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**Vol. 1 Issue 191**

**September 2009**



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# GUN GIVE-AWAY ~ NOVEMBER 2009

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## Cover Photo

A 15 pound freshwater drum was caught by Richard Roupe, from Morgantown. These fish are sometimes called "sheep head" and for some reason "perch". They are endemic to North & Central America. Their otolith, a calcium carbonate deposit found in the inner ear, was used by early Indians as jewelry. They use their swim bladder to make a grunting drum noise. This aids in locating other fish during the spawning season.

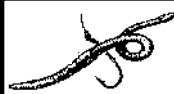
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## Ask The Pro - Greg Hackney

No victory was bigger than his recent 2009 Forrest Wood Cup win in Pittsburgh, where the Louisiana native managed to walk away with \$500,000 in prize money after pulling off a dramatic first-place finish by a slim 3-ounce margin.

Q: Congratulations on your championship victory! What was it like to win the Forrest Wood Cup? And how does that victory rank in your career achievements?

-- Jon Pageler (New York, N.Y.)

A: It was by far the pinnacle of my career. Nothing I've ever done before compares to that. The best thing I'd won before that was the FLW Tour Angler of the Year in 2005. It was the most emotional thing I've ever won. I still have to think about it -- it doesn't seem real. It's definitely a life-changing event -- and it's not just about the money. To win the championship

title itself was just unbelievable.

Q: When was the first time during Cup competition when you thought, "You know what, I have a real chance to win this"?

-- Jon Stebbins (San Diego, Calif.)

A: Probably it hit me when Scott Suggs weighed in during the final day. The third day of the tournament I caught a fish that I'd seen on the first day of the tournament but couldn't catch. But I wound up catching that fish on day three with like five minutes left in the day, and those are the kinds of things that need to happen in order to win. After that I started thinking that I'm making all of the right decisions. But honestly, even after I checked in on day four, I knew I never did catch that big bite, so I thought I

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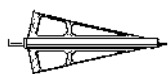
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was probably fishing for second - at least when I initially checked in. I honestly felt like 6 pounds a day would win the tournament, and it did. And that's exactly how it turned out.

Q: How big was the bass you sight-fished on day two of the Cup? Did it bite on the first pitch, and what bait were you using at the time?

continue to the next page

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Mr. Tyree took a nice buck last season. Photo courtesy of Cardinal Pawnbrokers in Beckley.

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A: It was a 3-pounder, and it did bite on the first cast. I caught it on a 4-inch Ocho wacky-rigged. Basically, I pitched the bait upstream and let it drift downstream in the current toward a big log. And the bass just ambushed it.

Q: Now that you've won the Forrest Wood Cup, will you be approaching the 2010 season any differently?

-- Pat Zak (Oakland, Calif.)

A: Not consciously, but I'm sure I will mentally. Honestly, this win gives me a lot of cushion. It really helps when you don't have to worry about finances. It's always better to head into a tournament when you only have to concentrate on fishing and nothing else. It definitely al-

lows you to fish a lot more freely.

Q: What is your favorite all-time body of water to fish?

-- Samantha (Long Island, N.Y.)


A: Three Rivers in Pittsburgh (laughing). I really don't have a favorite lake per se, but I want it to be shallow with lots of cover: aquatic vegetation, wood, etc. But when I get a chance to go fishing and relax, 99 percent of the time I'll go to Venice, Louisiana. It's one of those places where I can catch a bass, a shark, redfish ... when I go there I'm like a kid. It's by far the greatest fishing you can have. It's the only place in the world where you can actually be reeling in a bass and have a bull shark bite it. It's like being in another world.

Q: How do you go about scouting a tournament lake that you've never fished before? Where do you even begin?

-- Jim Interlandi (Chicago, Ill.)

A: The first thing I do is find out a little bit about the lake for a tournament. I'll check past tournament results, the history and composition of the lake. If the lake has grass,

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that's the first place I'm going. I'll also check out the time of year, whether to start in the back of the creeks, etc. If it's a prespawn time, I'll look for obvious spawning areas. But normally, the Internet is where I start doing research for all of my tournaments. I actually don't like talking to locals directly, because they'll give you their opinion whether they're right or wrong. Locals tend to be spot fishermen, and most of the tournaments are won fishing a particular pattern. So it's rare that a large tournament is won

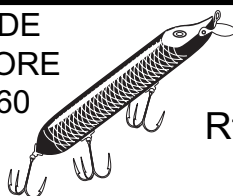
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Ronald McCray caught a flathead.  
*Photo courtesy of Riverside Bait & Tackle in Hockingport, OH.*

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fishing a particular pattern. So it's rare that a large tournament is won doing the same exact thing that locals are doing. So I always take that into consideration as well.

Q: Who coined the phrase Hack Attack? Is Hack Attack just a name, or is it a mentality?

-- Tim (Little Rock, Ark.)

A: It started as just a name, but nicknames have a way of becoming a mentality. Fish Fishburne is actually the guy who first started calling me that.

Q: Did it feel weird at all winning FLW's championship as an Elite Series pro? How has FLW treated you?

-- Nick G. (Atlanta, Ga.)

A: Actually, I still consider myself an FLW pro. I actually got my start with FLW. It actually felt like coming home. I was the FLW Angler of the Year and grew up fishing against a lot of these guys, so it really felt like I was coming home. During the pretournament banquet, it was pretty emotional for me. So overall, yes, FLW Outdoors has treated me very well.

