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*"The where to and how to magazine for the outdoor enthusiast."*

**Issue 233**

**November/December 2013**



***INSIDE THIS ISSUE***

**Hunting  
TIPS**

**B.A.S.S.  
NEWS**

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Updates**

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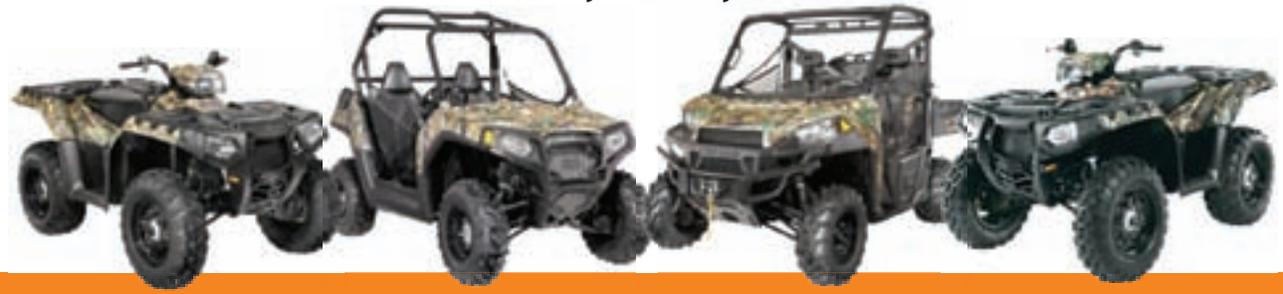
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Nov./Dec. 2013 ~ Page 2

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**Volume 1 Issue 233**

Publisher and Editor  
**Mark A. Goudy**

Contributing Editors  
West Virginia Division Of  
Natural Resources

**No Subscriptions Offered**

*Printed Every Six Weeks.*

**W.Va. Sportsman**

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## Cover Photo

Hunting in Gilmer County, Jason Miller used a bow to bring down this big double drop tine buck. It green scored over 161.

Buck gun season opens on Nov. 25. In 20 counties, hunters can also harvest bear beginning that day. Bigger caliber rifles for bear would be more effective.

If you happen to bring in a big buck or other large game animals, there is a form on page 27 to send in your trophy pic.

**Good luck and hunt safely!**

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## Deer Hunting Advice

With all the hunting equipment that we carry into the field just to go deer hunting, it got me thinking, do I really need all this stuff? It's expensive, heavy, loud, and so bulky that I stick out like a grape on a toothpick in my tree stand.

I began toying with the question – could bringing less hunting gear actually make me a more successful deer hunter? If so, what items would I consider to be must have for deer hunting?

### 1. Choose Your Weapon

To call yourself a deer hunter, you must first have a weapon. Whether you use a gun or a bow, be sure you are within your state's current deer hunting regulations.

Not all gun caliber sizes are legal.

There are certain seasons during the year for specific types of guns (shotgun, muzzle loader, and rifle). High powered rifles are illegal to hunt deer with in some states.

There may be a minimum poundage required for a compound bow to deer hunt legally.

States have varying laws about using a cross bow to harvest whitetail deer.

Check the whitetail hunting regulations for the current year and be sure you are within the guidelines before choosing a weapon and buying ammo.

### 2. A License to Kill

You must possess the proper deer hunting license or deer tag before you can hunt deer. You need a legal license just to be in the field with a weapon during the season even if you do not harvest a deer.

Most states also require hunters (especially young hunters and non-residents) to take a mandatory hunter safety education program. The goal of the 10 hour course is to make deer hunters safe, responsible, and more knowledgeable about wildlife conservation. The course can be taken at various locations within your state or online. Upon completing the course, deer hunters will receive a card signifying  
continue to the next page

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Justin Stanton brought in a great bow buck. Photo courtesy of Anderson Outdoors in Buckhannon.

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ing their certification.

### 3. Dress for Success

Now that you are legal, it's time to figure out what to wear. Depending on the time of year you'll need either lightweight or cold weather gear. There are a few things to remember with hunting clothing when it comes to deer hunting whitetails.

Always check the local forecast for the predicted weather during your hunting hours.

Wash your clothing in a scent free soap to remove any foreign odors. Layering your clothes is the best way to stay warm (wear one more layer than you need as you can always remove it).

Choose the right camouflage pattern for the terrain you'll be deer

hunting.

Wear gloves and a mask so you blend in and control your scent better.

If necessary, wear or bring along some rain gear to keep dry. A comfortable pair of hunting boots is extremely important.

