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**Vol. 1 Issue 184**

**Fall 2008**



***INSIDE THIS ISSUE***

**Hunting  
Tips**

**FLW  
News**

**DNR  
Updates**

**Outdoor Photos**



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**Volume 1 Issue 184**

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**Mark A. Goudy**

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## Cover Photo

Fishing at Burnsville Lake,  
Mike Drost, from French Creek,  
hooked two giant flathead cat-  
fish. Mike is also known for being  
one of the top knife makers in the  
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This magazine is on line [www.wvasportsman.net](http://www.wvasportsman.net) Photo courtesy  
of Drost Knives in French Creek.



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## 2008 Sportsman Of The Year

The 2008 Sportsperson of the Year Award and the Sportsman's Organization of the Year Award were announced by West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (DNR) Director Frank Jezioro on September 27 at West Virginia's Celebration of National Hunting and Fishing Days at Stonewall Resort State Park.

The 2008 Sportsperson of the Year Award was given to John Drangmeister of Hurricane – a long-standing member of the West Virginia Bowhunters Association. Drangmeister, an avid outdoorsman, has exposed many people to the pleasures of archery and bowhunting. "He is a patient and enthusiastic archery instructor, and his students enjoy learning to shoot bows under his guidance," Jezioro said. "John immensely enjoys seeing a young person hit a target, and

his own excitement and enthusiasm rub off on other children. He is the type of person who likes to see things get done. He is often the first to volunteer to help make things happen and never seeks any kind of personal recognition. His contribution to countless outreach events have ensured they successfully exposed as many people as possible to the joys of archery and other outdoor pursuits."

Over the years, Drangmeister has volunteered his time and skills in numerous ways. He served as the archery instructor for Becoming an Outdoor Woman classes for



Cathy Collier, from Cabin City, caught a wahoo in Jew Jersey.

Fall 2008 ~ Page 4

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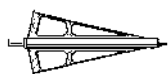
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the past six years and helped run the Youth Archery Alley at National Hunting and Fishing Days, reaching hundreds of youth each year. Drangmeister has mentored young archers at after-school programs, National Wild Turkey Federation (NYTF) JAKES Days, U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance Trailblazer Days, and numerous 4-H Camps, continue to the next page

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Sportsperson of the Year John Drangmeister, Sportsman's Organization of the Year representative Ed McMinn of the WV Bowhunters Assoc. and WV DNR Director Frank Jezioro

churches, and other facilities, and has volunteered at all Archery in the Schools State Tournaments – even pulling arrows in 2006 with a broken arm in a cast! “I sincerely appreciate the efforts of volunteers like John who expose others, especially young people, to the outdoors and outdoor pursuits,” said DNR Director Jezioro.

The 2008 Sportsman's Organization of the Year Award was given to the West Virginia Bowhunters Association. “The Association is an enthusiastic, but diverse, group of avid sportsmen,” Jezioro said. “They come from every corner

of the state, and when not helping with state youth, can be found pursuing trout in the winter, turkey in the spring, bass in the summer and bear in the fall. They have been a staunch ally of DNR's wildlife management activities and its charitable work, such as the Hunters Helping the Hungry Program. They

also were involved from the beginning with West Virginia's Archery in the Schools Program by purchasing the first training kit.”

The West Virginia Bowhunters Association has established an Archery in the Schools matching grant for new schools entering the pro-

continue to the next page

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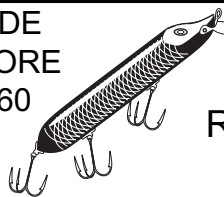


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Jamie Hanshaw caught a 43 pound catfish. Photo courtesy of Family Fishing in Grafton.

gram. They have mentored young archers at after-school programs, NWTF Jakes Days, US Sportsmen's Alliance Trailblazer Days, and numerous 4-H Camps, churches, and other facilities, and administered the Youth Archery Alley at National Hunting and Fishing Days for hundreds of youths. They have shown their generous spirit through donations to the Hunters Help-

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Glen Tusey hooked a 28 pound catfish. Photo courtesy of Family Fishing in Grafton.

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ing the Hungry Program and the DNR's bear study by purchasing radio telemetry equipment. "It has been a pleasure working with a private organization such as the West Virginia Bowhunters Association, which has made a commitment to encourage our youth to discover the outdoors and outdoor pursuits," said DNR Director Jezioro.

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## Pre-Season Scouting

The recent cool mornings are a sure indication that another hunting season is just around the corner. With the youth squirrel season less than a month away (October 4), it's time to begin preseason scouting by checking out the local woodlot for mast and wildlife sign.

Each year the mast conditions vary from species to species. Mast conditions are some of the main factors determining where wildlife will be found. West Virginia wildlife biologist and avid squirrel hunter Keith Krantz, stresses that "Large numbers of squirrels may be hard to locate due to the abundance of hickory we have this year. However, in areas with fewer hickories, squirrels may be either concentrated or have completely consumed the nut crop. In most areas, the oak mast seems to be spotty and sparse."