Q: With the lighter BASS schedule



AJ Rhodes & Mike Wilson hooked several catfish. Photo courtesy of Jarrett's Bait in Elizabeth.

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in 2010, is there any chance you'll get to participate in any FLW Outdoors events next season?

-- Titus Song (Minneapolis, Minn.)

A: I'm actually going to fish every FLW event possible -- as many as I can get in -- which could be as many as nine. I've actually spent a

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ot of time thinking about that, and I've begun to try to put down next year's schedule on paper.

Q: Don't you feel bad for Ike (Mike Iaconelli)? He took second at the Classic and the Cup!

-- Terry (Buford, Ga.)

A: No (laughing). If I felt sorry for him, I'd have to feel sorry for everyone behind me. I like Ike, but it's a competition, and there has to be a winner and there has to be a loser. That's just fishing.

Q: What keeps you motivated when fishing is tough? Do you have a regular practice routine in the off-season?

-- Shawn V. (Bloomington, Ind.)

A: The biggest thing that keeps me motivated is past success, because it's so hard to get that feeling, and it feels so good that you always want more of it. Once you do well, you expect yourself to do well again. And success, like in everything else, usually breeds more success.

Q: What was your impression of Pittsburgh and the Three Rivers system during the Cup?

-- Dan Stauffer (Creighton, Pa.)

A: The river system had really improved from 2005 when we were there during the Classic. The fish population has quadrupled since we were last there. The water looked better. The water was a lot cleaner. We had really bad conditions in 2005 as well. But, overall, I'd say the area has really improved.

Q: Overall, did you catch more fish (keepers) in the Kiski or the Allegheny?

-- Greg (Dallas, Texas)

A: I probably caught most of my keepers in the Allegheny.

Q: What is your take on fishing difficult tournaments like the recent Cup event in Pittsburgh? Do you like tough events like that, or do you prefer venues where you can

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catch bigger and more quantities of fish?

-- Andy Kurzwig (Charlotte, N.C.)

A: I would definitely prefer the tougher tournaments. I was fortunate to win the Cup, but tough tournaments definitely separate the field. When you go to a tough place like that, three-quarters of the field are out of the running before the event even starts. But in a slugfest, a lot of times it comes down to the luck of the bite, and you're always competing against the whole field. I love to hear other anglers talk about how bad or how tough a tour-

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David McCormack caught a 11 1/2 pound striper. Photo courtesy of PC Bait & Tackle in Hinton.



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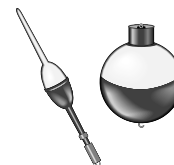


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nament is going to be because that shows weakness. For example, everyone in the top 10 in the Cup was a great angler. Just look at that top 10: That was a tough field. In tough events, it's really hard to luck into good catches. You might be able to do that one day, but not four days in a row. That's why in those tournaments, you usually have the good anglers separating themselves from the rest of the field.

Q: I was fishing in a local pond and caught an unusually colored bass. It is not a managed pond, and it has a red clay bottom. What could cause the bass to look blue, almost like a blue catfish?

-- Jonathan (Marion, S.C.)

A: As far as the blue color, I'm not sure, but it could be because of an algae bloom -- something in the pond itself that causes that. But I'm not entirely sure.

Q: Greg, do you have any advice for someone interested in becoming a professional bass angler? I just started fishing local club tournaments, but I wanted to know what I should do to take the next step.

-- Eric Holmes (Los Angeles, Calif.)

A: Actually, you've done the right thing. Personally, I believe in taking baby steps. I know a lot of good fishermen who got burned out because they made the jump to the next level too soon. I went through the BFLs, Strens and then the FLW Tour. That's how it was for me. I'm not saying that everyone has to take that exact route, but you need to have confidence to move on to the next levels. It's almost like you can be a star in a college sport, but then when you go to the pros, everybody is a star.

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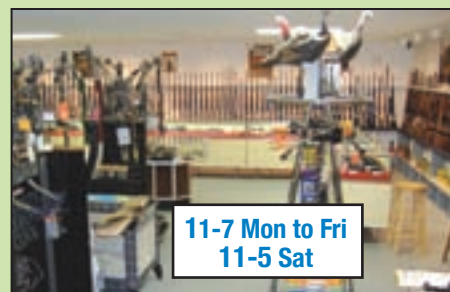
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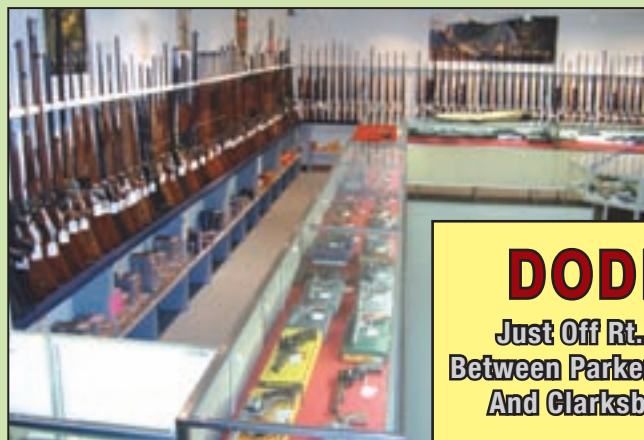
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Jon Bush landed a 36 1/2" catfish..  
Photo courtesy of Riverside Bait & Tackle  
in Hockingport, OH.



A couple of nice channel catfish  
were hooked. Photo courtesy of Burns-  
ville Docks in Burnsville.



Danny Edwards hooked a 12 1/2  
pound hybrid bass. Photo courtesy of  
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Scott Marple hooked a 33 1/2 pound catfish. Photo courtesy of Family Fishing & Camping in Grafton.

