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Issue 323

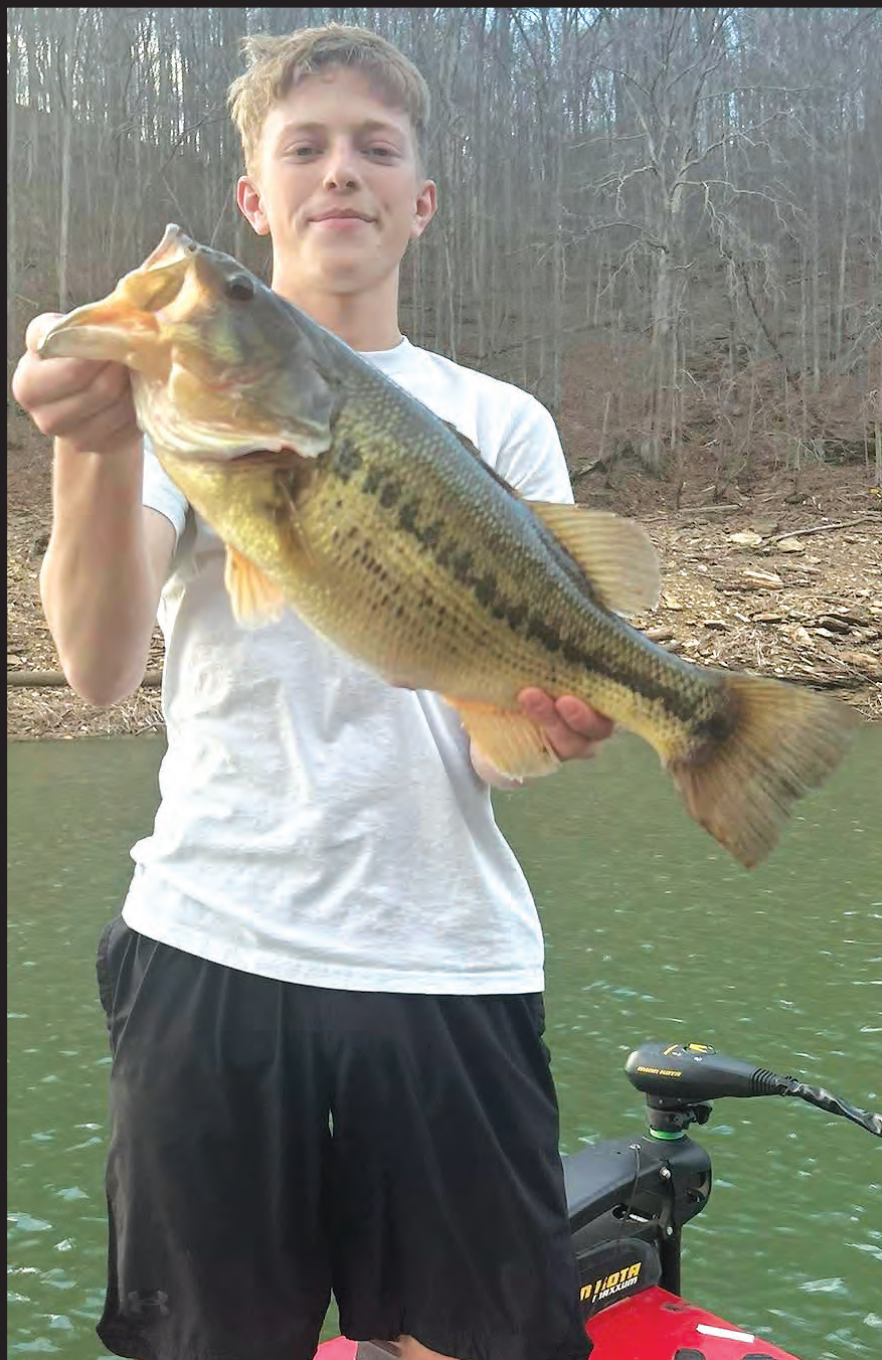
April/May 2025

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Cover Photo

17 year old Aidan Crockett, from Braxton County, landed a 6 pound even largemouth bass at Sutton Lake recently. He and his younger brother Isaiah have fished in numerous national youth bass events. His father, Johnny, has taught his sons well. Fishing season has started. Good luck to all anglers.

We are looking for big game pics. Form is on page 38.

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CWD Containment Areas

The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (WVDNR) announced today the expansion of the Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Containment Area after the detection of CWD in a Grant County deer.