Hunting clothing can get confusing with windproof, waterproof, scent control, and breathable types all in dozens of different camou-

flage patterns. Choose what is right for you depending on the conditions and realize that you'll get better at dressing as you gain whitetail deer hunting experience.

### 4. Eyes Like a Hawk

A decent pair of hunting optics is going to be something you depend on a lot. Being able to spot whitetails in the distance can mean the difference between harvesting a deer or eating a tag sandwich.

I like to use my binoculars to scan heavy cover. It passes the time and occasionally I will spot a big buck. Zoom in on a whitetail buck that is still beyond your range to determine if it's a shooter or not. Binoculars can also aid in recovering a deer after the shot by viewing it as it runs off.

### 5. Know Your Distance

continue to the next page



Young Braydon Kimes used a bow for a buck. Photo courtesy of Boone's Bow Shop in Parkersburg.

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No matter what shooting gear you have, rangefinders are a must have when hunting whitetails. You need to know exactly how far a deer is before you can make a perfect shot. As responsible whitetail hunters, we want every advantage in making an ethical kill.

When hunting with a bow, I like to mark spots in 10 yard increments from my deer stand using my rangefinders prior to seeing any deer. I'll pick out small landmarks like a rock, unique weed, or field edge and take a mental note. This way I know how far a deer is without having to move around more than I need to once they're in close.



Young JT Corbin arrowed an 8 point buck.

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### 6. Speak the Language

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### 7. Don't Be Afraid of the Dark

Whether you are walking to your stand or returning, most of the time you're doing it under the cover of darkness. For this reason, a flashlight is a must have item for hunting whitetail deer. Safety is the number one advantage of carrying a flashlight.

I prefer to use a headlamp over a hand held flashlight. It allows me to have a light on while I'm carrying my weapon, navigating through brush, and climbing my stand. A light source also warns other deer hunters in your area of your presence.

To have a better chance of sneaking in undetected, try packing lighter this hunting season.

It's less tiring so you might end up hunting deer more often. By bringing less, you eliminate more scent. You'll be able to sneak in and out easier and quieter. There is less chance of being spotted in your hunting stand.

Good luck on your quest for the buck of a lifetime.

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# Big Game Harvest Checking Policy

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. - With the opening of a variety of hunting seasons quickly approaching, the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (DNR) reminds successful big game hunters that they must field tag and transport their deer, bear, turkey or boar to a Natural Resources Police Officer or official game checking station for checking. This must be completed by the hunters themselves and is required of all hunters, including landowners. A summary of the checking requirements follows, but hunters should check the hunting regulations booklet for complete details.

**Deer:** The unskinned carcass or the fresh skin and head must be checked before it is transported beyond the county adjacent to the county in which it was killed

within 72 hours from when it was killed, or 24 hours from the close of the respective season, whichever comes first. In Logan, McDowell, Mingo or Wyoming counties, however, the deer must be checked in the four-county area within 24 hours of the time of kill. Deer killed outside these four counties cannot be checked within these counties. New regulations implemented this year allowing for the harvest of two deer in the same day do not require that the first deer be checked before the second deer is harvested; however, all deer taken in a day must be checked before hunting on a subsequent day.

**Bear:** The unskinned carcass or fresh skin must be checked within 24 hours after the kill and before any part of the bear is transported more than 75 miles from the point

of kill.

**Turkey:** The unskinned carcass must be checked before it is transported beyond the county adjacent to the county in which it was killed, or 24 hours from the close of the respective season, whichever comes first.

**Boar:** The unskinned carcass must be checked in the county of kill within 24 hours after the kill.

For additional information, consult your 2013-2014 West Virginia Hunting and Trapping Regulations Summary available online at [www.wvdnr.gov](http://www.wvdnr.gov) and at DNR district offices and license agents across the state

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## **New Shooting Range**

MORGANTOWN, W.Va. - The public shooting range located on Pedlar Wildlife Management Area (WMA) in Monongalia County will reopen Sept. 27, 2013, according to Frank Jezioro, director of the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (DNR). The range will be open Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Monday from 9 a.m. until sunset and Sunday from noon until sunset. The range will be closed Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

"The range was temporarily closed May 10, 2012, to allow our agency to evaluate and address vandalism and littering issues that were occurring at the Pedlar WMA shooting range," Jezioro said. "To effectively address these problems, we will have increased law enforcement patrols by Natural Resources Po-

lice Officers and plan to strictly enforce all shooting range regulations posted at the facility. In addition, modifications have been made to the shooting range to further deter any unsafe use."