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## Prepare For Early Deer Season

Deer hunting comes early to the West Virginia hills this fall. "The special antlerless deer seasons for archery and muzzleloader hunters will open on private land in certain counties in September," said West Virginia Division of Natural Resources Director Frank Jezioro, who wants hunters to be well armed with the facts before entering the woods.

The early archery season opens September 14 and closes Septem-

ber 19. Hunters wishing to participate in this season must buy a Class RB or Class RRB stamp before going afield. The stamp allows a hunter to take one antlerless deer during this archery season.

The early muzzleloader season opens September 21 and closes September 26. Hunters must buy a Class RM or RRM stamp before hunting. This stamp allows a hunter to take one antlerless deer during this muzzleloader season.

If a hunter does not fill a tag during either season, the appropriate stamp can be used during the regular archery or muzzleloader season.

Landowners hunting on their own land or holders of the new DT li-

cense do not have to buy a stamp.

### Prepare for Early Warm Weather Deer Hunting

"With these early seasons, you need to know before you hunt how you'll take care of it in the field and how you'll get your deer processed," said Jezioro. "If you don't plan to process the deer yourself, make sure beforehand that your deer processor will be open to process the deer." If your regular processor is not open, Jezioro suggests processing the deer yourself. This is a relatively simple process and numerous guides exist explaining how to do it.

"Cooling the deer meat will be a  
continue to the next page



Travis Sexton hooked a nice bass..  
Photo courtesy of Starcher's Sport SHop  
in Lubeck.



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prime concern,” say Jezioro. He encourages hunters to keep a bag of ice in a cooler at camp or in the car. “After you have field dressed the deer, throw the bag of ice into the chest cavity. Get the hide off the deer as soon as you can. This will let the meat cool quicker.”

Hunters planning on participating in the early seasons need to remember to check their equipment earlier than normal to increase their chances for a safe and successful hunt.

“The opening dates are fast approaching and these seasons will provide an excellent opportunity to hunt deer earlier in the year when weather conditions are generally milder. A little preplanning can greatly enhance your outdoor experience,” Jezioro said.

**Mail In Your Big Fish  
Photos - Form Is On Page 38**



Joe Beitz hooked and released 4 smallmouth over 19 1/2 inches. He was fishing on the Greenbrier River.



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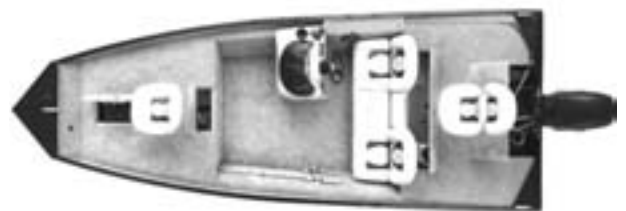
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Burl & Dave White have had good success trapping. *Photo courtesy of Jerry's Sporting Goods in Horner.*



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## Goose Hunting Tips

For all the goose hunters this is a time to get active. It's hunting season again and this is a perfect time to brush up on all the tips and tricks that many experienced goose hunters have to offer. Check out these ten basic goose hunting techniques that are sure to help improve your goose hunting season this year.

**Team Work:** Pair up with some of your fellow hunters and do your goose hunting together in a large open field. One of you should stay hidden on the out edge of the open field while the other approaches from the opposite side of the field forcing the geese to fly over the hidden hunter, setting him up for a great shot.

**Scouting:** Do some foot work and bird watching prior to going out goose hunting. Find the location of their feeding area. Once you establish where the geese are feed at make sure you can hunt in that area and set up a small blind near the vicinity.

**Mimic Their Wings:** By waving a few goose flags you can draw the attention of geese that are a little farther away. The flag will draw them like a flock of geese feeding.

**Flight Path:** Try your goose hunting near water where a large group of geese may flock together. Hunt them; if possible, by pass shooting

continue to the next page

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Kerry Dunbar fished at North Bend Lake for this 40 inch musky. Photo courtesy of Starcher's Sport Shop in Lubeck.



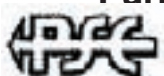
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while they are going to and from this area.

**Wind Mapping:** Wind mapping is very important to goose hunting, especial when using decoys. For the most part you usually want to place decoys downwind from where you are doing your goose hunting.

**Decoys:** Make sure and use the right decoys, there are so many to choose from. The type of decoy a goose hunter should use should match the conditions of the area he is hunting in through the geese hunting season.

**Calling:** When hunting geese make sure you are properly using the goose call. Geese are usually more responsive to a bird call then most birds but if you are in a good goose hunting location a goose caller should not be needed.

**Blinds:** When out goose hunting

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remember that a low profile blind is better. Flatter areas like fields and hay pastures can sometimes be a challenge to hunt, but not impossible. A large piece of fast grass can better furnish you in these kinds of areas.

**Under Cover:** You go out and invest into all the proper attire for goose hunting but not properly

cover your hands. This is a common mistake; geese can be alerted to you when you move your hands if they are not camouflaged with paint or gloves.

**Dress in Layers:** Sometimes the best hunting is done in the worst weather. Be prepared for any weather by layering your clothes, this way you won't miss an opportunity while out goose hunting because you left early due to the weather.