“Grant County has been part of the CWD containment Area since 2015 because of its proximity to affected counties,” said Paul Johansen, chief of the WVDNR’s Wildlife Resources Section. “While there is no evidence that CWD is harmful to humans, it is important that hunters abide by the carcass transport regulations to reduce risk factors that may affect our deer population.”



Alan White, from West Union, caught a nice March largemouth.

Grant County is the first new county where CWD has been detected in wild deer in the state since 2023, when cases were identified in Jefferson County. Previously, CWD cases were detected in Berkeley, Mineral, Morgan, Hardy and Hampshire counties.

To reduce the risk of further disease spread, the WVDNR has implemented restrictions on baiting and feeding deer and on transporting high-risk carcass parts out of the CWD containment area. Transport restrictions for Grant County will take effect during the 2025 deer hunting season.

Additionally, as a proactive measure, baiting restrictions will be implemented in Pendleton County during the 2025 deer hunting season. Feeding restrictions are currently in effect. While CWD has not been detected in Pendleton County, its close proximity to known cases of the disease makes risk mitigation efforts critical.

The WVDNR continues to offer free CWD testing to hunters who harvest deer in the CWD Containment Area during all deer seasons. For questions about CWD, regulations and testing contact the WVDNR District 2 office at 304-822-3551.

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Before I tell you my story, I need these?
to tell you my dad's story. Who would ever think, you could have so much fun out of a dead rattlesnake.

When I was a teenager, my dad brought me home some rattlers, off of a rattlesnake.

My dad worked most of his life as a mine foreman in the coal mines, he always had wild stories of things happening in and around the mines. As a young man, this was exciting to me!

This particular day, when I received the rattlers, I asked him, how in the world did you get

Dad said, well we had this guy at work, and he was always pulling pranks on the men. For instance, this guy would bring two slices of bread to work. Then he would take a bucket of grease, and spread grease on them, and make a grease sandwich. Then, he would take someone's bucket, take the good sandwich out, and put the grease sandwich in.

In the mines it's dark, and you just feel around in your bucket and pull out a sandwich, unwrap it and start eating. Dad said, well can you imagine taking a bite of that sandwich, trying to get the taste of grease out of your mouth?

He said, well I had enough, I was waiting just for the right situation and sure enough today was the day. I was going to work this morning and there, lying in the road, was a dead rattlesnake.

By Don Lilly - Sutton, WV

This is what I had been waiting on. The guy that made the grease sandwich, was scared to death of rats and snakes, today was the day of reckoning.

He said, I took the rattlers off the snake and put them in my pocket. I put the snake in a sack and took it to the mines. When no one was looking, I took everything out of his bucket, and replaced it with

conintue to the next page



Josh Murray landed an Ohio River hybrid bass.

A hybrid is a cross between a white bass and a striped bass. Notice the broken lines towards the bottom of the side. Easy to tell.



Drexel Cline caught a 7 lb., 3 oz. rainbow trout in Wyoming Co.

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that huge coiled up dead rattler.

Now, all Dad had to do, was wait for lunch time. When lunch time came, and he put his hand inside, he felt around and said, what did my wife pack in my bucket? He held his bucket out in front of him so his head lamp light would shine inside. As soon as his light hit that snake.

Dad shouted, there's a rattle-snake, and shook those rattlers at the same time.

The man threw his bucket across the mine and took off running. Dad said, we very caught him before he left the mine.

I asked dad, what did the guy say. Dad said, well he never made anymore grease sandwich's.

For a boy, I loved that story. The best part, dad gave me the rattlers, there were 13 rattlers and a but-

ton. I had a lot of fun taking them to school, scaring all my friends with them.

I lived in Paint Creek WV, a place called Standard. There were some new boys that moved in the neighborhood. I figured, hey, this is as good a time as any to wel-

come them, and introduced them to my snake rattlers.

continue to the next page



Hunter Rohr reeled in a huge Shavers Fork rainbow trout.

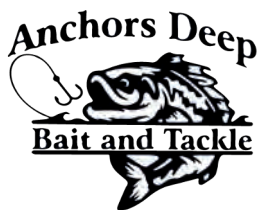
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Robert Rockey brought in a rifle deer in Ritchie County.

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There was a water culvert I had been through a few times. It went from the valley floor up the hill, and went under the West Virginia Turnpike. I am guessing it must have been around 50 yards long and coated with rubber inside. It was big enough so you could crawl on your hands and knees without a lot of problem.

