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Brandon Barker, from Morgantown, hunted in Monongalia County for his great buck. It was a main beam 12 point but had 16 scoreable points.

WV bucks are looking better every year. Less hunter hours and poor access to public hunting are letting deer get older.

Looking for your big buck pics. Look for a form on page 26. Hope you have a great 2023!

Jan/Feb 2023 ~ Page 3

2022 Deer Hunting Results

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. harvest numbers for the buck fire-- The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources on Thursday announced that the 2022 buck firearms season harvest was up 18 percent compared to last year.

According to preliminary data, the WVDNR reports that hunters harvested 49,662 bucks during the state's two week buck firearms season, from Nov. 21 to Dec 4. During last year's buck firearms season, hunters harvested 42,143 bucks."We were expecting



Braylee Rine got a 10 point buck in Wetzel Co. *Photo courtesy of Tyler* Outdoor Supply in Middlebourne.



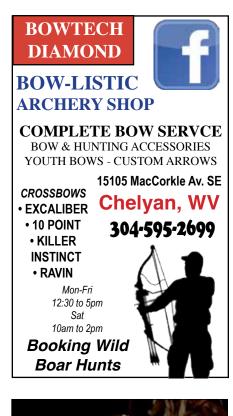
arms season to be comparable to last year, but mast conditions and weather favored hunters this year and we're thrilled that hunters all over the state were able to have a successful season," said Paul Johansen, chief of the WVDNR's Wildlife Resources section.

Harvest numbers were up across the state. The largest increases were reported in West Virginia's central and western areas, where buck harvests increased 38 percent and 36 percent, respectively.

The top 10 counties for the 2022 buck harvest are Greenbrier (1,856), Preston (1,760), Randolph (1,667), Ritchie (1,633), continue to the next page



a bow in Wyoming Co. for a buck.





Young Charlie Blankenship used Holly Davis used a crossbow in Kanawha Co. for a velvet deer..





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Jackson (1,539), Hampshire (1,352), Lewis (1,270) and Poca-(1,453), Mason (1,417), Kanawha hontas (1,196).



Cory Cleavenger, from Flemington, has a tall racked bow buck.



Cody Young went to Clay County with a bow for this fine buck..



Burl Goddard has an 11 point Tyler Co. buck. *Photo courtesy of Tyler Outdoor Supply in Middlebourne*.



Will Morgan used a bow for a crazy rack on a Wyoming Co. buck.



Corey Greene archery hunted in Logan County for a quality buck. Jan/Feb 2023 ~ Page 5



Declan Shreeve harvested a nice 8 point buck. *Photo courtesy of Middle Mountain Sporting Goods in Elkins*.



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49 Unusual Hunting Facts

Archaic humans began hunting around 3 million years ago, and it has remained a part of our civilization since then.

When archeologists discovered early evidence of our human ancestors' hunting activities, it became clear that adding meat to the diet meant big changes for early Homo sapiens. For example, skeleton size increased soon after, suggesting meat was important for evolution.

Researchers believed early humans waited in trees for their prey to pass underneath, rather than chase after animals the way hunters in the classical and Renaissance periods generally did.

method of hunting.

Weapon choices vary, but a bow and arrow are fairly traditional Blowpipes, or blow guns, are some of the most dangerous weapons a hunter can use.

The Australian boomerang, now continue to the next page



Bows and arrows were a universal Josh Murray bagged a 30 pound Matt Ripley used his bow in Cabobcat hunting this season. Jan/Feb 2023 ~ Page 7

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bell County for a wide buck.

a popular toy and tourist gift, was originally a tool used for hunting.

When early humans hunted bigger game, like antelopes, they chose to eat only adults, leaving behind younger and older animals in the herd.

Hunting may have helped establish traditional gender roles, as males were forced to learn to hunt more efficiently in order to feed

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Stonewall - Vandalia April 23 Burnsville - Main May 21 Stonewall - Vandalia June 25 Stonewall - Vandalia July 23 Stonewall - Vandalia August 13 Stonewall - Vandalia September 24 their female mates and offspring. When agriculture was introduced about 11,000 years ago, hunting became less important as people dedicated more time to cultivating crops.