Questions regarding the opening and operation of the public shooting range on Pedlar WMA should be directed to the DNR District 1 Office in Farmington at 304-825-6787.



Martha Atkinson, from Vienna, landed an Ohio River smallmouth.

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Steve Williams hooked a big bass.



Gary Bowman reeled in a large blue catfish.

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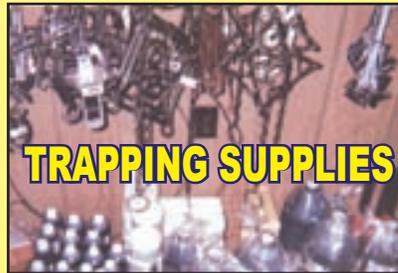
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Tiffany McCumber reeled in a huge flathead catfish. Photo courtesy of Mr. Clean in Glenville.

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Jody Franco, from Charleston, landed a 24" brown trout.



Joe Beitz, from Beckley, hooked a 21 3/4" smallmouth bass.

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 Form On Page 27**

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## Black Bear Safety Concerns

Black bears were moved around the state numerous years ago. Currently, the population is too abundant. The DNR is instituting a buck/bear season in 20 counties in the state this season. A certain amount of concern should be applied when out in the woods.

Black bears (*Ursus americanus*) are the most common species of bears found in the United States with a home range that extends into 41 of the lower 48 states, and Alaska. The estimate for the total population in the United States is about 300,000 bears.

Black bears tend to live in forested areas, but are capable of expanding their home ranges into open grasslands and residential areas. One of the reasons black bears are so adaptive is that they are omnivores (eat both plant and animal matter). This allows them to thrive in a wide variety of habitats.

Black bears are relatively small compared to their close relative the grizzly bear (*Ursus Arctos*). Adult female black bears weigh around 150 lbs., and adult male bears weigh on average 250 lbs. As a comparison, male grizzlies weigh 450-550lbs., and female grizzlies

weigh 300-400lbs. It is estimated that up to 85% of a black bear's  
continue to the next page



Everett Bailey, from Coxs Mills, brought in a black bear.

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diet is composed of plant matter. The other 15% is mostly small invertebrates (insects) and the occasional animal carcass.

Black bears are not always black. Coat colors range from black to cinnamon to blonde. There is even a species of black bear found only in British Columbia, Canada that is white. These bears are nick named "ghost bears". Black bears are able to begin reproducing at 3 to 5 years, and typically give birth to 2 offspring while in hibernation during the months of January and February. Black bears have litters every 2 or 3 years. This is because a mother black bear will keep her young with her until they reach the age of 2, or sometimes 3. Once the original cubs are kicked out of the den, the female is ready to produce another litter.

#### When Black Bears Attack!

Although black bear attacks are rare and most victims come out unscathed, this does not negate the fact that black bear attacks do happen and are sometimes fatal. Since 1900, there have been only 45-recorded deaths that were caused by



Keith Britton used a bow for this wide raked 6 point buck. Photo courtesy of Wabash Trading Post in West Union.

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black bears in the North America. This number is very minimal compared to the over 500 conflicts between black bears and humans from 1960 to 1980. Black bear attacks are much more common in the United States than are grizzly bear attacks. The main reason for the difference is the population size of each species. There are approximately 300,000 black bears in the continental United States, whereas there are only about 2000-3000 grizzlies still remaining in the lower 48 states. The larger population of black bears greatly increases the probability of encountering one in

the wild.

Black bear attacks may occur more frequently than grizzly bear attacks, but this does not mean that black bears are more ferocious than their brown cousins. Ninety percent of all known black bear attacks have only resulted in minor injuries, whereas over half of all grizzly bear attacks have caused major injuries. Black bear attacks/encounters have been most common in national parks where the bears have been desensitized (also known as habituation) to the presence of humans, and have been

coninue to the next page

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conditioned to human food and garbage. These "food conditioned" bears have learned to associate humans as an easy and reliable food source, which brings some bears in closer contact with people than would normally be expected. More times than not, bears that have become habituated and/or food con-



Bubb Short had bow success. *Photo courtesy of Anderson Outdoors in Buckhannon.*

ditioned are killed because managers fear that the learned behavior will result in injuries, and possibly death to humans.

Black bear attacks can be avoided if proper care and precaution is taken when traveling in black bear country. There are many things that can be done while camping, hiking, fishing and general recreating in black bear country to ensure the safety of everyone involved, humans and bears.