Lisa Losh hooked a 47 pound blue catfish at this popular pay lake. *Photo courtesy of Family Fishing & Camping in Grafton.*

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## Canadian Goose Season Opens

West Virginia's 2009-10 waterfowl seasons will begin statewide on Sept. 1, 2009, with the opening of the early Canada goose season, according to Curtis I. Taylor, Chief of the Division of Natural Resources' Wildlife Resources Section. The early season will end on Sept. 19. Shooting hours are one-half hour before sunrise until sunset. All other general waterfowl hunting regulations apply to the September season. Hunters must possess a federal waterfowl stamp and a free Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program (HIP) registration



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tion card in addition to their regular hunting license. HIP registration is free and available from DNR offices and all hunting license outlets.

"Canada geese are found throughout West Virginia, but the largest concentrations are in the major river valleys where agriculture and

suburban landscapes provide an abundance of open land," Taylor said. "A recently harvested crop field near water would be an ideal place to hunt, but hunters should not overlook those out-of-the-way spots such as an isolated pasture or strip bench with a small pond." Regular scouting is important because geese are very mobile and will move to such isolated areas to avoid hunting pressure.

Most goose hunting is found on private lands, so it is important for hunters to maintain good relationships with landowners. Goose hunting is also available on some wildlife management areas and hunters should contact the appropriate district office with questions about specific areas.

Waterfowl hunters are reminded of two important toll-free numbers. Federal waterfowl stamps may be purchased with a credit card by calling 1-800-782-6724. Also, hunters who harvest a banded bird may call 1-800-327-2263 to report the bird and find out when and where it was banded. Banded birds may also be reported online at [www.report-band.gov](http://www.report-band.gov).



Robert Thaxton, from, Charleston, hooked a big musky on the New River

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## Hunting Regulation Changes

Several important changes in the state's fall hunting seasons for white-tailed deer and black bear are included in the new 2009-2010 West Virginia Hunting and Trapping Regulations Summary brochure, according to Division of Natural Resources Director Frank Jezioro. The publication is now available at all West Virginia hunting and fishing license agents, DNR District Offices, Elkins Operation Center and South Charleston Headquarters

Hunters and trappers are encouraged to carefully review these regulations due to the numerous changes in hunting seasons, especially for deer and bear hunting, which will be in place this fall. The 2009-2010 West Virginia Hunting and Trapping Regulations Summary is also available online at [www.wvdnr.gov](http://www.wvdnr.gov).

Major Changes for 2009-2010 (See brochure for details)

Black bear hunting seasons are less liberal than last year with only four counties open September 21-

26; five counties open November 23 – December 5 during the Buck Season, and 44 counties open December 7-31. The daily bag and season limit is one bear this year.

There will be a one-week Special Antlerless Deer Archery Season on private land only in selected counties September 14-19, 2009. Hunters may kill one additional antlerless deer that must be checked on a Class RB or Class RRB stamp.

There will be a one-week Special Antlerless Deer Muzzleloader Season on private land only in se-

lected counties September 21-26, 2009. Hunters make kill one additional antlerless deer that must be checked on a Class RM or Class RRM stamp.



Young Austin Lowe hooked a bass.  
*Photo courtesy of Jarrett's Bait in Elizabeth.*



Josh Murray landed a nice catfish.  
*Photo courtesy of Starcher's Sport Shop in Lubeck.*

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Form Is On Page 38**

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John Murray hooked a big flathead.  
Photo courtesy of Starcher's Sport Shop in Lubeck.



Tori Drake reeled in a nice 16 pound musky.



Kristopher Gross caught 2 Ohio River catfish. Photo courtesy of Starcher's Sport Shop in Lubeck.




# New State Record Blue Catfish

A new state record blue catfish was caught by David Wayne Green of Wayne, W.Va., according to Frank Jezioro, Director of the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources.

Green caught the 40.4-inch, 22.3-pound fish from Twelvepole Creek in Wayne County on August 5, 2009. His catch establishes a new record for length.






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Janet Beverage hooked a big blue catfish. Photo courtesy of Family Fishing in Grafton.



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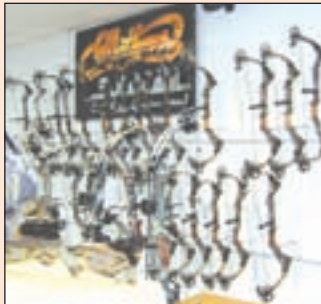
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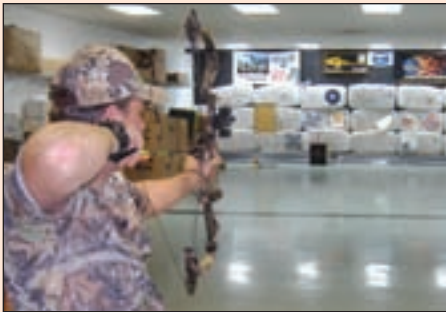
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Leah Boughker hooked an 18 pound catfish. Photo courtesy of Backwater Bait in Newport, Ohio.



Jennifer Gordon caught some nice channel catfish. General Store near Newark.



Scott Ripley landed several crappie. Photo courtesy of Jarrett's Bait in Elizabeth.

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# Musky Tricks

Question: How did you become so involved in muskie fishing?

Long: I learned my love of muskie fishing from my grandfather and from my father, who was also a muskie fisherman for several years.

Question: How do you catch muskies in stained water?

Long: The water in our dark lakes is relatively shallow, usually 30 feet or less. Therefore, the main feeding is primarily in shallow water. In the shallow water in which we fish, most of the time we'll be fishing over stumps or weeds. When the muskies move into that shallow water, they usually come in, feed, and then pull back out to deeper water. Therefore, if you go after the feeding muskies in the shallow water, your chances are much higher for catching them.