September is one of the most pleasant and beautiful times to be afield in West Virginia. It's a wonderful time to take the whole family for an afternoon walk. It's also a great opportunity to introduce youngsters to the outdoors. Identifying wildlife sign and learning tree species can be very beneficial

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for these future sportsmen. Take the time to explain the reasons for buck rubs and scrapes you may find on your journey. Be sure to check for soft mast also. Soft mast is sometimes overlooked when search-

ing for available foods. However, when hard mast is scarce, many animals rely on the berries of these species. Turkeys and bears are especially fond of grapes, gums and

continue to the next page



George Lambert, from Mullens, caught a 41" musky while fishing in the New River near Hinton.



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Young Catlin Morgan, from McGrawas, caught an 11 1/8 inch citation bluegill.

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Hunters are not the only West Virginians who benefit from deer harvested in the state. For the past 16 years, the Wildlife Resources

Section has sponsored the Hunters Helping the Hungry Program (HHH). Since its inception in 1992, hunter-donated venison has provided more than 850,000 meals for needy West Virginia families.

For more information about the HHH program or deer hunting sea-

sons and regulations, consult the 2008-2009 West Virginia Hunting and Trapping Regulations Summary brochure available at all DNR Offices and license agents or visit the DNR Web site at [www.wvdnr.gov](http://www.wvdnr.gov). Have a safe and successful hunting season.

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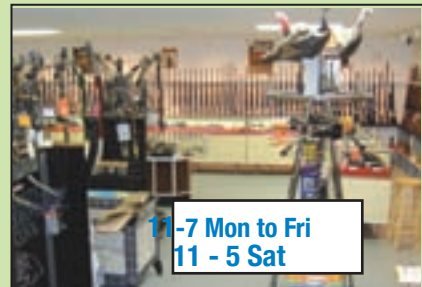
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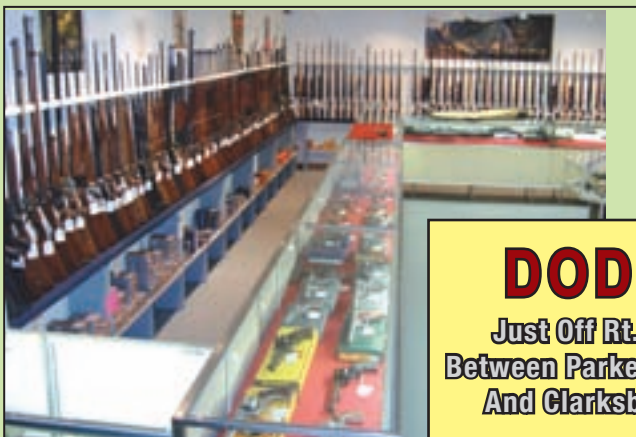
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Bud Six reeled in a 39 3/4 pound catfish. Photo courtesy River-Side Bait in Hockingport, Ohio.



Young Avery Berga, with Brad Berga, caught a bass. Photo courtesy of Backwater Bait in Newport, Ohio.



Sid Schneeberger landed a 6 pound, 5 oz. farm pond bass. Photo courtesy of Starcher's Sport Shop in Lubeck.

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Clarence Richardson took this nice Canadian black bear. It green scored 18 3/8 Pope & Young. Photo courtesy of Team Buckhorn in Princeton.

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Archers from the Wood County area participated in the IBO World Shoot in New York recently. From the left: Rodney Epling - 1st Youth Male Release, Dave Wallace - 1st Long Bow, Mike VanFossen - 2nd Advanced Hunter, Randy Irvine - 1st Recurve Unaided, Randy Epling - 2nd Recurve Unaided, Amy Wenmoth - 1st Pro Female, and Penny Law - 3rd Female Hunter. Photo courtesy of Boone's Bow Shop in Parkersburg.

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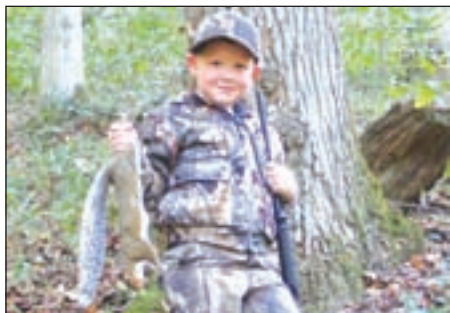
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Justin Bunner used a trot line to catch these catfish. *Photo courtesy of Hobert's Store in Big Bend.*



Andrew Crowder, from Charleston, bagged a squirrel on Youth Day.



Sid Fry hooked a big catfish. *Photo courtesy of Catfish Cove in Hurricane.*

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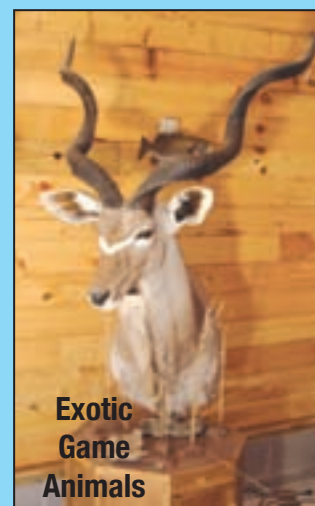


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Danny Harper hooked a large Stonewall Jackson Lake bass and released it. *Photo courtesy of Loyd's Hardware in Flatwoods.*

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## Think Smallies

The older I get, the more I think about when I was young. I guess that makes sense since the older I get the more I have to remember and think back on.