This particular day, I saw the

new boys out riding their bikes and asked them, would like to do something fun. My yes, they were all over that and it was almost in sight of their house.

I showed them the culvert, they were a little apprehensive about going into dark space like that, there might be spiders. I told them, I had done it before, and to make them feel better, I would go first.

We started up the culvert, I was in front, and in my pocket I had those rattlers.

We started up the culvert, it got very very dark quick. You couldn't see your hand in front of your face. It was the darkest place you could ever imagine. There was no sound, you were 40 feet underground, other than the noise of the laughing we were making.

It was an uphill climb, so about

every 30 feet, I would stop, and say, man, I hope we don't run into a wild animal sleeping in here! That thing will eat us up! I would assure them. I'm in front, it would get me first.

At this point, things started to get more serious, the laughing
continue to page 11



Cole Huff caught & released an early season smallmouth bass.



Young Allen Plum reeled in a 19" rainbow. Photo courtesy of Middle Mountain Sporting Goods in Elkins.

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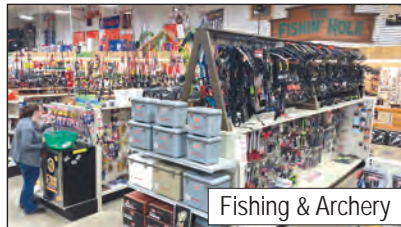
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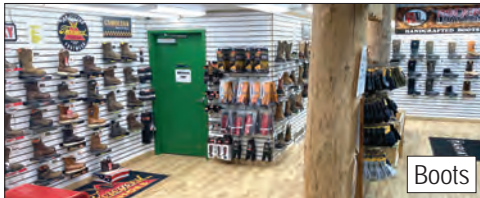
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had stopped. I had those boys so primed. They were about to jump out of their skin.

We got about 3/4 the way through, I said, everybody quiet, quiet! I said, did you all hear anything? They said, no we didn't hear anything. Shhh, Quiet, you could have literally heard a pin drop. I said, I feel something soft squirming under my hand. There was dead silence. It was so scary. I was scaring myself, because I knew what was about to happen.

One of the boys whispered, what is it? More silence, I got in my pocket and got those rattlers out and reached my hand back, and put it in the middle of them. I starting buzzing those rattlers, and screamed, it's a Rattlesnake!!!!

You can't imagine all the chaos, everyone was trying to get over top of each other. I was following right behind buzzing those rattlers and screaming!! Rattlesnake!! Rattlesnake!!

When they got outside they were gone!! I couldn't hardly get out of the culvert, I was laughing so hard.

After that day, I never saw those boys again.

I always kind of felt bad, I did

those old boys that way. I bet that was the most excitement they had in their life.



One thing I am certain, they will never, ever, go through a dark culvert with me again.



Zach Horrocks and Alex Goff won an early April Stonewall Jackson Lake bass tournament



Alyssa Dennis reeled in a 19" rainbow trout in March.




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Spring Bass Fishing Techniques

For most of us who live in the colder climates of the United States, cabin fever is setting in big time. As I sit around the house mired in seasonal depression, reading articles, watching fishing

videos, and going through tackle, I can't help but get the jitters thinking about my favorite time of year to be on the water. There's nothing quite like bass fishing in the spring. The bass are awaken-

ing from their winter dormancy and they have one thing on their minds before the big spawn. You guessed it: gorging themselves to the max to have the proper nutrients before working hard to make future generations of green and brown bass.

I wait all year for that first ice to go off the lakes. Whether it's throwing a jerkbait, dragging a swimbait, throwing hair, or crankin' a chatterbait; the bites are ferocious and it's the best time to catch your new personal-best bass.

While most of the following advice comes from extensive experience on northern fisheries for both largemouth and smallmouth, these techniques can be and are utilized in all areas where there is



Bryan Alderman, from Hinton, caught a March smallmouth bass.



Kevin Ross, from Pennsboro, hooked a fine smallmouth bass I



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a significant temperature change among the four seasons. So, don't hesitate to try something new here in the southern impoundments; it just might put a few more fish in the boat.

Pre Spawn and Habitats to Target

As you can imagine, when that ice comes off the lake, that water is cold; and I mean COLD! In some cases, when the area around your local boat ramp finally has open water to dump a boat in, other parts of the waterbody might still have ice on the banks and in the shallow coves. When the water is that cold, you need to take a specific approach, especially in northern lakes, most of which contain both species of fish.