### Bear-Proofing your campsite

If you spend a considerable amount of time in black bear country, odds are you have and/or probably will run into black bears, whether it is at a backcountry campsite, or on a hiking trail. Most encounters with black bears end quickly, with the bear turning and running away. There are a few circumstances where the bear might not be so eager to turn and high tail it out of the area. The first circumstance is when a bear is feeding on human food in a campsite.

Black bears are opportunistic, and will feed on anything that is an easy meal. At campsites, there are many chances for bears to feed on human food and garbage. To keep black bears from invading campgrounds, here are a few suggestions to keep a "bear safe" campground:

- Keep a clean camp. Put all garbage into wildlife proof containers,

continue to the next page  
Sept./Oct.. 2013 ~ Page 15

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or in a vehicle (for types and places to get wildlife containers go to <http://www.state.ak.us/adfg/wildlife/geninfo/game/harmony2.htm>).

Keep food odors away from sleeping areas. Cook food away from sleeping tents, and never sleep or keep cooking clothes in sleeping tents. Store food at least 100 yards from sleeping area. If possible, hang in a tree 10 feet off the ground and 4 feet from the trunk of the tree. If there is not adequate trees to hang food from, dig a hole and place the food in it (100 yards away). Storing food in a locked car is also an option.

If you decided to bring pets, keep them on a leash while hiking and never leave them chained up alone at a campsite. Dogs that are let off leash may get too close to a bear (due to curiosity), and this could very easily cause a bear to act aggressive towards you and your pet. Chained up pets have no way to protect themselves, and could attract a black bear into camp.

If a black bear should enter camp, active deterrence is the best solution. Loud noises such as banging pots and pans, throwing sticks and stones, and yelling can be effective deterrents. The bear has entered your territory and bears have to learn that this behavior is not acceptable and that no rewards will come of it. Just remember, "A fed

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bear is a dead bear". When a bear gets taste of human food they will ultimately have to be put down, because the behavior will likely continue. This puts humans and bears in dangerous situations.

The second circumstance is a surprise encounter in the bear's habitat while hiking, fishing, or mountain biking. When encountering a black bear while hiking, the circumstances have changed. You have invaded the bear's territory and active deterrence should only be a last resort. Here are a few ways to keep safe while hiking in black bear country:

continue to the next page



Hank Bailey went to Montana for this buck. Photo courtesy of Boone's Bow Shop in Parkersburg.



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Hike in groups - the more the merrier!

Make noise - bear bells, clapping, singing and general chit-chat will notify the bear of your presence allowing them ample opportunity to run away

Move with the wind at your back - this allows a bear to smell you Always be aware of your surroundings

Carry a deterrent - bear spray is very effective in close range situations (see section on bear spray below)

If you do happen to come into close contact with a black bear, here are a few suggestions to keep the situation from getting out of hand:

Avoid direct eye contact - this is a challenge to the bear

Stay calm, and identify yourself as human by waving arms and talking to the bear - don't run (bears can out run you!)

If you can, slowly walk back in the direction you came from. Nev-

er take your eyes off the bear and don't turn your back.

If you cannot walk away, and the bear is not fleeing, try to scare the bear by yelling and clapping your hands. Throwing objects may also be useful.

If the bear charges use your deterrent (bear spray-see next section). If you have no deterrent and the bear attacks, fight back. Use what ever you can (hands feet, sharp objects) and direct them at the bears face. As a last resort, rollover on your stomach protecting your face with your hands and play dead.

### To Spray or Not to Spray

The active ingredient in bear spray is capsicum, a pepper derivative. Bear spray has gained much

continue to the next page

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praise as an effective bear deterrent in close range approach situations. Capsicum is a nerve irritant that causes inflammation of soft tissues, particularly around the face (eyes and respiratory tract). The spray is only a temporary discomfort to the victim. The spray is most effective when dispensed from the canister in a fog, or mist. This type of dispersal, along with the noise that the canister makes upon firing, seem to be just as effective of a bear deterrent as the spray itself.

Bear spray is not always 100% reliable, especially when the user is inexperienced in the proper use of the deterrent. This is why it is recommended to test out your bear spray canister to make sure that you know how to discharge its contents, because most bear attacks happen in split seconds and end just as quick. The spray is most effective within a range of 20-30 feet. The best place to aim the spray is at the bear's face. This allows the capsicum to irritate the nasal passage and lungs of the animal.