Hunting is still important for people who live in areas where farming is impossible or very difficult, such as rainforests in South America or jungles in Southeastern Asia.

Artemis, daughter of Zeus, was the virgin Greek goddess of the hunt.

Diana, the Roman equivalent of ing in 2nd millennium. Artemis, guarded forests and the animals who lived there. In ancient Egypt, hu a separate class, often h

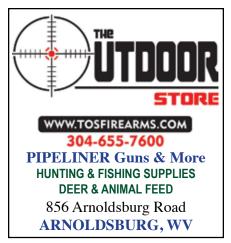
Mixcoatl was the Aztec god of hunting. To ensure a prosperous hunting season, the Aztecs performed human sacrifices.

Aztecs often made humans sacrifices to ensure the favor of the gods (we're curious about how they hunted those animals)

Dogs were most likely trained to hunt alongside humans in the early Neolithic era, and some breeds were developed to hunt specific



Cody Rine has a wide rack 8 point buck. *Photo courtesy of Tyler Outdoor Supply in Middlebourne*. Jan/Feb 2023 ~ Page 8



animals.

Horses were raised to hunt starting in 2nd millennium.

In ancient Egypt, hunters were a separate class, often hunting for nobles and aristocrats as well as on their own.

The use of hunting dogs can be traced back to ancient Egypt, where greyhounds were used to track gazelles.

"Coursing" is the use of hounds in hunting.

"Gun dogs" are dogs that hunt by scent and sight, and both fetch birds after they have been killed as well as sighting them before. Setters, spaniels, and pointers continue to page 10



Fred Hammond used a bow for a nice buck.



are the most common "gun dog" breeds.

During the Middle Ages, hunting as a sport was reserved for the rich and done on private lands owned by aristocrats.

Some hunting techniques in the early modern era involved putting animals in an enclosed space and allowing them to be killed outright with little effort.

In many early Northern European tribes, slaves were forbidden from hunting since they were not allowed to own weapons or bear arms.

Hunting with firearms began in the 16th century.

The perils of duck hunting are great - especially for the duck.

- Walter Cronkite

In 1515, the French government made hunting and poaching illegal for peasants.

Punishments for peasants who hunted on grounds owned by nobles included being sewn into a deerskin and chased by hunting dogs, who would kill the prey upon capture.

continue to the next page



Young Aiden Compton took a quality Ritchie County buck.







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Eli Ward bagged his nice buck in Gilmore County.



In Business Jan/Feb 2023 ~ Page 10



Jim Stotts caught a 30" walleye at the Belleville Dam. *Photo courtesy* of Old & New Sports in Ravenswood.

STUMPTOWN, WV US HIGHWAY 33



Kings would often demonstrate their hunting ability for an audience of nobles. To do so, kings would have game brought to closed arena before shooting and killing it, rather than hunting it in the wild.

Nobility in medieval England hunted several animals, including the stag, the boar, and even otters.

Queen Elizabeth I enjoyed hawking (where prey is killed by trained hawks) as well as hunting.

Royal feasts in medieval and renaissance Europe often included wild boar and venison, sometimes killed by the king himself.

Red deer, fallow deer, and hares



A great buck was taken by Cory Greenlief.



Weston Sloan brought in a long tined whitetail buck.

were hunted for their ability to lead a chase, an exciting change from waiting for prey to wander into range.

The French Revolution opened up lands for hunting, but the sudden free-reign of people on hunting grounds caused massive animal and ecosystem damage.

Foxes were initially hunted like vermin but were eventually hunted for sport.

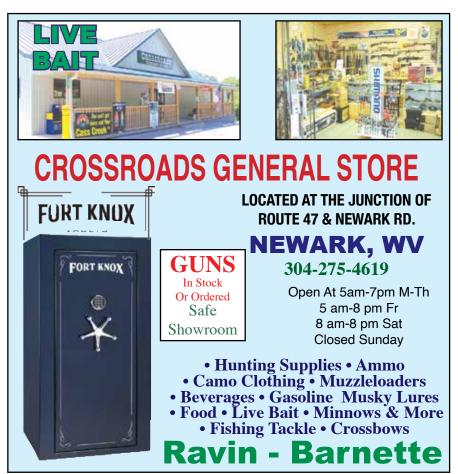
Wolves were considered a type of vermin in early Europe. People were allowed to kill as many wolves as they could, whenever extinct in the British isles due to they could.