There are two ways you can go: either really deep or really shallow.

low. Many of your smallmouth will still be in their wintering patterns hugging deep rock piles, boulders, and any sort of hard structure on the bottom. Large-mouth will also hang around hard structures, but will relate more to the forage that's closer to whatever weeds are still left from the fall.

For largemouth especially, the extreme shallows are what warms up the quickest, especially when they're full of rocks and woody debris. Hard structures also heat up faster, especially when the sun is hitting them on a warm early spring day. Afternoon hours can be killer after the sun has had a chance to "bake" those hard structures all morning long and give off some heat.

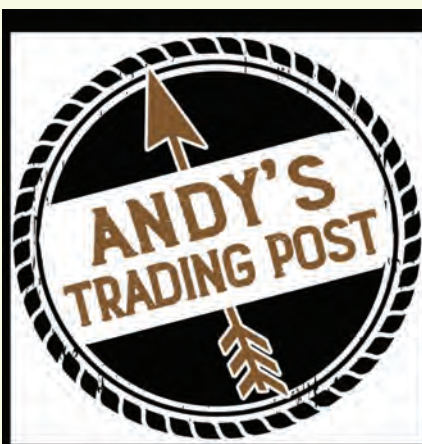
Once that water warms up a little continue to the next page



Mathew Brown fished at Blue-stone for a fine largemouth bass.



Michael Wagoner hooked a big New River smallmouth bass.



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tle bit after some warm spring sun and crests the 40 degree mark — that's when things really start to get going. Both largemouth and smallmouth get up shallow and probe the flats, searching for their next meal. Even though the bass are usually pretty hungry, the water is still cold, and they are fairly

lethargic still, so presenting a bait that will sit in front of their face and suspend is crucial to picking up more bites.

Fast forward a few weeks to mid to late April; that's when the real magic happens. Water temperatures enter the roaring 50s and bass just want to feed up heavy

before the spawn. Both species are cruising the shallows looking for their next meal. This is the time of year most anglers enjoy most, just because of how willing bass are to bite practically anything. It's truly one of the best times of the spring to be on the water if you're looking to continue to the next page



Dominic Goodnight landed a musky in Wirt County.



Blake Hepner, from Barrackville, reeled in a nice rainbow trout.

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ing for their next meal. This is the time of year most anglers enjoy most, just because of how willing bass are to bite practically anything. It's truly one of the best times of the spring to be on the water if you're looking for a new personal best.

The Spawn: What to Look For and Avoid

The other part of the spring that many people either look forward

to or completely hate is when the bass start to spawn. For small-mouth, it's when the thermometer hits that 55-degree mark; large-mouth wait until temps hit the low 60s. Hammering bass at this time of year can be an extremely touchy subject, especially because this is when tournaments start in many parts of the country.

While catch-and-immediate-release is the best practice if you see a bedding bass and want to catch it, please take into consideration that this is the most stressful time in the bass's lifecycle every year. It takes a lot out of them to not feed and protect their nests with all of their might. The more effort they put into fighting you on the way to the boat, the less energy they have to protect their nest when they get released.

Both bass species generally spawn in shallow water to allow good light penetration for substantial egg growth. In very clear

water, light penetrates deeper; you might find bass spawning as
continue to the next page



Lillie Diule, from Elkins, hunted in the snow for her nice buck.



Jadley Griange hooked a 6 3/4 pound rainbow trout. *Photo courtesy of Middle Mountain Sporting Goods in Elkins.*

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deep as 20 feet or more, especially smallmouth.

Whatever the water clarity, you can easily define a bass bed in the water, because it's generally lighter colored than the rest of the surrounding bottom. Male bass will come shallow to gather a mixture of rock, sand, gravel and other hard structures to fan out a nest with their tails — that's what makes it stand out.

Sometimes, you'll even spot nests next to large boulders, docks, and holes in vegetation. Males will continue to stay in the nest until after the fry emerge. The only time a female bass is present is when they come to lay their eggs and physically spawn. Females will hang around for a few days before moving on to another nest, since most don't deposit all their eggs in one place; some females will deposit eggs in up to eight different nests in a single spring. The most important thing to remember is that not all bass spawn at the same time. There are different stages of the spawn on different moon cycles, and at any given time, bass can be in all three stages at once in a given waterbody.



Mellanie Allender used a rifle in Ritchie County for her buck.



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en waterbody.