Traveling in black bear country is something that millions of people do every year. As civilization continues to move into uncharted territory, black bears and humans will have to learn to live in close quarters with one another. Black bears are not aggressive animals if the proper precautions are taken. Keeping a safe campground

and staying safe on the hiking trail is ultimately up to those who use the area. When in bear country, be smart. Think about things that you should, and could do to make sure that black bears will remain a part of the United States wildlife for many years to come. Black bears are amazing creatures; treat them with the respect that they deserve.

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Bill Almond landed a 5 pound, 5 oz. largemouth bass.



John Overstreet brought in a large 8 point with a wide rack. Photo courtesy of Crossroads General Store near Newark.

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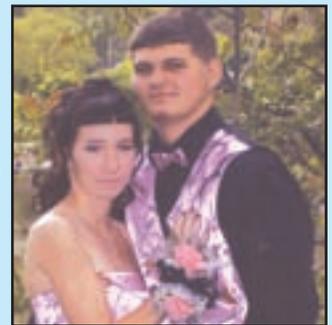


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Greg McConn had bow success with this 8 point. Photo courtesy of Cross-roads General Store near Newark.



Jake Boggs went to Braxton Co. for this archery buck. Photo courtesy of WV Wild Outdoors in Birch River



Cody Isner used a bow for this 41 point Ohio buck. Photo courtesy of Crooked Creek Archery in Williamstown.



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Big buck hunter, Keith Snider, brought in a huge Ohio buck.



Ryan Winter used his bow for a nice buck. Photo courtesy of Bowlistic Archery in Chelyan.



Kent Grimes, from Beckley, landed a large New River smallmouth.

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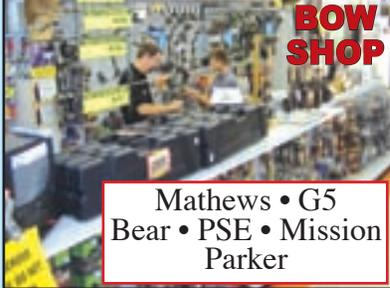
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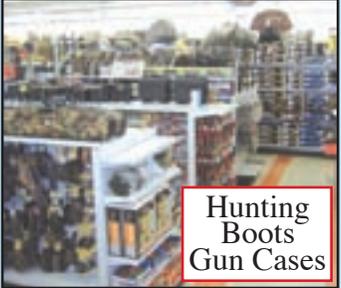


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Emily Almond hooked a large bass



How would you like to see this bear on your trail cam? *Photo courtesy of Uncle Tom's Loans in Oceanna.*

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# Deer Attractants

In the highly competitive deer hunting world, landowners and hunters are looking for ways to maintain a healthy deer herd population. Deer attractants will help in keeping deer families from leaving your land to find better nutrients and habitat elsewhere. Maintaining an attractive piece of land to white-tail deer will contribute to your hunting success in future hunts.

## Natural Food Plots

A food plot is a great way to building a healthy deer herd. Deer Food



Mike Hutchinson went to Ohio for this outstanding 12 point. *Photo courtesy of Crooked Creek Archery in Williamstown.*

Plots Made Easy is a popular book available online, for anyone looking to start a food plot on their land. With a food plot you are helping provide key nutrients that are sometimes very difficult for deer to find in good supply. It takes a lot of time and effort on your part but will also help contribute to better hunting success. If you know where the deer are feeding on a daily basis then your scouting time should be greatly reduced. Survival is the #1 priority in a deer's daily routine and food is a major part of a deer's survival. If your budget allows, try to plant foods that will make your plot attractive year round. Corn, clover, soybeans, brassicas, alfalfa and winter wheat are all good choices for deer food plots.

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A salt/mineral lick will help promote muscle and bone growth. During the spring when various wildlife are searching for these nutrients you can very easily and inexpensively give them the nutrition their bodies are searching for. A salt/mineral lick will help provide calcium, iron, zinc, phosphorous and other minerals their bodies need. There are 2 simple ways to create a salt/mineral lick. If you

continue to the next page

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are using loose salt, remove limbs, leaves, etc away from soil. Pour loose salt over soil. Mix salt with soil using a stick or some other type of broken limb. When using a block, dig a hole that is big enough to fit the block into. Drop block in hole. Cover the block with loose soil and pray for rain. When it rains the salt will dissolve into surrounding soil.