Wolves were hunted to extinction in the UK, but species still remain in North America and in continental Europe



By 1770, wolves had become overhunting.

In the 1800s, over-hunting had brought about the extinction of several species, prompting the incontinue to the next page





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troduction of the extensive game laws currently in place in Great Britain.

In the UK, nothing more deadly than a double-barreled shotgun is allowed as a hunting weapon, as the shooter can only unload two bullets before reloading, thus allowing prey the chance to escape.

It costs about \$20 and takes about 5 hours for the average deer hunter to secure one pound of venison. The most common "trophy" animal (an animal meant to be killed and then displayed) in the United States is the snow goose.

American hunters track and kill Canada.

In Africa, the most common tro-

by the elephant and the leopard.

Samuel Colt, the man who created an empire selling hunting weapons, was said to have coined the phrase "new and improved."

Only five percent of Americans participated in hunting during the past five years, meaning the sport is on the decline.

Non-violent natural activities. such as nature photography and bird watching, are replacing hunting in popularity.

Somewhat ironically, money spent on hunting helps fund wildlife conservation efforts

Taxes on hunting licenses and most of their trophy animals in equipment pay for 60% of wildlife agencies' expenses. Less hunting means less funding, which is a phy animal is the lion, followed concern for many state-run wild-

life and recreational departments.

President Theodore Roosevelt. himself an avid hunter, helped continue to page 14



Gary Walker had succes with this quality buck.



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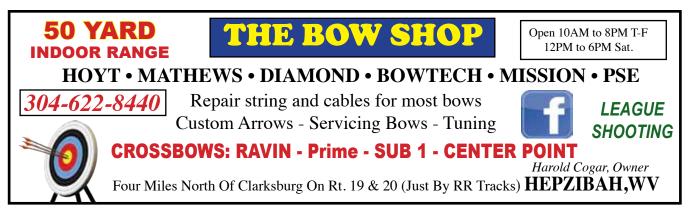








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create the "conservation through ier revenue streams. wise use" principle and encouraged other hunters to donate to causes that would preserve the land they hunted on.

New York sold its first deer hunting permit in 1864. President United States are baby boomers. Roosevelt helped more states sell licenses, thus allowing for health- sport by the age of 65.

In 1937, Congress passed legislation that required money earned from hunting licenses and products to be used for conservation.

Almost a third of hunters in the

Most hunters retire from the



Jn/Feb 2023 ~ Page 14



Joshua Farley hunted in Boone County for his good buck.



Young Rylee Martin used her crossbow for her fine buck.

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Fish Electronics By Greg Hackney

I grew up on a fishery where I never caught fish deeper than 4 feet, and that's where I make most of my living today — fishing shallow.

Contrary to what some anglers may believe, electronics are just as important in shallow water as they are in deep water.

I am constantly looking at my Lowrance HDS bow graph, monitoring the 2D sonar, water temp, mapping and time of day. I'm absorbing all of that information when fishing shallow.

I'm watching for depth changes just like the deep angler. Although that change may be a subtle drop from 2 feet to 3 feet, it can hold fish the same way a drop from 10 to 20 can be a key structural change offshore.

I'm also looking at the bottom for any changes in content. Does it go from a hard bottom to mud? Is there any rock or vegetation down there? All of this is part of the puzzle that helps me figure out what the fish are doing or may be doing later in the day.



Roy Neil brought in a top quality 8 point buck.



I want to know what was there when I caught that last fish. Was it a log or stump or patch of grass? What time of day was it, and when fishing the spring or fall months, what was the water temperature? I will use my ActiveTarget forcontinue to the next page



ward facing sonar at times, but the 2D feature is vital in helping me piece together detailed bottom and structural information. I'll use DownScan and SideScan on occasion, but in shallow water, 2D gives me most of the detail.

Some anglers believe it's important to turn off electronics to reduce transducer pinging noise when fishing shallow, but I haven't seen much difference. The benefits of having it on outweigh any disadvantages I've seen.