Post Spawn and What to Look For
As the water temps rise out of the mid 60s into the 70s, many bass are starting to transition into their summer patterns. Often referred to as the "post-spawn blues" it

can be one of the toughest times to catch fish, but it can also be the most rewarding when you do figure them out. Many of the male bass transition from guarding their nests to leading the fry into
continue to the next page



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the nearest standing vegetation, where they will then stay till they are big enough to fend for themselves.

Some anglers consider fry-guardians a blast to catch, mainly because it's like bed fishing, but the bass are more responsive to moving baits. You can actually get them to chase something instead of dropping your bait on their heads.

Many fish are also beginning to go deeper into weedbeds, rock piles, and docks to start feeding again. Fishing boat docks can be a big player this time of year. Bass will start to stray farther from their nests and take shade under



Tyler Harris reeled in a nice brown trout at Shavers Fork.



Keith McCloy caught a rainbow trout at Mountwood Lake.

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boat docks. Standing and floating docks both provide great shade for predator and prey species.

Female bass, especially, will hang out under docks so they don't have to go far to find an easy meal. Don't disregard the areas inside weed edges, they can be a great post-spawn habitat feature. Bass don't have to move far

to slide into an inside weed edge; it's an easy spot for them to ambush prey and relax after a stressful spawn.

There are many different techniques that can be used throughout the spring to put a lot of bass in the boat. Some definitely work better than others, but there are some that truly shine in the spring.

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An Application Form Is Also On Our Website
www.lickrunhuntclub.com



New Boat Ramp Open In Clendenin

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. — The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (WVDNR) today announced the completion of a new public boat ramp in Clendenin, which will expand access to the lower Elk River and improve recreational opportunities

for anglers and boaters

“We’re excited to open this new boat ramp and continue the WVDNR’s important work of making it easier for resident and visitor anglers and boaters to experience the Elk River and all it has to offer,” said WVDNR Director Brett

McMillion.

The \$800,000 construction project was a partnership between the WVDNR and the Town of Clendenin, which owns the property and has committed to maintaining and operating the ramp along with two additional access sites within town limits. Project design and permitting was handled by E.L. Robinson Engineering and the construction contract was completed by J.F. Allen Company.

continue to page 20

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“We appreciate the Town of Clendenin for their commitment to maintaining this site and ensuring it benefits anglers, boaters and outdoor enthusiasts while also supporting tourism and local businesses for years to come,” McMillion said.

The new boat ramp, located at Virginia Avenue, is part of the WVDNR’s ongoing commitment to improving outdoor recreation infrastructure across the state. It is one of six newly completed public access points on the lower Elk River and creates more opportunities for anglers and paddlers to customize their trips and experience the river’s scenic beauty. A full map of public boating and fishing access sites can be found at mapwv.gov/huntfish.

With improved access, local businesses are also expected to benefit as more visitors travel to the area to fish, paddle and enjoy the outdoors.

“This boat ramp is more than just a place to launch—it’s an investment in the future of outdoor recreation in West Virginia,” said Clendenin Mayor Kay Summers.



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“We look forward to partnering with the WVDNR to ensure this site remains a valuable resource for generations to come.”

All anglers 15 years and older

are required to have a West Virginia fishing license while fishing in the state. A trout stamp is required for those fishing for trout.



Jeremy May landed a 9 lb., 4 oz. rainbow trout in Wyoming Co



Damon Abshire, from Dunbar, hooked a 6 lb., 6 oz. largemouth.



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New Big Game Bulletin

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. — The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (WVDNR) announced today that its annual Big Game Bulletin, which includes harvest numbers for white-tailed deer, wild turkey, black bear and wild boar, is available to download at WVDnr.gov/big-game.

“The Big Game Bulletin is a helpful tool that gives hunters an

overview of harvest numbers and trends,” said WVDNR Director Brett McMillion. “These harvest numbers also help our biologists monitor big game populations and recommend any needed changes in bag limits or season lengths so we can continue to sustain healthy populations of these important species.”

continue to page 24



Allie Flowers bagged a Boone County 10 point buck.