Question: Okay, so when you're in the shallow water, how are you catching them?

Long: I like to fish a bucktail with Colorado blades like the Mepps Musky Marabou. Because of the Colorado blades, you can keep the Musky Marabou higher in the water than you can with the other lures that don't have Colorado blades.

By Dave Long

Now, the real secret to fishing this lure is that as soon as it enters the water, you want to immediately engage the reel and start the lure coming back to the boat to get the blades turning.

As soon as you get the blades turning, you ought to swim the bait just under the water, so that it causes a bulge on the surface. The Musky Marabou is fairly weightless, and when it makes that bulge on the surface, it's making a path that the muskies can follow to the bait. The Musky Marabou is a great muskie attractor.

Question: What color of Musky Marabou do you like?

Long: In dark water, I like the black marabou with either the orange or the chartreuse blades. I fish it on 80-pound PowerPro test line with St. Croix rods and reels.

Question: How do you entice the musky to strike?



Long: Another reason I like the Musky Marabou in stained water is that you can see the wake that the muskie throws off as it come after the Marabou. You'll see what looks like a torpedo under the water com-

continue to the next page

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This angler caught a musky. Photo courtesy of Amish COUNTRY Store in Marmet.

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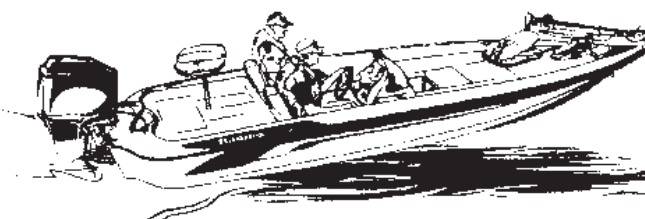
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ing after the lure. Once I see the muskie following the blades, I tell my customers to keep the muskie coming toward the boat.

When the muskies get to the boat, I encourage my anglers to make a big circle in front of the boat before they start doing a figure-eight. I have found that teaching my fishermen to do a circle before they start doing a figure-eight allows them to learn to keep their rods in the water and keep the baits moving when the baits get close to the boat. I've learned that teaching fishermen to do a circle first before I teach them to do the figure-eight is a much easier maneuver for them to learn to do once the bait gets closer to the boat.

A big muskie is like a freight train. It can't turn quickly, so by turning in a big circle before starting a figure-eight, the muskie has more time to turn around and start looking for the bait than if you imme-

diately go to the figure-eight. Also by teaching my customers to start with the circle, I teach them to do the same speed when they do the circle and the figure-eight as when they're retrieving the lures.

Question: What happens when the muskie grabs the lure?

Long: All hell breaks loose (grin). When the muskie takes the bait close to the boat, you'll usually set the hook straight up on the top of its mouth or further back in its mouth than you'll set the hook if he takes the bait while he's retrieving it.

Question: When your customer has the rod deep in the water and a big muskie attacks, what prevents the muskie from pulling the rod out of his or her hands or breaking the rod?

Long: When the muskie attacks the Marabou, the customer gets an overwhelming shot of adrenaline, and then he can set the hook hard.

continue to the next page



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Lots of big stripers are being caught out of the New River like this 12 1/2 pounder. Photo courtesy of Three Rivers Edge in Hinton.

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Question: How do you get the muskie out of the water, if the muskie takes the bait and then dives under the boat?

Long: In those situations, you're pretty much at the muskie's mercy for a little bit. I run my boat from the rear, and I have my customers fishing at the front of the boat. So, when the muskie goes under the boat, really all the fisherman has to do is to move his rod around the front of the boat, so once again he's on the same side of the boat as the muskie. I run a tiller motor, so if the muskie runs for the back of the boat, I raise my tiller motor and get out of the way. Then my fisherman can come to the back of the boat to fight the fish. One of the real thrills of muskie fishing is that, every time you hook a fish, you don't know what's going to happen.

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## Youth Hunting Dates

West Virginia's youth waterfowl season has been set for Sept. 26, 2009, and the youth squirrel season is scheduled for Oct. 3, 2009, according to Curtis I. Taylor, Chief of the Wildlife Resources Section of the Division of Natural Resources.

"These special youth hunts provide an excellent opportunity to introduce youngsters to our state's strong hunting heritage," said Taylor. "The mild days of early fall are a great time to be afield with our youth, and provide an excellent opportunity for experienced hunters to mentor our youngsters on the various aspects of hunting such as the safe handling of firearms, hunter ethics and wildlife conservation."

Youth Waterfowl Season Sept. 26

Youth waterfowl hunters must be less than 16 years of age on the day of the hunt to participate in the youth waterfowl season. Youth hunters age 14 and under are not required to have a hunting license. Those who have reached their 15th birthday must possess a valid state hunting license (A, XJ, XXJ, AB-L or A-L) and HIP registration card,  
continue to the next page

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John Shillingburg, from New Creek, landed a 5 pound, 10 oz, largemouth in Mineral County.

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be a qualified resident landowner. The youth must be accompanied by a licensed adult at least 21 years of age. Landowners over 15 years of age are not exempt from the requirement to carry a valid migratory bird hunting and conservation stamp, commonly called the duck stamp. The daily bag limit for the waterfowl hunt is the same as during the regular season with several species restrictions.

Youth Squirrel Season Oct. 3

Youth squirrel hunters must be less than 15 years of age on the day of the hunt to participate in the youth squirrel season. Youth hunters are not required to have a hunting license; however, they must be accompanied by a licensed adult 21 years of age or older. The supervising adult may not hunt or carry a firearm or bow and must remain near enough to the youth to render advice and assistance. The daily bag limit for the youth squirrel season is six squirrels.