However, being stealthy is critical because shallow-water resident fish are the hardest to catch. They're very familiar and aware of their surroundings and can spook easily by unnatural disturbances.

Fish that live in skinny water most of the year are far more wary than those that live in deep water or those that periodically move from deep to shallow to spawn or feed.

For that reason, I run my Ghost trolling motor on slow and steady



speeds rather than constantly turning it on and off with a faster speed. You never want that blade "whooshing" erratically. When I get hung on a stump, I don't rock the boat to get it off because it sends out shock waves. I use my trolling motor.



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Nicholas Ball has a very typical for scoring 10 point buck.



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St. Albans Public Fishing & Boating Ramp

- The West Virginia Division 2 p.m. of Natural Resources announced today that the public boat launch St. Albans in announcing the reand lower parking area at the St. opening of this access site," said Albans Roadside Park on the WVDNR Director Brett McMil-Kanawha River reopened on Dec. lion. "The Kanawha River is a

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.VA. 19 with a dedication ceremony at popular boating and fishing area

"We're happy to join the city of



and we expect this improved boat launch, parking area and dock to get a lot of use for many years."

The site was closed in early September for upgrades, which included repaying the access road and parking area, stabilizing the two-lane concrete launching ramp and the installation of an ADA-compliant courtesy dock. Work has since been completed. The more than \$1 million in upgrades were installed by Landcore Builders of Milton, following plans provided by Chapman Technical Group of St. Albans.



Alexis Lane got a nice archery buck. Photo courtesy of Middle Mountain Sporting Goods in Elkins.

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TJ Jackson shot a 14 point buck in Jackson Co. - 156 5/8 score.



Hunting in Lewis Co., Kaitlyn Shannon got a 7 point buck.



2022 Fall Turkey Results

FARMINGTON, W.Va. - West Natural Resources. Virginia's 2022 fall turkey harvest increased by almost 46 percent over last year's harvest, according to preliminary results released by the West Virginia Division of

Fall turkey hunters harvested 1,012 birds this past season compared to 694 birds last year. The fall 2022 harvest was just 0.24 continue to page 23





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Brian Wheeler Owner

Jan/Feb 2023 ~ Page 21

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percent below the five-year average and 9.6 percent below the 10-year average. Although fewer counties had a two-week season this year due to a decline in the spring harvest, the fall harvest generally remained on par with long-term averages.

Fall turkey harvest numbers are influenced by hunter participation. This year's brood survey results were similar to last year's, resulting in the best two production years in the past five years. While last year's fall harvest did not mirror the increase in brood production, this year's fall harvest reflected the increase.

All six districts reported increased fall turkey harvests compared to last year, with Districts 1 and 3 reporting more than double the number of harvests. District 3 had the highest harvest with 261 birds, followed by District 2 with 187, District 4 with 166, District 1 with 150. District 5 with 128 and District 6 with 120.

Counties with the most harvests were Randolph County (72), Nicholas (65), Greenbrier (57), Monroe (41) and Webster (39), all of which had a four-week season.



Kyle Reed hooked a fall Little Kanawha River smallmouth bass.



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Winter Rabbit Hunting Methods

of the best activities you can do during winter. Sure it may be cold but hunting rabbits is worth it. In this article, I'll show you the steps to take when you are late rabbit hunting without dogs and how to hunt rabbits in the winter. Do many people tend to ask why is rabbit season in the winter? Well, it is easy, cold days are good for hunting because the rabbit fur has

be forced to take shelter from the harsh weather making them easier to find.

Top Winter Rabbit Hunting Tips: Snipe rabbits at dawn

During winter, rabbits seek shelter in thick bushes and evergreen trees. This answers the question, where do the rabbits go in

Winter Rabbit hunting is one poor insulation, so the rabbits will the winter? You can use a small binocular to look for new timber cuts, patches of newly burnt wood or edges of fields.

> Winter rabbits require good quality forage and twigs and green growth in burns will feed the rabbits during the early hours. Look for rabbits that have walked into continue to the next page

Becky Stalnaker brought home a fine 10 point gun buck.



Silas McVey (8) harvested a nice 8 point in Wirt County.



the open. Don't forget to pack ets. your scoped, 22 rifle since it may come in handy.