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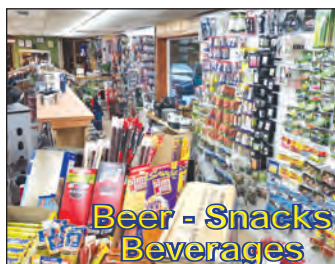


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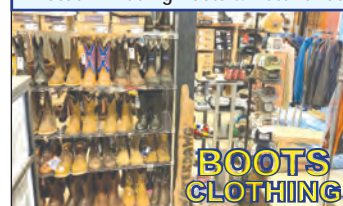
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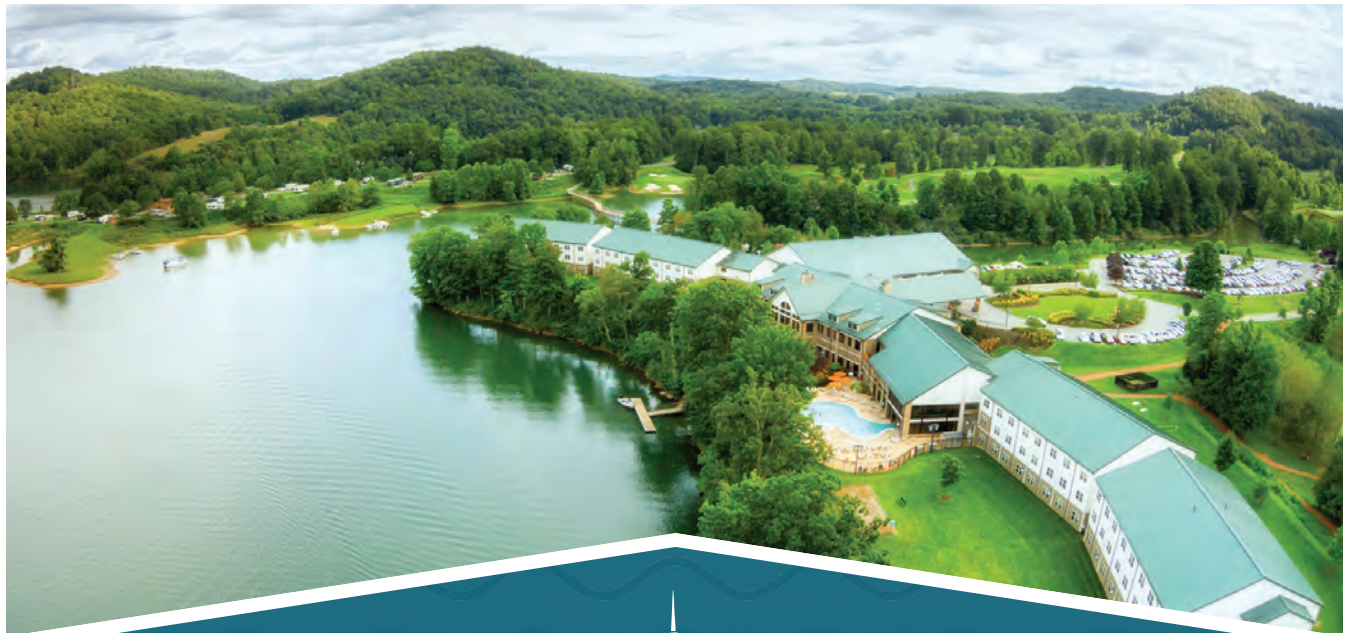
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According to data in the report, hunters harvested more white-tailed deer during the 2024 seasons than last year while overall harvest numbers for other big game species decreased. Summaries from the report for each big game species are provided below.

Black Bears Harvest and Trends
Hunters harvested 2,479 black bears during the 2024 seasons, a 12% decrease from the 2,830 bears harvested in 2023. Despite the overall harvest decline, the bear population remains robust and liberal hunting seasons in eastern mountain counties have stabilized numbers. Non-hunting mortalities decreased by 19 percent, nuisance complaints dropped by 55 percent and damage claims decreased by 26 percent, which suggests effective management.

White-Tailed Deer Harvest and Trends

Hunters harvested 111,646

white-tailed deer during the 2024 seasons and January 2025 season, a 2 percent increase from the 109,246 deer harvested in the previous year and 1 percent above the five-year average of 110,296. While harvests in the buck-only firearms season dropped 7.7 percent, the overall deer harvest was buoyed by a 14% increase in antlerless harvests. Despite this in-

crease in antlerless deer harvests, female deer harvests fell short of the 40 percent target for population stabilization.

Wild Turkey Harvest and Trends

Hunters harvested 12,780 wild turkeys in 2024 seasons, a 3.2% decrease from the 13,198 turkeys harvested in 2023. The spring gobbler harvest decreased 4.64%

continue to page 26



Chris Beverage harvested a fine Pocahontas Co. buck.



Brody Burns hunted in the snow for a quality whitetail buck.