#### Feeders

Automatic feeders are also a good way to keep deer herds healthy and close by. A feeder that broadcasts your food is a much healthier option than simply pouring out your feed on the ground. Deer diseases such as CWD are often spread from deer eating out of the same food piles. Deer eating out of the same food spot will spread their saliva and various germs to other deer. With a feeder that spreads you are reducing the chances of having these diseases spread. An automatic feeder also provides a good location for a trail camera. It will be a highly visited area by various wildlife and



Danny Gould brought in an archery buck. *Photo courtesy of Anderson Outdoors in Buckhannon.*

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Acorn, corn, apple and wild berries are just a few of your options when creating a food flavored mineral lick.

#### Tip

When searching for a place to create your salt and mineral licks look for old stumps. These provide great spots to put your salt and liquid formulas.



Brian McClung, from Charleston, caught a 23" largemouth.

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## Bear Outlook

By Cory Booth

West Virginia is loaded with bears. A population once confined to the mountain counties now stretches to the Ohio River, the southern Coalfields, and even the Northern Panhandle. Last year, forty-two of fifty-five counties in the state had a bear kill.. Ever since the bear season modification in 1979 of moving the season later to lower female harvests, we have had an expanding bear population.

Since the season move in 1979, West Virginia's lowest bear harvest was 37 in 1982. The highest was 2,691 in 2012. Some counties are currently bear hotspots. Counties with over one-hundred bears harvested last year are Boone, Fayette, Greenbrier, Grant, Hardy, Kanawha, Nicholas, Pocahontas, Preston, Randolph, and Webster. Webster County lead the state with 223 bears taken last year.

Due to high bear populations and the need to control growth, fall 2013 will see our first deer season for bear during gun season. In select counties a hunter will be able to harvest a bear while deer hunting. This is by a permit system which had to be applied for, however, resident landowners do not need the permit to hunt bear on their own land.

In conclusion, the time to hunt

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bear is now! Spend a little time scouting for the elusive bear and use a rifle large enough to handle a black bear this deer season. The results might be some tasty, delicious meat and a trophy bear rug for the wall.

Who ordered the bear?



Bobby Boston arrowed a nice buck.  
Photo courtesy of Crossroads General Store near Newark.

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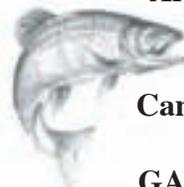
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## Mast Survey

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. - The 2013 Mast Survey and Hunting Outlook is available on the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources' website and will be available soon at DNR offices across the state, according to Curtis I. Taylor, chief for the DNR Wildlife Resources Section. Since 1971, the Wildlife Resources Section, in cooperation with volunteers from numerous other agencies, has conducted a fall mast survey to determine the abundance of mast produced by 18 species of trees and shrubs.

"The availability of fall foods has a significant impact on wildlife populations and harvests," said Taylor. "Our biologists have used the mast survey data to demonstrate the strong correlation between mast conditions and deer, bear and turkey harvests. In addition to the impact on harvests, the amount of food available each year can affect the reproductive success of numerous species which will affect population sizes in the following years."

Beechnut and hickory were above their long-term average and should supply many wildlife species with ample food sources. Production of acorns, however, is well below the 42-year average and will have noticeable effects on the 2013-2014 hunting seasons because oak makes up the majority of the hard mast biomass. Soft mast conditions of apple, crabapple and hawthorn were also well above average.

"It is very important for hunters to scout and consider the type and amount of food available in the areas that they hunt," added Taylor. "Areas that have any oak mast will concentrate animals early in

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the season but most of it should be consumed by mid-fall. Hunters will have to shift their localized hunting spots to take advantage of these mast conditions. Hunters can find a wealth of facts in the Mast Survey and Hunting Outlook. It should provide them valuable information before heading into the field."

Copies of the 2013 Mast Survey and Hunting Outlook may be found on the DNR website at [www.wvdnr.gov](http://www.wvdnr.gov) under "Hunting."



Steven Barker, from Parkersburg, landed a 40" catfish.

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SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. - As many West Virginians take to the field during the annual deer hunting seasons, they gain more than just an enjoyable day with family and friends. Many will successfully harvest a deer and fill their freezers with an ample amount of "heart-healthy" venison.

"Venison is an excellent alternative to beef for those concerned with healthier choices in their  
*continue to the next page*

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 BE RETURNED**

diet," said Curtis I. Taylor, chief of the Wildlife Resources Section of the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (DNR). "Venison is a healthy source of protein for many West Virginia families and has fewer calories and less fat than an equivalent serving of beef. With the changes in the 2013 deer harvest regulations, hunters this fall will have additional opportunities to harvest a deer."