Work the edges after sunup

Rabbits tend to go to nearby cover once the sun has been up for a while. Take your shotgun and check every tangle of hedgerow brush and check every pile of timber slash. Rabbits use these areas as their hiding places. It will be easier to shoot the rabbit when you remove them from the thick-



Sarge Travis, from Bridgeport & 83, still brings in great bucks.



Alexis Nelson bagged her 1st black bear. Photo courtesy of Middle Mountain Sporting Goods in Elkins.

Go to the high ground for loafing rabbits

The next step is to move to the dense areas because rabbits hide in these areas during midday. High grounds along swamps or creeks are a sure bet. Thickets grow in increased sunlight so the rabbits will definitely find shelter there and also water. Rabbits dislodged from these areas have fewer options to escape so it will be easy to trap rabbits in winter.

Hunt hunkered-down rabbits near home

Old homesteads and equipment junkyards are mostly ignored for years. These also provide safe havens for the rabbits. Don't pass



up these areas especially if these places are in the middle of fields. Put gunners 20 yards from the corners of the barns. Rabbits will run along the edges of barns and abandoned houses, then jet away from places with easy shotgun range.

continue to page 29



Jan/Feb 2023 ~ Page 27

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Lewis County CVB on Facebook or www.stonewallcountry.com 304-269-7328 Jan/Feb 2022 ~ Page 28 Stage mini drives for wood rabbits.

Once you've checked the fields and creeks, go into the woods. If there are 2 hunters, then they should be at least 30 yards apart. That is the standard method for shooting and jumping rabbits. You can also another method which includes having one hunter go quietly into the woods for about 30 yards then the next hunter should follow in a zigzag pattern.

Take a stand for last light rabbits. As afternoon reaches, go back to the food plot or where there are recent burns. Rabbits will return



Ben Tenney harvested a 10 point in Randolph County.



David Yeater felled an 8 point buck in Tyler County.



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steps above and you will likely end with where you started. lot of aiming time. Though the process is tiresome, a rabbit filled bag will be worth it.

As for what to hunt with, some hunters use a bow and arrow. Though it is a challenge, the silence of the woods is not disturbed. Some also use shotguns but it is not preferred because the

to those areas to feed so you have shot tears up the meat on the alto check them again. Follow the ready small animal. They use a .22 long rifle because there isn't a

> Late rabbit season is the best time to hunt. I've list 5 late season rabbit hunting tips. They include:

> Releasing the beagles since they are useful in sniffling the rabbits. Snow is your friend because you can track rabbits.

> > continue to the next page



Pack an open chocked shotgun. Heavy/ winter hunting clothes and armor against thorns. Take your time.

Winter cottontails are fun to hunt. So how do you hunt rabbits in the snow or winter?

Wear brush pants for protection.

Wear your blaze orange to be visible to other hunters.

Take the right gear like a cylinder choke.

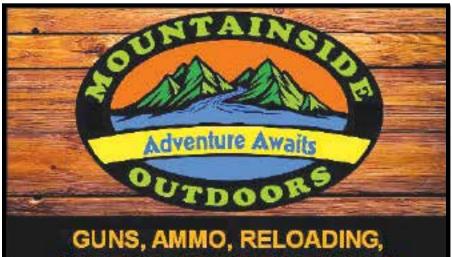
Find clover, these are loved by cottontails so they will be there.



Dylan Cutlip hunted in Pocahontas County for his 13 point buck.



Joe Williams hunted in Mingo County for a quality buck.



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Winter Squirrels

If you are wondering what do squirrels do in the winter, you've come to the right place! Here are some interesting facts about these little guys. During the winter months, squirrels dig up food they have gathered over the past year and bury it. This way, they'll remember where to find it in the spring and summer. If you're a home owner, you can watch your squirrels for signs of hunger.

Squirrels prepare for the winter months early. They start collecting nuts and acorns and store them



Chris Ashley got a huge Wirt Co. buck with a muzzleloader.



in scatter-hoards around their territory. They will come back to these piles when they need to feed during the cold season. They also feed on a variety of seeds, fruits, and vegetables. So it is important to provide them with ample food and shelter during this time. Here are some things to keep in mind.