Some of my favorite memories are also some of the oldest — me and my father going fishing in the little creeks and streams near our home in southern Kentucky. We used to wade around casting for crappie and perch and whatever else would bite. Sometimes we got really lucky and caught some smallmouths. Those catches were the most memorable of all.

But it's not just the fishing I remember. Another thing that has stuck with me all these years is the time and effort spent in preparing to go fishing. We all know that you can't just "go" fishing. There's a lot more preparation than there is "go"



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when it comes to a fishing trip.

For those early trips that I took with my dad, there was quite a lot of preparation. For one thing, I had to catch the minnows that we used for bait. These were usually trapped or netted from a creek smaller than the ones we fished. The process of catching the bait always seemed to last a lot longer than the actual fishing, but when you're a kid and there's fishing at the end of the tunnel, no chore is too tough or too long.

After catching the bait and put-  
continue to the next page



Josh Compton, from Ellenboro, caught two nice salmon in Alaska.

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ting it in the bucket, I also had the task of fixing our lunch for the day and putting some drinks in the cooler. In fact, when I think about it, it seems my dad made me do everything to get ready for our fishing trips. Even when we walked from the car to the creek I remember that I was the one doing all the carrying while he was taking it pretty easy!

Of course, I'm not complaining. It was good training for all the fishing trips that I'd take in the years since then. It taught me to respect the process as much as the experience and to understand what it takes to just "go" fishing.

The hours we spent on those small streams were irreplaceable. It was not only bonding time for us, but it was also like time spent in a fishing classroom. I learned every inch of those streams, where the fish lived, where they ate and what they ate.

I think stream fishing is probably the very best way to get into the sport, even now. There's just nothing like it.

For one thing, the fish are just a little bit trapped. Their environment is pretty small. A creek is nothing like a giant lake with hundreds of feet of water beneath you and thousands of surface acres around you.

On a little stream, the fish are either in the shallow riffles or the deep pools. They're either holding next to some big rocks or an overhanging branch. They'll either re-

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spond to a grasshopper struggling across the surface or a hellgrammite tumbling across the bottom.

Smaller really is better, sometimes.

Not only did we have lots of fish confined to a relatively small area, but we could occasionally see the fish and watch what they were doing. It was like a classroom that you never wanted to leave.

And unlike today when I typically carry a dozen or more rods and reels and enough lures to stock a tackle shop, we used very basic equipment and just a few lures ... when we weren't fishing with live

continue to the next page



Amy Wemoth, Mathews Factory Pro Staff, won the Pro Female World IBO Championship in New York. Photo courtesy of Boones Bow Shop in Parkersburg.



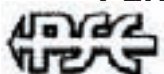
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bait.

It was a simpler time, a simpler style of fishing and a very basic introduction to a sport that has been very good to me for a long time.

Even though I spend most of my fishing time on a big man-made reservoir today, I've never forgotten what I learned on those little streams or the time I got to spend with my dad.

I wish everyone could start their fishing on one of the streams I fished as a kid.

Until next time, if you have any questions or comments, I'd love to hear from you. Please e-mail me at [Stephen@thesmallmouthguru.com](mailto:Stephen@thesmallmouthguru.com).

Have Fins Will Travel



Young Hayden Mattison hooked a bass in a farm pond. Photo courtesy of Justins Fishing & Hunting in Huntington.

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A question I get asked a lot at seminars is also one that keeps me thinking. Different folks will ask it different ways, but it usually goes something like this:

"How far do smallmouth bass travel? I was really on 'em last week, and then yesterday I pulled into the same area and they were completely gone! What happened?"

It's a great question, and I wish I had an answer that was worthy of it, but I'm afraid we still don't have enough information to answer that one with a lot of certainty. So, until we find ways to get a lot more information or find a bass that can talk, we'll just have to speculate and use our best judgment on what's really happening.

My friend, the great Billy Westmorland, used to tell me that smallmouths were homebodies. He believed they staked out a home area and stayed there. He thought this was especially true with really big bass.

But telemetry (a fancy word that

means they tagged them with a transmitter of some kind) studies by the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency indicate that smallmouths move around quite a bit. What's more, their studies showed that the bigger the smallmouth, the more she traveled!

These studies were done in the mid-1990s, well before Billy passed away in 2001, and when he heard about them, he pretty much just laughed and decided those biologists had no idea what they were talking about. He figured the only way those bass moved that much (up to 25 miles in a year) was in somebody's livewell.

I'm not so sure, and I'm definitely not as quick to ignore the results of scientific research as Billy was.

The way I see it, there probably  
continue to the next page

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I'm not so sure, and I'm definitely not as quick to ignore the results of scientific research as Billy was.

The way I see it, there probably are some smallies that roam that much in a year, just as there are some folks who will drive across town to eat a burger they could have cooked at home. Luckily, I'm not trying to catch one individual bass that may be here today and two miles away tomorrow. I'm looking for all the bass I can find, and the bigger the better, but I'm mostly happy that those bass can only be one place at a time. So all I really have to do is find the spots that hold the fish.

I don't care if the bass I'm casting to was in that spot yesterday or if he was all the way across the lake, and neither should you. If he's there, I intend to catch him. And if I can't catch him after a reasonable try or two or three, then I'm going

to move on — not because I don't think he's not there, but because I've lost confidence that he's there or that I can get him to bite. Once that happens, it's time to move on.