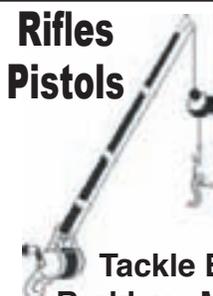
After the harvest, hunters can ensure their venison cuts will be the best quality and flavor if they take a few simple steps in caring for their game. Meat should not be exposed to excessive dirt or moisture and should be cooled as quickly as possible to avoid spoilage.

Hunters are not the only West Virginians who benefit from deer harvested in the state. Over the past two decades, DNR has sponsored the Hunters Helping the Hungry (HHH) program. Since its inception in 1992, hunter-donated veni-

son has provided more than 1.1 million meals for needy West Virginia families.

For more information about the HHH program or West Virginia's various deer hunting seasons and

regulations, consult the 2013-2014 West Virginia Hunting and Trapping Regulations Summary available at all DNR offices and license agents or visit the DNR website at [www.wvdnr.gov](http://www.wvdnr.gov).



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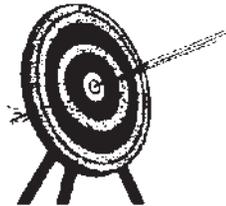


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Chuck Spears used a bow in Ritchie Co. for this big racked 8 point buck.



Matt Bonnell landed a musky that measured 51 1/4". Photo courtesy of Wabash Trading Post in West Union.

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A nice black bear was tagged. Photo courtesy of Middle Mountain Sporting Goods in Elkins.

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Roger and Sheila Perry both got great bow bucks in Upshur County.



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Harry Nester used a bow for a good buck. Photo courtesy of Uncle Tom's Loans in Oceanna.



Crandale Neal hooked a large flat-head in Mason County.

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## Shot Placement On Deer

Knowing which shots to take on whitetail deer will make you a better prepared and successful hunter. You need to learn prior to going on a deer hunt what shots are able to take a deer down cleanly and quickly. Hunters need to know how to avoid injuring or maiming deer. Knowing what shots you are willing and able to take ahead of time will make you a better prepared hunter when the time comes. There are times in deer hunting when you need to make a split second decision on taking a shot or passing it up. If you know what you are looking for, these decisions will come quickly and easily. Listed below



Appalacian Big Game TVs Elijah Bennet, from St. Marys, bowed a big 10 point buck.

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### GAME CHECKING

are the four most popular angles that you will see a whitetail deer, and tips on what to do in each situation.

#### Broadside

An unobstructed view of a broadside deer offers the best chance of a shot hitting the vitals. This is by far the favorite position for bow and gun hunters to have their deer in before taking a shot. The kill zone on the average deer is 9 inches. The broadside shot offers the hunter a clear shot on all the vitals, with even a little room for error. Aim for the heart right behind the shoulder blade. Even if your shot goes high you will pass through the lungs. This will provide you with a quick, clean, ethical kill.

#### Quartering Away

A quartering away deer also offers both gun and bow hunters a good selection for a shot. This is the second best position to have a deer in before taking a shot. With a deer in this position you need to aim for the exit hole, in essence, you want to aim to shoot through

continue to the next page

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the deer to the opposite shoulder. With an accurate shot, you will hit the vitals and take the deer down cleanly. The quartering away shot, as with the broadside shot, gives a little room for error.

**Quartering Toward**

A quartering toward deer is a shot that is very risky to take. You need to be an excellent marksman to attempt this shot. There is no room for error with a deer in this position. Do not use a bow. With a bow, it would have to be an absolutely perfect shot to kill the deer in an ethical way. If your arrow was slightly off, you would have an injured deer that you would most likely never recover. There is too much bone that your arrow would have to pass through before it would contact the vital area. With a gun, a shot high in the chest will pass through the lungs. A shot low would pass through the heart. I would personally pass up on this shot in the hope for a better one.

**Head On Shot**

When a deer faces a hunter head on, it gives you two possible shots, the chest and the neck. The chest area is the most popular because it provides a shot to the heart and lungs. A shot to the neck area will break the neck or cause enough shock to drop the animal in its tracks. A head on shot should only be done when using a rifle or muzzleloader. In this situation with a bow, you have a higher chance of injuring or maiming the whitetail.

With any weapon you are using, excellent marksmanship is needed to make this shot. For the average deer hunter, I recommend to be patient and wait on a better shot.

Always make wise shooting decisions. Making a fast, efficient kill should be the goal of all deer hunters. Enjoy hunting in an ethical fashion



Bill Looney, from Amma, hooked a 44' musky.