For additional information, hunters should check the 2009-2010 West Virginia Hunting and Trapping Regulations and the 2009-2010 West Virginia Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations. These publications are available at all license agents, DNR offices and the DNR's Web site at [www.wvdnr.gov](http://www.wvdnr.gov).

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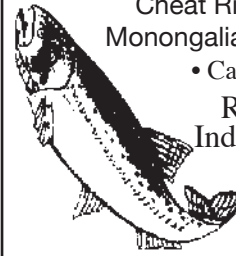
## Applications For Controlled Bear Hunt

Black bear hunters who wish to participate in a controlled bear hunt using dogs on Nathaniel Mountain Wildlife Management Area (WMA), located near Romney, must submit their applications by Oct. 31, 2009, according to Rich Rogers, District Wildlife Biologist for the Division of Natural Resources' Wildlife Resources Section.

Hunting with the use of dogs is by permit only on Nathaniel Mountain WMA during the bear gun season. Hunters must apply for a permit in parties ranging from one to four hunters and must supply hunting license information and dog tax license numbers of at least four dogs to be used in the hunt. Hunting parties will be limited to eight dogs. Individual's names may only appear on one application and duplicate application will result in disqualification from the drawing. Successful applicants will be assigned two consecutive days to hunt with one additional day for dog retrieval. Applicants are selected randomly by drawing and

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the first applicant on the application will be notified if selected by Nov. 20, 2009. Hunters may apply by visiting the DNR Web site [www.wvdnr.gov](http://www.wvdnr.gov) under "Hunting" and printing out an application which is mailed to the WVDNR, Operations Center, P.O. Box 67, Elkins, WV 26241 Attention: Shelva See. Applications may also be obtained at district wildlife offices, the Elkins Operation Center, and Charleston Headquarters.

All hunting regulations of the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources will apply to this hunt. The bag limit is one bear per party for the duration of the hunt and will apply to the licensed hunter's season bag limit as established by the state. For more information and rules please visit [www.wvdnr.gov](http://www.wvdnr.gov)

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## More Participation Expected In Youth Challenge

Changes in the format of the annual Outdoor Youth Challenge will allow more participation from youngsters to test their skills in hunting, fishing, and other activities, according to Division of Natural Resources Director Frank Jezioro. The Outdoor Youth Challenge is part of West Virginia's Celebration of National Hunting and Fishing Days, scheduled for September 26 and 27 at Stonewall Resort State Park in Lewis County.

“This celebration is one of the best outdoor recreation events held in West Virginia, with hands-on learning and instructional opportunities for youth and the entire family in celebrating West Virginia's wildlife and outdoor heritage,” said Jezioro.

A major change instituted last year and continuing this year involves removing the competition factor in all the Outdoor Youth Challenge events, unless a youth requests to be competitively scored. Last year the result was more than 350 youngsters over the two-day weekend participating in approximately 20 different events, up substantially from previous years.

Any youth between 6 and 18 years of age may participate in the Outdoor Youth Challenge events. However, those youths 11-18 years of age who would like to compete will still be able to do so, with five scored competitive events which include casting for accuracy, archery, .22 rifle, muzzleloader and skeet shooting.

All youths who wish to participate must complete a free, on-site registration. They will be given a color-coded registration card with

map showing the Outdoor Youth Challenge events. The Outdoor Youth Challenge will run from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on both Saturday and Sunday. There will be approximately 25 events and each youth must complete at least 10 events

continue to the next page



Jim Anderson, from Parkersburg, is teaching his grandson, Jacob Barker, how to fish.

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events to be eligible for prize drawings. Upon completion of each event, the youth's registration card will be validated by the official overseeing that event.

Two types of registration will be offered for the Outdoor Youth Challenge. The first will be for those youths 6 to 18 years of age who would like to participate in the Youth Challenge event just for the fun and experience, but do not wish to compete. The second type of registration will be for youths 11-14 and 15-18 years of age who wish to compete in the scored events. The numerical score for the five scored competitive events will be recorded on the youth's registration card. These youths, in addition to completing the scored events, must also complete at least five of the un-scored Youth Challenge events.

Again this year, the grand prizes are two lifetime hunting and fishing licenses. For those youths who want to compete in the five scored

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competitive events, a Junior Conservation Camp Scholarship (junior group ages 11-14) and a state Conservation Camp Scholarship (senior group ages 15-18) will be awarded each day. Many other quality prizes, dealing with hunting, fishing and other outdoor rec-

reation activities, will also be given away each day.

For more Outdoor Youth Challenge information call Shawn Head at 304-637-0245 or go to the Web site at: [www.wvdnr.gov/Hunting/Youth.shtm](http://www.wvdnr.gov/Hunting/Youth.shtm). Bring your youth to this great event.



Young Levi Gardner is enjoying fishing for catfish at this popular pay lake. Photo courtesy of Family Fishing & Camping in Grafton.

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Bruce Bumgardner took his first gobbler in the spring. *Photo courtesy of Briken Wheel Campground in Weston.*

[www.wvasportsman.net](http://www.wvasportsman.net)



Michael Angelo caught a 26 1/2 pound flathead catfish. *Photo courtesy of PC Bait in Hinton.*



Jamie Lilly bagged a nice buck last season. *Photo courtesy of Cardinal Pawnbrokers in Beckley*

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Keith Davis, from Reedy, landed an 8 pound, 2 oz. largemouth at Rollins Lake in Jackson County.