While people shop at grocery stores for their food, squirrels horde their own in the fall and winter. Many ground squirrels, chipmunks, and other rodents will also store food in their larder continue to the next page



Blake Cook went to Mingo County for a great bow buck.





during the winter months. While squirrels usually eat a variety of leftovers. A squirrel's larder may contain up to a thousand different call AAAC Wildlife Removal. kinds of food.

ter for several reasons. They conserve energy and do not eat during this time. They may not come out until April, while other mant. Instead, they store stored types may take up to two months. While ground squirrels typically cold months. Besides hoarding come out in mid-February, some food during the warmer months,

species may come out even earlier to breed during the winter breedfoods, other animals also eat these ing season. If you're looking to get rid of squirrels in your yard,

Winter is a time when animals Squirrels hibernate in the win- conserve energy by burying food and storing it in burrows. Ground squirrels also hibernate in winter, but they do not go completely dorfood and use it as fuel during the

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squirrels also spend a great deal of time indoors. They share their body heat amongst each other, which helps them stay warm. **Build** dens

You can build dens for squirrels in your yard to attract them to your property during the win-

continue to page 34



Advertise In The W. Va. Sportsman Low Rates 32 Years In Business Ad Rates Are On Page 3



Phil Maltempie had bow success with his nice buck. Jan/Feb 2023 ~ Page 32



Ashton McClanahan used a bow for his huge buck.



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ven for newborns. Here are some ergy reserves. tips to help you build a squirrel The huddling behavior of penden.

are not social animals. They will gether, the surface area of the share a den, but only if the oth- birds they're huddling together er squirrels are in a similar state decreases, which conserves heat of coldness. They will likely use and helps them survive in the your home as their den if it is cold. Penguins in Antarctica don't more insulated. Make sure the build nests, so they must huddle den is warm enough for the an- together to conserve heat. In orimals to stay warm. If you can't der to keep warm, penguins must build a den, call animal control rotate their positions within the and release them in the wild. Huddle together for warmth

We've all seen images of penguins huddling together in the winter. They're standing in the cold to incubate their eggs, but in

ter months. Squirrels are mo- reality, they're huddling togethbile creatures that tend to stay in er for warmth. Not only do they forests or highly mobile areas to share body heat, but they also avoid being caught by predators. rotate in order to stay warm. By These homes provide a comfort- huddling together, they can use able place for them to rest, store each other's body heat to stay food, and even serve as a safe ha- warm and avoid using up their en-

guins is a form of cohesion and Squirrels typically live alone and trust. When penguins huddle tohuddle, as one in the middle of the group will overheat.

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continue to page 36







Brady Six got an archery 9 point in Tyler County.



6:00 PM	\$8,000
6:05 PM	\$4,000
6:10 PM	\$4,000
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6:20 PM	\$4,000
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6:40 PM	\$4,000
6:45 PM	\$5,000
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3:01 PM - 3:30 PM Rapid Fire Round A

Drawings #1 THRU #20 - ONE WINNER

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ROUND A RFR #12 Springfield 1911 9mm ROUND A RFR #13 Ruger PC Charger 9mm ROUND A RFR #14 Fair Carrera One 12ga ROUND A RFR #15 Thompson 198A1 45ACP ROUND A RFR #16 \$&W Model 642 38 Special ROUND A RFR #17 Kimber Micro Raptor Pistol ROUND A RFR #18 Weatherby Sporter 243 ROUND A RFR #19 Kel-Tec P50 5.7x28mm ROUND A RFR #20 Sabatti Saphire Thumbhole 30-06

ROUND B RFR #11 Bengara BMR Micro 22LR

ROUND B RFR #17 Henry 22 LR Pump ROUND B RFR #18 Olock 43 9mm

ROUND B RFR #12 Mossberg 590 Shockwave JIC 12ga

ROUND B RFR #15 Glock G4110mm ROUND B RFR #15 Christensen Anns Meso 28 Nosle

ROUND B RFR #19 Tikka T3x Lite Camo 6.5 Creedmoor

ROUND B RFR #13 Browning Xbolt Max Long Ronge 300 Win ROUND B RFR #14 SkW Performance Center 642 38 Special