So how do you put those odds in your favor? It's really not that tough. The way I do it is to find those spots that have everything a bass could want — access to deep water, lots of cover, plenty of forage and close proximity to good spawning areas. If you can find a couple of these spots on your favorite smallmouth waters, you'll have places where you can catch bass — including really good ones — all year long.

Whether they're holding bass that live there all year long or just vacationers from up at the dam hardly matters. If you find one of these "year-round" type areas, you're in business.

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*Gene and Roseanna Hines*

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continue to the next page

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• Where will they spawn? Are there some shallow flats with gravel that will hold the spawners?

• What about the food source, is this an area that will provide a variety of forage — from crawfish to baitfish?

If you can answer all those questions satisfactorily, you've found a potential gold mine. All you have to do is start eliminating the options — shallow or deep, rocky cover or grass, fast baits or slow — until you start getting some data back from the fish in the form of bites.

Now that's the kind of scientific research I love! Stephen Hedrick is a well-know smallmouth bass expert.

## Additional Land At Sandhill Area

An additional 1,020 acres have been added to the Sand Hill Wildlife Management Area, according to West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (WVDNR) Director Frank Jezioro. Heirs of the Dennis O'Brien Estate agreed to lease the acreage to the Wood County Parks and Recreation Commission and in turn, through Mountwood Park, lease the property to the WVDNR so the public can use the additional acreage for hunting and other recreational activities.

"All of the current parties realized that the public would be better served if the land was incorporated into the adjacent Sand Hill Wildlife Management Area," Jezioro said. The original 967 acres were leased from CNG Transmission Corporation in 1997 and have been managed as a Wildlife Management Area since that time.

The Sand Hill Wildlife Management Area is located on either side of U.S. Route 50 approximately 12 miles east of Parkersburg and lies

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both in Ritchie and Wood Counties. Several portions of the WMA share common boundaries with Wood County's Mountwood Park. This new lease increases the size of the area to 1,987 acres. Plans are underway to begin boundary marking and road closures so that the new acreage will be available for hunting this fall. Users are reminded that ATV's and permanent tree stands are not permitted on Wildlife Management Areas.

"This property is an important supplement to West Virginia Division of Natural Resources system of Wildlife Management Areas," Jezioro said.

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Curtis Boggs hooked a 43" New River musky. Photo courtesy of Richmond's Store in Sandstone.



Dennis McGlothlin caught a large smallmouth. Photo courtesy of Wright's Riverside Marine in St. Marys.

**Mail In Your BIG FISH Pictures  
From The 2008 Season.  
Form Is On Page 38**



Josh Murray hooked a huge king salmon from the Niagara River. Photo courtesy of Starcher's Sport Shop in Lubeck.

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Mike Drost landed a 46 pound Burnsville Lake flathead. *Photo courtesy of Drost Knives - French Creek.*

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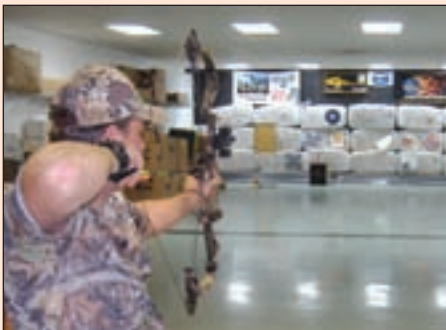
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Wes McPherson took this big buck last year. Photo courtesy of Team Buckhorn in Princeton.



Larry Leason caught a 29 pound flathead catfish. Photo courtesy of Family Fishing in Grafton.



Rodney Starcher hooked a large catfish. Photo courtesy Starcher's Sport Shop in Lubeck.

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# Small Game Season Begins

Hunting for small game in West Virginia began October 11, 2008, with the opening of squirrel season. "Squirrel season is very popular with many West Virginia sportsmen. It is a time when hunters can participate in one of their favorite sports and also enjoy the fall beauty of the Mountain State," said Curtis I. Taylor, Chief of the Division of Natural Resources' Wildlife Resources Section.

Last year's hard mast production was down slightly from the previous year but was still good enough to reduce overwinter squirrel mortality and sustain adequate

reproduction. A recent mast survey conducted by the Division of Natural Resources (DNR) indicates that statewide hickory and walnut production this summer was better than last year. These factors should provide good hunting opportunities for gray and fox squirrels this fall. Some pre-season scouting to locate areas containing favored foods of squirrels will ensure successful hunting. The daily bag limit for squirrels is six.

The ruffed grouse season opens on October 18 and closes on February 28, 2009. Brood counts for ruffed grouse were considerably lower this summer than in recent years. Grouse hunters should look for areas that provide ample cover and soft mast species such as grape, hawthorn, dogwood, and green-brier. Mast survey results indicate that all of these species produced well this summer. The daily bag limit for grouse is four.

Hunting season for raccoons will open October 18, 2008, at 6 p.m.



Jesse Fury took an early season black bear in Fayette County.

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and continues through February 28, 2009. Favorable mast conditions in recent years have allowed raccoon populations to increase. Food is again plentiful this year. Hunters, and their hounds, should have a very successful season. Raccoon continue to the next page



Matt Frances hooked a 11 pound, 9 oz. hybrid bass. Photo courtesy of Starcher's Sport Shop in Lubeck.