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but came in ahead of the five- and 10-year averages of 10,937 and 10,913, respectively. The drop in spring harvests was offset by a strong fall season, in which hunters harvested 16.9% more turkeys than they did in 2023.

Wild Boar Harvest and Trends

Hunters harvested 91 wild boar during the 2024 season and February 2025 season, a 35 percent decrease from the 142 boar harvested in the previous year and the lowest harvest in five years. According to the report, bad weather and abundant white oak availability reduced harvests, but the February season continues to stabilize the population while offering hunting opportunities.

Publishing the Big Game Bulletin is funded by money collected through the sale of hunting and fishing licenses and by funds from Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration. In addition to including harvest numbers for each big game species, this year's publication includes harvests by season and county area. Digital copies are available to download at WVdnr.gov/big-game.



Chris Farley has a 7 lb. 12 oz. rainbow. Photo courtesy of Middle Mountain Sporting Goods in Elkins.



Landon Kyle - 5 lb. 5 oz. brown trout and Trent Mullenex 8 lb. 2oz. rainbow & 6 lb. 5 oz. brown trout. All were caught near Elkins.



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What Turkey Call To Uses Successfully?

How to Pick the Right Turkey Call: Mouth, Box, or Friction?

When it comes to turkey hunting, picking the right call is half the battle. With so many options out there—mouth calls, box calls, and friction calls—it can be tough to know which one to run and when.

Some hunters swear by a mouth call and won't touch anything else. Others love a good box call because of its volume and ease of use. And then there are friction calls—pot calls like slate, glass, and aluminum—that offer unmatched realism.

So which one is best? Well... it depends. Let's break it down.

Mouth Calls: Hands-Free & Deadly When Mastered

Mouth calls (diaphragm calls) are the go-to for a lot of turkey hunters because they let you call with no hands, which is a big deal when a gobbler is closing in.

Pros of Mouth Calls:

- Hands-free calling – Keep your

gun ready while calling.

- Wide range of sounds – From soft tree yelps to aggressive cutting.

- Lightweight – No bulk, just slip it in your vest pocket.

- Affordable – A good mouth call won't break the bank.

Cons of Mouth Calls:

- Takes practice – If you're new to mouth calls, there's a learning curve.

- Can cause gagging – Some hunters struggle with the fit in their mouth.

- Less volume than a box call – Can get loud, but not like a box.

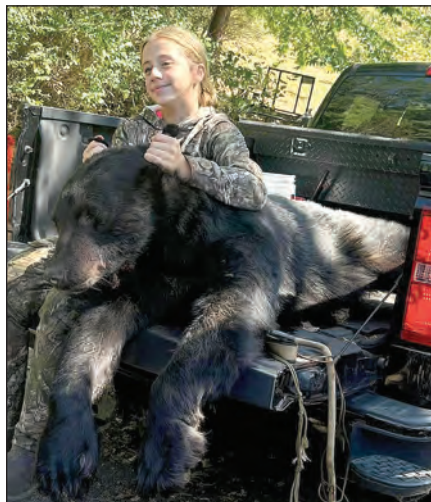
Best for:

Experienced hunters who want full control over their calling.

Close-range hunting where hands-free calling is a big advantage.

Hunters who like versatility and

continue to page 29



Sam Elmore, from Oak Hill, bagged a huge black bear.



Easton Chapman brought in a high rack buck.

the ability to call subtly or aggressively.

- Want to get good at a mouth call? Start practicing now.

Box Calls: Loud, Realistic, and Easy to Use

Box calls are one of the oldest and most reliable turkey calls around. They produce loud, realistic turkey sounds with minimal effort—perfect for beginners and long-distance calling.

Pros of Box Calls:

- Easy to use – Anyone can pick up a box call and sound decent.
- Loud – Great for reaching out on windy days or big country.
- Realistic yelps and clucks – Sounds natural without much skill.

Cons of Box Calls:

- Needs two hands – Can't call and have your gun ready at the same time.
- Can be bulky – Takes up space in your vest.
- Weather sensitive – Wood box calls don't like rain and moisture.

Best for:

Beginners who want an easy-to-use call, that sounds great.

Hunters who need volume to reach distant gobblers.



Scott Swick harvested a quality wide rack buck.

Calling in big open terrain where sound needs to travel.

- A good box call belongs in every turkey vest.

Friction Calls (Pot Calls): Versatile & Deadly Realistic

Friction calls—like pot calls made from slate, glass, or aluminum—are some of the most realistic turkey calls out there. They require both hands to run but give you precise control over your calling.