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 Page 38**

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Joe Beitz, from Beckley, caught and released a 20" smallmouth.



Richard Wimmer hooked a 7 pound smallmouth. Photo courtesy of PC Bait & Tackle in Hinton.



Kyle Russ reeled in a 44 pound catfish. Photo courtesy of Family Fishing & Camping in Grafton.

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# Squirrel Hunting Basics

Squirrel hunting is one of the best ways for a new hunter or even a seasoned sportsman to hone their skills. Depending on the basic principles of hunting—technique, woods and terrain skills, silence, and marksmanship, squirrel hunting is often regarded as a guilty diversion, but the result of a relaxing squirrel hunting afternoon is often improved skill, necessary harvesting of the animals, and a tasty game meat regarded often as delectable table fare.

Squirrel hunting is usually the first hunting experience for youngsters new to the sport of hunting. With an experienced mentor guide, the young squirrel hunter will learn

the basics of the technique in a relatively simple arena. Squirrel hunting seasons typically open in late august and continue to mid January. It does not require an extensive hunting license (usually the general one will do), and minimal equipment is necessary for successful squirrel hunting. In addition to a little camo, the type of weapon necessary is just your common ordinary shotgun, preferably with 5 or 6 shot. Some prefer a .22 to add marksmanship to the sport.

So what are the basics of squirrel hunting? Squirrels are everywhere. If you know their habits, you will do best. They love trees that produce nuts, so any mature oak, beechnut, and hickory can be a good place to find a group of squirrels. If you



Jerry Reddon got a buck last season. Photo courtesy of Cardinal Pawnbrokers in Beckley.



Steven Ratz, from Wilkinson, is showing his 20 pound gobbler to his daughter, Lydia.

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Gene and Roseanna Hines

look on the ground under the trees, you can tell when a squirrel has been around because they leave small pieces of shells and hulls all over the place from where they have been eating. If there aren't a lot of nut trees, or the trees are non-producing for a season, look for groups of squirrels near populated areas where they can feed on birdfeeders, corn crops, gardens, outdoor catfood or dogfood, and any other human luxury they can get their paws on.

Nothing is more memorable to a hunter than their first hunting trip, often squirrel hunting. The beauty of the sport is that the hunter can offer their skills to the younger hunting generations in temperate weather while the leaves begin to fall exposing the squirrels to offer a moderate, plentiful target.

continue to the next page

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Squirrels are hard to skin at first, but a well-developed skill in squirrel skinning will make it easier. After flipping the squirrel over and using a very sharp knife to process, cut the underside of the tale and cut the tailbone. Then cut a diameter of skin (resembles pants) around the squirrel's middle. Put the squirrel on the ground and step on the tail near the body. While you are holding the tail down, put up on the back legs and peel the skin up to the front legs like removing a shirt. Stop at the hands. Break the front legs and remove the skin, discarding it, and remove and discard the head. (Do not eat squirrel brain. It is unhealthy.) Then follow by working off the back half of the skin, completing the process by clipping off the legs.

To dress the squirrel, after the squirrel has had its skin taken off, flip the squirrel over in your

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hand so it's belly is up. Carefully cut from the rib cage to the pelvic bone, being especially careful not to nick the guts. At the base of the pelvic bone, split the bone in half, spread the back legs out, and pull all the entrails up against the upper body without removing them. Cut the arms off and put them in your meat container, which should be a salted cold water bath. Cut behind the ribs to the backbone on both sides to separate ribs from the meat bone. Discard the ribs and guts. Dress the remainder as preferred, typically separated in two


front legs, two back legs, and the saddle (back) piece. Be sure to look for and remove any pellet, shot, or BBs in the meat prior to cooking.

Most squirrel hunting involves two varieties of squirrel. Gray squirrels are early morning risers and run around right before the sun goes down, sometimes seen mid-day but not commonly. Fox squirrels run around from sunrise until about noon, rest in the heat of the day, and then run around again about dinner time. Squirrel hunting may be considered a guilty pleasure or just simply cruel, but without squirrel hunting, the population would inbreed and starve. Besides, fried squirrel is a delicious alternative to genetically modified macaroni and diseased beef!

Squirrels are abundant in West Virginia. Look for areas in the state with good food sources.



This angler landed a big Kanawha River catfish. Photo courtesy of Amish Country Store in Marmet.



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# Fishing For Bluegills

Bluegills are one of the most common game fish found in Iowa. Although primarily thought of as a pond and small lake fish, they are also abundant in natural lakes, large border rivers, and reservoirs. Bluegills are closely related to largemouth bass, and as you might expect, anywhere there are bass there is an excellent chance bluegills will be present.

Angler opinion polls conducted by the Department in the last decade have shown bluegills are one of the more popular fish in Iowa, especially in the southern part of the state. Not only is it a favorite, but its popularity has been steadily increasing until it currently ranks third in preference. Bluegills are moving towards the top of popularity charts for several reasons. They are quite easily caught, take great varieties of baits, are not particularly wary, are forgiving of a less than perfect fishing technique, fight very well for their size are exceptionally fine eating, and are extremely abundant in many ponds and lakes. In addition, bluegill can be caught with just about any tackle, from a simple cane pole to a sophisticated and expensive graphite flyrod. Finally, and most importantly, bluegill are just plain fun to catch.