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Raccoon hunters are reminded that the daily bag limit is four.

Opening day of cottontail rabbit season is November 1, 2008. Rabbit populations should be similar to last year. Old fields and brushy pastures are the best habitat types in which to rabbit hunt. Snowshoe hare, bobwhite quail, bobcat, red fox, and gray fox hunting seasons also open November 1, 2008. Hunters should be aware of daily bag limits and season possession limits for each species.

November 1, 2008, marks the opening of trapping season for furbearing animals in West Virginia. Populations of beaver, bobcat, fox, mink, and raccoon are high, and



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trappers should be very successful. Trappers are reminded that season closing dates vary for the various species.

For more complete information on season dates and bag limits, consult the 2008-2009 Hunting and Trapping Regulations available at all hunting and fishing license agents, DNR District Offices and the DNR Web site, [www.wvdnr.gov](http://www.wvdnr.gov).



Ryan Meadows caught a 41" and a 51" gar in Tennessee. Photo courtesy of Cardinal Pawnbrokers in Beckley.



Dwayne Fury, Jef Fleshman and Tracy Groves had early season black bear success in Fayette County.

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## Bird Strike At School

Early on the morning of September 29, 2008, a large bird kill at the Tucker County High School near Hambleton, West Virginia, was reported to Division of Natural Resources personnel. DNR Wildlife Resources Section (WRS) biologists, along with conservation officers, representatives from the Tucker County Health Department, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the U.S. Forest Service responded to the report and found evidence of a large bird strike at the school.

Officials recovered 501 birds representing 31 species at the site. Seven birds recovered and were released alive. The remaining 494 specimens were collected and identified by WRS biologists. More than 80 percent of the birds were warblers. Bird banders from the Allegheny Front Migratory Observatory and Powdermill Nature Reserve verified the identifications.

Officials collected the majority of the birds along or near the outside walls of the school and from the school roof. Some specimens were also collected from the adjacent parking areas and athletic field. All evidence was consistent with a large scale collision event. Initial speculation suggested that disease and/or poisoning caused the deaths, but no evidence supports this claim.

Additionally, as part of standard procedure, sample specimens of officials from the West Virginia Department of Health and U.S. Department of Agriculture tested



Travis Lough, from Weston, hooked a 15 pound carp.

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sample specimens for both West Nile Virus and Avian Influenza. All samples tested negative for both  
continue to the next page



Chris & Josh Waldron caught some catfish. Photo courtesy of Burnsville Docks on the lake.



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diseases. An additional sample was sent to the Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Laboratory in Athens, Georgia, for necropsy. All specimens examined at this facility exhibited trauma consistent with a bird strike, including extensive hemorrhage, and fractured skulls, wings and legs.

Officials from the WRS and the USFWS are working with the Tucker County School Board of Education and Allegheny Power to remedy the situation at the Tucker County High School. They will modify existing lighting to make the site less attractive to migratory birds. The site will be monitored for additional mortality for the remaining 2008 migratory period and



Jon Bush hooked a 32 1/4 pound flathead. *Photo courtesy of River-Side Bait in Hockingport.*

this monitoring effort is planned to continue into future years.

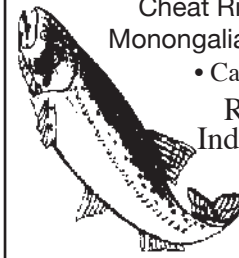
The peak of neotropical songbird migration occurs in late September and early October and is concentrated along mountain ridges. Large bird strikes like the Tucker County High School event are not uncommon throughout North America during this time frame.

Events like these occur when several environmental conditions occur simultaneously in proximity to a lighted man-made structure. These conditions typically include dense fog, southerly winds and a dome of artificial light surrounding a structure. The event can be further amplified by a period of rain prior to the event that concentrates birds by delaying migration.

This was the case with the Tucker County event. Three days of rain prior to September 29 were followed by a passing cold front that generated southerly winds and ideal migration conditions. These birds headed south, encountered dense fog along Backbone Mountain, were attracted by the dome of light

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surrounding the school, became disoriented, and began to circle the structure, crashing into windows and the outside walls. Some birds may have died from exhaustion from constant circling.

Similar events have been documented in West Virginia in the past. Forty birds of 14 species died on October 5, 1999, in Monterville in Randolph County; and at Snowshoe Mountain Resort in Pocahontas County on October 15, 1985, officials collected 1,336 birds of 30 species.

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The course features 15 - 21 targets made of foam and plastic replicating wildlife game species found in West Virginia along a quarter mile

designated trail. Represented species include whitetail deer, bear, wild boar, turkey fox, raccoon, groundhog and coyote.

"Targets are laid out in a variety of settings and positions, providing easy shots for beginners and more challenging poses and distance for advanced archers," says Brad Reed, Assistant Superintendent. The archery course is located adjacent to the Wobble Clay Shooting Range. A fee is charged for this activity and reservations are required.

Hours of operation are from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. through October 17 and from December 1, 2008 to May 25, 2009. The course is open Sundays only from October 18 to November 30. The course range use is by reservation. There is a maximum limit of five individuals per reservation.

