helps neutralize any body odor that is on your clothing and on you. Stay away from foods that have heavy odors - such as bacon or onions - and do not fill up your gas tank in the morning so you don't have the lingering smell of gasoline on you. Even though you and your clothing are clean and you are using an attracting scent, try to stay upwind of your quarry as much as you can. Remember that when the wind blows, it will blow your scent away.

When your deer comes into range and you know that this is one you want to try for, take you time taking your shot. No hunter should ever try shooting at a running animal. All you will do is wound it and possible lost it in the woods as it runs away.

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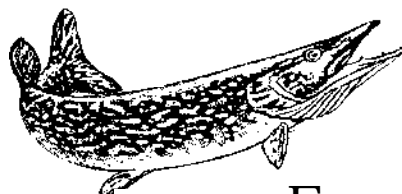
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