Drawing #21 ONLY - TEN WINNERS

ROUND A RFR #21 Glock 19 Gen 5 9mm (Match last 3 numbers on ticket to WIN)

5:31 PM - 6:00 PM Rapid Fire Round B

Drawings #1 THRU #20 - ONE WINNER

OUND B RFR #1 Beretta PX4 Storm 9mm Pistol ROUND B RFR #2 INI Tovor TSI2 taga Tactical ROUND B RFR #3 Weatherby VG First Light 257WBY Cipher ROUND B RFR #4 FN 509M 9mm ROUND B RFR #5 Beretta A300 Ultima Kom 12ga Camo ROUND B RFR #6 Reminaton 7005PS Tactical 308 ROUND B RFR #7 Tri-Stor Bristol 410 SXS ROUND B RFR #8 Kel-Tec Sub-2000 GU(17 9mm ROUND B R/R #9 Pietta 1873 357 Mag 4.75* ROUND B RFR #10 Weatherby Vanguard \$2 Sporter 243Win ROUND B RFR #20 Bergara HMR 300 PRC

Drawing #21 ONLY - TEN WINNERS

ROUND B RFR #21 Ruger LCP II 380 W/Green Laser (Match last 3 numbers on ticket to WIN)



7:00 PM \$75,000 Grand Prize Drawing

"If Grand Prize Winning Ticket is purchased in an online Extreme or Ultimate Bund or the winner is present at the time of the drawing, a \$25,000 bonus will be added to make the Grand Prize: |0|0,0|0|0

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Advertise In The W. Va. Sportsman - Details On Page 3

Squirrels often bury food underground for the winter, and during the winter they dig up these hidden stores. Select species of squirrels also keep food in a central location, known as a midden, where all the squirrels in the territory can access it. This system allows them to gather food together and save food from competitors. They use teamwork to find and store food to survive in harsh winter



Tracy Foster used a crossbow for her massive whitetail buck.



U

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Shawn Stidham used a bow for this Putnam County buck.



Clayton Curry's Cabbell County bow buck had huge brow times.



Tony Aker's Wyoming Co. bowbuck has an impressive rack.





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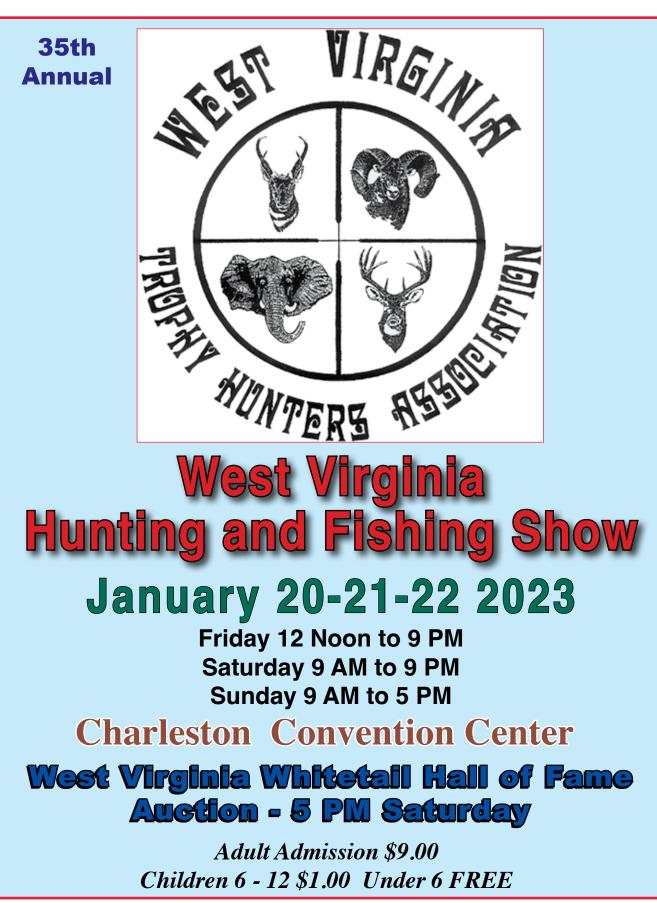
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Hannah Myles hunted in Greenbrier Co. for a long tined 7 point buck.





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