"A small number of shooters per reservation creates a good sport experience and promotes a safer shooting environment," Reed ex-  
continue to the next page



Ronnie Hunt has a mess of fish.  
Photo courtesy of Jarrett's Bait in Elizabeth.

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plains. He says the course is ideal for archery clubs and individuals with archery equipment who want to improve field skills.

Cacapon Resort currently offers many outdoor recreation opportunities including: 18-hole Robert Trent Jones, Sr. golf course; hiking trails; horseback riding; and Wobble Clay Trap Shooting Range. The park is located near Berkeley Springs in Morgan County accessible via Route 522. For information about Cacapon Resort and 3-D archery go online, [www.cacapon-resort.com](http://www.cacapon-resort.com) and click on "things to do." Question and answer pages are posted for both Wobble Trap Range and 3-D Archery. For lodging, special events, trap or 3-D range reservations or additional information, phone: (304) 258-1022.

#### Additional Information

- Reservations are required and may be made up to 30 days in advance. A \$7 fee is required to hold a reservation. Call (304) 258-1022 to make reservations.
- The archery range is open seven days a week from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. from September 1 through October 17 and December 1 through May 25. From October 18 through November 30, it is open Sundays only from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. during the prime archery hunting season

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- A fee of \$7 per person per hour is charged for range use. A maximum of five people may participate in one reservation/round. Special arrangements for different times and group sizes may be made by contacting the park superintendent in advance.
- All ages are permitted, but chil-

dren under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult age 18 or older.

- Customers must provide their own archery equipment, and it must be cased at all times when not in use on the range. No firearms are permitted on the archery range.
- Compound, longbow and recurve bows are allowed on the range. Broad head tipped arrows are not allowed. Only arrows tipped with field or target points are permitted. Cross bows are allowed only for people possessing a current and valid Class Q (handicapped) hunting permit.



Jon Martin shot a coyote. *Photo courtesy of Starcher's Sport Shop in Lu-beck.*



Pual Hinzman, from Sandyville, shot this 11 point last year.



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Cody Farley hooked a 29 pound fish. Photo courtesy of Catfish Cove in Hurricane.



Jack Rowe has a nice smallmouth. Photo courtesy of Richmond's Store in Sandstone.

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Mike Drost caught a big catfish at Burnsville Lake. Photo courtesy of Drost Knives in French Creek.

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Harold Plumley reeled in a 34 pound catfish at this popular pay lake. *Photo courtesy of Catfish Cove in Hurricane.*

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W. Va. Sportsman - Rates Are On Page 3**



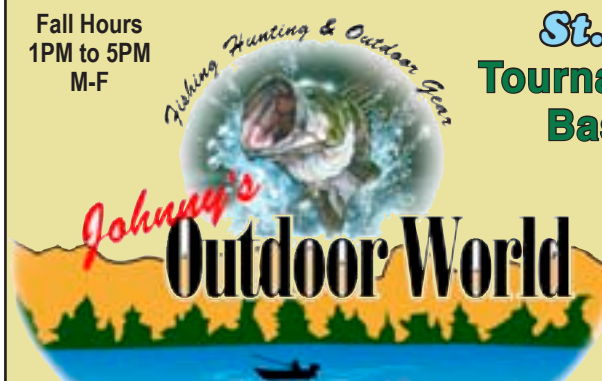
Chuck Mills hooked this 50 3/4' musky in Canada on a rooster tail with 6# test line. *Photo courtesy of Holbert's Store in Big Bend.*

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Darrel Brown landed a long flathead catfish at Burnsville Lake. *Photo courtesy of Burnsville Docks at the lake.*



Young Dylan Nichols, from St. Marys, used a bow for this fish.

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Clint Mills landed a 50 1/2" Stone-wall Jackson Lake musky. *Photo courtesy of Hobert's Store in Big Bend.*



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Megan Smith hooked an Ohio River walleye. Photo courtesy of Starcher's Sport Shop in Lubeck.



A nice 39 3/4 pound catfish was landed. Photo courtesy of River-Side Bait in Hockingport.



Brian Ward caught a hybrid. Photo courtesy of Three Rivers Edge in Hinton.



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Mario Mayle landed a 40 pound flathead at this popular pay lake. Photo courtesy of Family Fishin In Grafton.

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# Helpful Deer Methods

1 Start looking for antler sheds soon after the season is over. Some bucks may not drop their antlers until March, but others lose them sooner. Also, look for sign as clues that you must then put together like pieces of a puzzle to form a complete picture of a deer's movement pattern. Use a topographic map and mark the location of any sheds that you may find on the map. Also take a small notebook with you to describe any rack you may find. You should also mark down trail locations, rub lines, beds, scrapes, and any deer sightings. Doing this type of research will give you a good idea of where to hunt the following season along with a better understanding of the deer's move-



Danny Lusk bagged a nice caribou.  
*Photo courtesy of the Team Buckhorn in Princeton.*

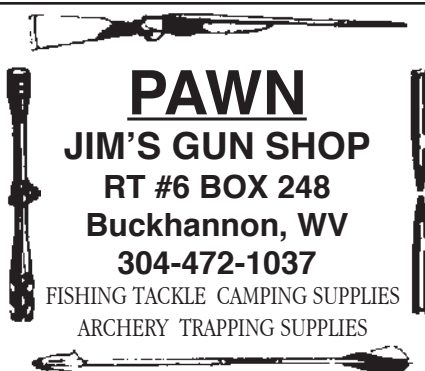
ments.