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**Scent Elimination**

Hiding your human scent is one of the most important factors in successful deer hunting. The nose of a whitetail deer is a very powerful tool that they use in detecting odors not natural to the area they are in. When a deer is walking through thick woods you can bet money that its nose is what's leading the way. If it smells anything out of the ordinary the deer will become extremely alert and start searching for a way out of the area. Once that old doe starts blowing at you your chances of seeing deer in the next little while just got slimmer.

Its no easy task to cover up all the human scent you carry with you,

continue to the next page

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but the less noticeable your scent is, the more likely you will see good, quality deer. In the sections below we will discuss covering scent on your clothing, body, and hunting equipment.

### Clothing

Washing your clothing and storing them in scent free containers is one of the easiest and most important steps you can take in the process of scent elimination. You need to dedicate one load of laundry to just hunting apparel. Hats, gloves, jack-



Phillip Atkinson, from Vienna, caught a nice largemouth bass.

ets, socks and anything else you plan to carry in the woods. Wash in a non-scented laundry detergent to eliminate all odors in your clothes. If it is still warm outside, hang your clothes on a line to let them air dry. If you have to use a dryer then do not use any fabric softener and make sure you clean out the lint filter. There are some dryer sheets on the market that will give you a scent that is normally found in the woods. After your clothes are dry you need to store them in a container of some kind to keep human scent locked out. Think of it as placing your clothing in a huge ziploc bag. I also recommend that you invest in an activated carbon suit of some sort. The carbon traps your scent inside your clothing.

### Boots

At some point of your hunting trip your more than likely to have to walk a good distance to your stand. It is likely that deer will walk over or around the same trail that you walked in on. Rubber boots are best for warm weather because the rubber will not hold foreign odors.

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GAME CHECKING



On your cold weather boots use a scent free soap to wash them. I always use a cover scent spray on the entire boot including the soles once i am out of my truck and ready to start my trek through the woods.

continue to the next page



Only 8, Cody Adams, from Fayetteville, used his bow for a 7 point.

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Body Odor

Before your hunting trip you will need to shower with scent free soap and shampoo. That fruit smelling body wash your wife has in the shower just won't cut it. Do not use any soap or shampoo that is not scent free. You can also get some scent free deodorant. Do not use any colognes, perfumes, or scented deodorants.

Equipment

Your tree stand and any other equipment you carry into the woods also need to be scent free. Remem-



Shawn Butler got a nice bow deer.  
Photo courtesy of Anderson Outdoors in Buckhannon.

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ber your bags, gun, and tree stand usually have human scent on them. I've found the easiest way is to use some kind of neutralizer spray or cover scent spray on all my accessories that I carry in. If you have any equipment that is washable then wash them and store them with your clothing.

Trying to trick a whitetail's nose is a difficult task, but with a little time and detailed effort you might just get that extra second you need to squeeze the trigger on that trophy buck.

## Must Tag Furbearers

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va.  
– West Virginia's trapping season will open Nov. 2, 2013. Trappers harvesting beaver, bobcat, fisher and otter are reminded that they must present the whole animal or pelt to a game checking station or Division of Natural Resources (DNR) representative within 30 days after the close of the respective season. A tag provided by the

continue to the next page

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checking station shall be attached to the whole animal or pelt until it has been sold, tanned or mounted.

Information provided by hunters or trappers on the checking tag is used to monitor the annual harvest and to assist in future management of these different species. Wildlife biologists make decisions regarding season length, opening and closing dates, and bag limits based on accurate data obtained from these tags.

State law no longer requires bobcat hunters and trappers to field tag each bobcat before moving the animal from the location where it was killed. Hunters and trappers are to present the unskinned bobcat when checking the animal.

This is the third year that otters may be trapped in the state. Trappers must deliver skinned otter carcasses to DNR district offices. Biological samples collected will assist biologists in making decisions regarding future trapping seasons.

DNR advises trappers to obtain a CITES seal for each bobcat and otter pelt from animals harvested in West Virginia. Federal law requires the seal on all bobcat and otter pelts if they will eventually be shipped to international markets such as those in Canada. The seals must be obtained from the state where the animals were harvested. These seals may be obtained from the DNR Elkins office or a DNR district office. Calling ahead is advised to ensure that personnel authorized to seal the pelts will be available.

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Fish \_\_\_\_\_ Pound \_\_\_\_\_ Oz \_\_\_\_\_

Deer Points \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

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