Locating a Fishing Spot

Catching bluegills is easy, but

consistent catches of larger fish are more difficult. Large fish are not found in every body of water; therefore, it is important to locate ponds and lakes that contain bigger fish. You can find water with keeper bluegills by asking other anglers, conservation officers, area fisheries biologists, state and county park rangers, pond owners, or for that matter anyone that is familiar with the body of water in question. Don't be shy in asking for information; most anglers like to add a little spice to their reputation.

After finding waters that are known to harbor keepers, consistent catches will depend on your

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knowledge of the location and seasonal habits of the fish. Bluegill are not randomly distributed in a lake, but rather they concentrate into specific habitats, depending upon the season. To be successful you must learn to locate these concen-

continue to the next page



These guys had fun fishing on the New River for catfish. Photo courtesy of Three Rivers Edge in Hinton.

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trations of fish. The fact you caught fish in one area in the spring does not mean you will catch them in that location in mid-summer. In fact, the opposite is probably true; it would be surprising to find bluegill in the same location during two different seasons.

### Spring and Early Summer Fishing

Spring and summer is by far the best period to catch bluegills because they congregate in the shallows to spawn, become very aggressive, and are particularly easy to catch. The best method of determining this period of bluegill spawning activity is water temperature. Spawning activity peaks when the water temperature is 75 degrees F. This period usually corresponds closely with Memorial Day in Iowa. Fish a week or two before and after this holiday, and you will center the major spawning activity. It is often easy to spot the saucer-shaped depressions because bluegill build their nests in shallow water very close to shore. Carefully search water from 2 to 6 feet deep and locate a spawning bed. Male bluegills guarding nests are woefully easy to catch.

Although the same factors govern the spawning habits of bluegill, there may be great differences depending on habitat. In large rivers, like the Mississippi, the fish prefer to spawn among stumps and dead bottom-hugging trees and other quiet areas; commonly these are backwaters and sloughs. Here

they find habitats where the constant current will not disturb the nest. Current is not a major factor in natural lakes, ponds, and reservoirs, where males build their nests in shallow bays or along protected shorelines. In these habitats bluegill spawn among sticks, stumps, or thinly-spaced vegetation. A shallow flat adjacent to a flooded creek channel is also a good place to find spawning bluegill. Nearly all species of sunfish, which include bluegill, prefer a sand or gravel bottom for nest building, but lacking this habitat the nests will be fanned out of silty muddy bottom. Beds may be as small as 3 or 4 feet long and 4 feet across or as large as 25 feet across and 50 feet long, and a single bed may contain only a few nests or several hundred. By and large, spawning locations in large rivers are considerably smaller than those found in lakes and pond.

Fishing for bluegill that are guarding the nest is exciting. One of the best techniques is to wade or boat within easy casting distance of the nests and use a small lure or bait just below a small bobber. Cast a piece of worm, jig, or other bait

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beyond the bed and slowly retrieve it through the nesting area. Depth of the nests determines how deep to set the float. Fish close to the bottom, keep both lure and float as small as possible, and set the hook quickly, or the aggressive males will swallow the bait.

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Young Dalton Beaver had help with his dad in catching this 38 pound flathead catfish. *Photo courtesy of Backwater Bait in Newport, Ohio.*

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A bed of spawning bluegills can be a flyrod fisherman's dream. If the water is shallow enough, they will usually rise to hit poppers, especially in the evening. Otherwise wet flies or ultra-lite leadheads will take them from deeper beds.

Of the fish caught from nests, 95 percent will be males. The male fish is more vulnerable to catching because he builds the nest within a well-defined territory and aggressively protects the eggs against all intruders. Females are more often caught on casts into the adjacent, deep water. Many times they hang just off the spawning beds prior to inshore movement.

#### Late Summer Fishing

As the season progresses, small bluegill hatch and move away to feed. The adult male then abandons the nest to travel to deeper water for the summer. Many bluegill will spawn only once each season, but in waters not limited by overcrowding, some fish move back into the shallows in the late summer to spawn a second time. It often is rewarding to check spawn sites again during the summer for these multi-spawners.

Large river bluegill spend their summer in deeper water and congregate along undercut banks often favoring old, fallen trees. High water in spring-time and currents scour holes near the bank, often exposing a tangle of roots and other snags. The edge of lilly pads or other aquatic vegetation can also produce good catches of fiery bluegills.

Bluegill living in lakes, reservoirs, and ponds also move to deeper water during the hot days of summer. They can be found along the edges of weeds or in deep coves. Many times they are on humps or areas

that break into flooded creek channels or other deep water. Summer-time bluegill, especially the bigger ones, are usually found at depths ranging from 10 to 12 feet. There they suspend just above the thermocline. Man-made underwater objects also attract bluegill during the summer. Many lakes and reservoirs contain stake beds, brush shelters, tire reefs, and other fish attractors that have been placed in the water. These objects, in addition to boat docks or boats tied at one spot for several days, are pro-

ductive hangouts for bluegill.

To catch mid-summer bluegill, fish your favorite bait or lure in areas you think might concentrate the fish. On the Mississippi try the 10-foot water along undercut banks or near aquatic vegetation that crowds backwaters and near sunken trees. Working undercuts during summer is best accomplished from downstream. Cast upstream and allow the current to move your bait or lure through target habitat. Allowing the bait to move naturally is the key. It's best to use natural bait.

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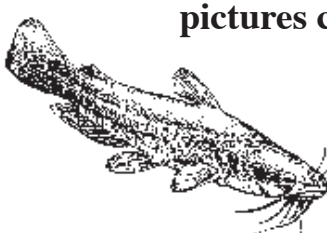
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