2 The best time to scout for next hunting season is from January through March. You can move freely through the woods without any worry of disturbing any deer that you wouldn't want to spook before the season begins. Even if you jump a buck and it runs off, it will have plenty of time to forget about you and return to the area before next fall. Sign also stands out more clearly now than in the thick, bright foliage of late summer and fall. Again, take plenty of notes.

3 Old overgrown homesites are magnets for deer, particularly if they are not easy to find. brush and weeds will have grown up, offering plenty of cover; saplings provide browse; overgrown fields harbor forbs and other food and there is often a fruit tree or two with just enough apples left to keep that old buck happy.

4 When you are out in the woods doing your pre season scouting, carry a pair of shears with you and clip away any saplings and branches that might be in the way once you decide on a stand site. Also, snip any brush or remove brittle branches that might make noise as you hike to your stand location. Since you will probably be entering the woods well before daylight the quieter your approach the better.

5 Never shoot the first buck you see entering a field or passing along a trail if you hope to tag a deer



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with a good sized rack. Smaller, younger animals will often move into an area before the larger deer come out to feed. This is usually just before the end of legal shooting time. Patience is a virtue and it sometimes pays off.

6 If you plan to have your deer mounted, never drag it by the back legs. this will bend the hair against the grain and may damage it.

7 Many hunters know that deer move heavily in front of an approaching storm. Few realize that much of this activity takes place six to eighteen hours before the storm arrives. During the final few hours before the storm they'll often be bedded down in thick cover. The lesson here is: be out from half to a full day before the storm arrives.

8 Scrapes are good locations to hunt any time just before or during the rut. A particularly good time to set up an ambush down wind of these pawed out oval area, however, is after a rain. The rain washes away the buck's urine and glandular scents and the deer will usually return to freshen it.

continue to the next page

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scents and the deer will usually return to freshen it.

9 Trails leading to and from bedding and feeding areas are good bets for deer stands, and the intersection of two heavily used trails is usually a good spot. If you are looking for a large buck, however, check areas 30 to 80 yards off to the side of the major trails in thicker cover or steeper terrain to hunt. While the does and yearling bucks travel the heavily used trails the larger antlered bucks will often sneak along back in thicker cover off to the side. These trails won't show signs of heavy wear, but a few large hoof prints or saplings with the bark rubbed off can give away their locations.

10 Hunting in the snow can be excellent if it is a fairly light snowfall and not very windy or cold. Deer will move more freely and they are easier to see. The snow also helps you move quietly as you hunt through the woods. In major snowstorms and bitter cold temperatures the deer will bed down in thick cover and won't move much until the weather breaks, this is a good time to be in the woods as the deer will begin to feed to make up for the time lost during the severe

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weather.

11 If you are hunting with a black-powder rifle and plan to use it the next day it is a good idea to leave it on a back porch or in a shed. If you bring it inside the sudden temperature change in a heated house can cause condensation to form and the moisture may dampen the charge and cause a misfire.

12 Islands in river and lakes can be hotspots for deer, especially late in the season after there has been a lot of hunting pressure on the nearby mainland.


13 There is no need to whoop and holler while putting on a deer drive. Quiet drives can be much more effective. A group of hunters walking slowly through cover will push deer out to the hunters on stand. The deer will be much more likely to be moving at a slower pace or sneaking along at a fast walk instead of running at full speed. This means that the hunters on stand may get easier shots. Also, the drivers may get a shot at a deer sneaking away from them. Remember to be positive of your target and anything beyond your target before you shoot. Once fired the bullet cannot be retrieved.

14 A good idea if you plan on trying to rattle in a buck is to paint your rattling antlers fluorescent orange. This will prevent other, careless, hunters from seeing the antlers and thinking that they see a buck. For  
continue to the next page



These young fellows caught a mess of fish. Photo courtesy of Jarrett's Bait in Elizabeth.

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safety's sake, please avoid trying to rattle in a deer in highly pressured hunting areas. The technique is rarely effective in this situation. Think safety first.

## Hunters Helping The Hungry

The Division of Natural Resources (DNR) extends an invitation to all West Virginia hunters, churches, and the general public to help support DNR's charitable Hunters Helping the Hungry (HHH) Program, according to DNR's HHH Program Coordinator Jerry Westfall. The HHH Program allows hunters to donate legally-harvested deer to certified processors so the meat can be donated to soup kitchens, food pantries, shelters, senior centers, missions, churches, and community centers around the state. The HHH program has been highly successful since it began in 1992, providing more than 850,000 meals to the neediest of West Virginians. However, because of processing and distribution costs, the program also requires cash donations to benefit these needy individuals.

Since 1999, the West Virginia Council of Churches has sponsored the Share the Harvest Sunday to raise funds for the HHH Program. This year, on Sunday, November

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Bob Whetzel  
Taxidermist

2, approximately 3,000 churches will be asking members of their congregation to contribute \$1, \$5, or whatever they can afford to the HHH Program. "Many churches around the state should receive a personalized letter asking them for voluntary donations from their congregation during this Sunday," noted Westfall. "However because the church database may not include every church in the state, we ask any church not receiving this solicitation letter to consider taking up an offering for the HHH Program. This donation can be mailed directly to the HHH Program. Churches can take up an offering any time, not just Share the Harvest Sunday, and submit this at a later date.

"The general public also may submit monetary donations to HHH Program at any time," noted Westfall. "We accept these donations throughout the year. Without the continued financial assistance of churches, hunters and the general

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public, together with the generous deer donations of some hunters, this program can not continue. Because the HHH Program can not use sportsmen's license dollars to pay for processing/distribution costs, it is entirely dependent on monetary donations, together with some grant funding. It is rewarding to know your donations are directly benefiting the neediest of West

continue to the next page



Jeff Hardy took a quality caribou. Photo courtesy of Team Buckhorn in Princeton.

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Virginians by providing them with highly nutritious meals."

To make a monetary donation to the HHH Program, visit online [www.wvdnr.gov](http://www.wvdnr.gov) (under Hunting click Hunters Helping the Hungry) or contact Billie Shearer at (304) 558-2771; [billieshearer@wvdnr.gov](mailto:billieshearer@wvdnr.gov). Hunters also may consult the Web site for certified processor locations around the state. For HHH Program general information consult the Web site or contact the Program Coordinator, Jerry Westfall, at (304) 558-2771; [jerrywestfall@wvdnr.gov](mailto:jerrywestfall@wvdnr.gov).

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John Murray hooked a nice King Salmon. Photo courtesy of Starcher's Sport Shop in Lubeck.

## Venison On Your Dinner Plate

Venison is a very flavorful meat, but if it tastes too gamy or too strong then it's probably not been properly cared for between the woods and the table. Bucks that are taken during the high point of the rut will have a wilder flavor that a young, un-aroused one, or a doe. Sometimes the bucks that you think will have the toughest meat, the old grey furred ones, will be the best eating ever. It has to do with when you cook down the animal and the meat. This is why field dressing the animal where it falls is necessary.

Most local law regarding deer hunting requires that you tag the animal as soon as you kill it. The next thing you need to do is the seal off the vent in which the feces escapes. You do this by coring around at the anal opening and pulling it out enough to tie it off with a string. From there you remove the sexual organs without piercing the bladder or intestines and without cutting into the body cavity itself. A good, sharp, thin bladed knife is the best thing to use and you never want to

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make deep cuts. Shallow cuts for this are all that is needed.

To continue field dressing your deer, slice from a few inches ahead of the rectum upwards to the sternum. Use the whole of the blade and not just the tip. When the opening is big enough and the intestines begin to bulge out, use your free hand to push the entrails back into the body cavity and away from the cut you just made. Flip your knife around so that the blade is not up and slide slowly and carefully ahead of the hand holding the deer guts in the body. When you reach the bottom of the sternum, stop.

Now you need to find the deer's bladder. When you do, cut the ligaments and tendons around it until it comes loose and then remove it carefully, preferably without spilling any of the contents on the meat. Pull the rectum that you tied off

continue to the next page

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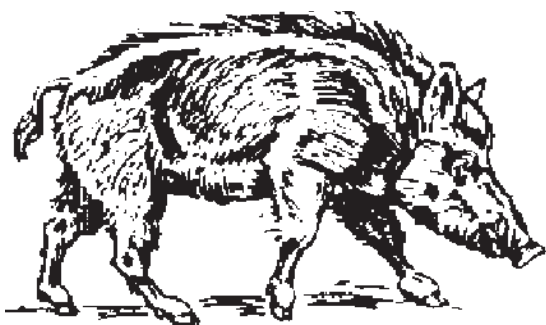


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back up into the body and cut away all the tissue that is holding the entrails in place from the abdominal walls. Make sure you do this for both sides of the animal for that the guts will come free easily. Cut the esophagus just above the stomach, and then work the entrails out of the body cavity with your hands onto the ground. If you want to save the liver and kidneys to enjoy later on, let them cool and then place them into a plastic bag to bring home. Finally, cut through the diaphragm that separates the chest and the abdomen. Reach up into the deer as far as possible to cut through the windpipe and the gullet. Grab a hold of the tubes and pull them free bringing the heart and the lungs with you. If you are going to eat the heart, add it to the bag with the other organs. Roll the animal over

and let an excess blood that accumulated while you working on the innards drip out onto the ground. Remember being a deer hunter means taking the deer down humanely. If you shot it and it doesn't go do it is your job to track the deer and finish the shot. You owe the deer that much!



Joey Lilly caught a 4 pound, 6 oz. smalleye. *Photo courtesy of Three Rivers Edge in Hinton.*



Dana Bush caught a 25 pound flathead in the Ohio River. *Photo courtesy of River-Side Bait in Hockingport.*

**Advertise In The  
W. Va. Sportsman - Page 3**

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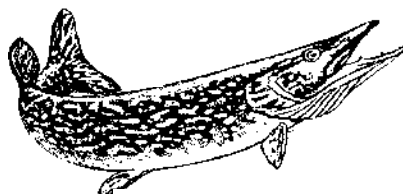
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