Pros of Friction Calls:

- Very realistic turkey sounds – Soft clucks, purrs, aggressive cuts—it does it all.
- Great control – Easily change pitch, volume, and tone.
- Good for soft calling – Perfect for close encounters.

Cons of Friction Calls:

- Needs your hands – Can't use with a gun shouldered.

- Weather sensitive – Some pot calls don't work well in wet conditions.

- Takes some practice – More forgiving than a mouth call, but still requires skill.

Best for:

Hunters who want the most realistic
continue to the next page



Jacob Johnston hunted in Wetzel County for a nice 13 point buck.

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istic sounds possible.

Late-season, close-range hunts where subtle calling is key.

Backup callers—if you're hunting with a buddy, friction calls are a great second call.

- Want a call that sounds just like a real hen? Get yourself a good friction call.

That depends on you and the situation.

- Need a loud locator call? Grab a box call.

- Want hands-free calling? Run a mouth call.

- Looking for the most realistic hen sounds? A good pot call has you covered.

The best turkey hunters carry all three and use the right call at the right time. If you're serious about tagging longbeards, it's worth learning how to use them all.



Adam Harvey used a bow in Wyoming Co. for a fine buck.



Kaleb Burfor, from Chapmanville, has a wide rack buck.

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Interesting Turkey Information

1 Female turkeys don't gobble, but they do purr.

Turkeys are known for the gobbling sound they make, but it turns out that only the male birds make that iconic call. Female turkeys—or hens—on the other hand, will instead cluck like a chicken, yelp if they're excited or agitated, or purr like a cat (although, according to the National Wild Turkey Federation, it's more of a "rolling, almost staccato call" than

a purr, but it conveys the same feeling of contentment). And to bust some Thanksgiving-related myths, check out 8 Common Myths About Thanksgiving You Probably Still Believe.

2 Turkeys were once primarily bred for their feathers, not their meat.

These days, farmers breed turkeys in order to sell them for their meat. But, according to En-

continue to the nextpage



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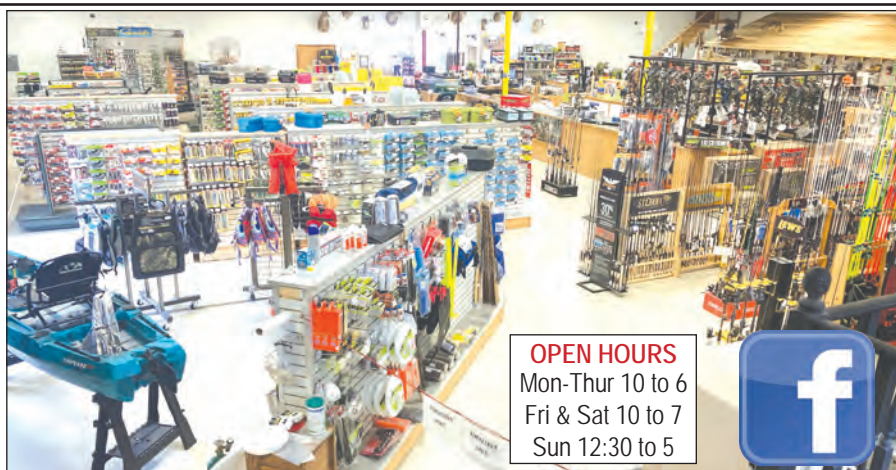
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cyclopedia Britannica, up until 1935, the birds were bred for their “beautifully colored plumage,” which features stunning striped patterns.

3 An adult turkey has around 5,000 to 6,000 feathers.

Not only do turkeys have gorgeous feathers, but they also have a lot of them. According to the U.S. Fish and Wild Life Service, an adult turkey has anywhere from 5,000 to 6,000 individual feathers on their body.

4 Male turkeys are called toms or gobblers.

Female turkeys are called hens, just like female chickens; but male turkeys aren't roosters. Instead, they're called toms, or, since male turkeys are the ones who make the notorious gobbling sound, they can also be called

gobblers. And if you ever wondered why we call them turkeys, check out This Is How Turkeys Got Their Name.

5 Toms have more warts than hens.

While some of the differences

between male and female turkeys could be considered endearing—such as the noises they make and the names they've been given—there's at least one difference between the two genders that isn't

continue to page 32



Sunee Stephens used a muzzle-loader for a fine whitetail buck.



Hobie Miller hunted in Greenbrier Co. for an 18 point buck.



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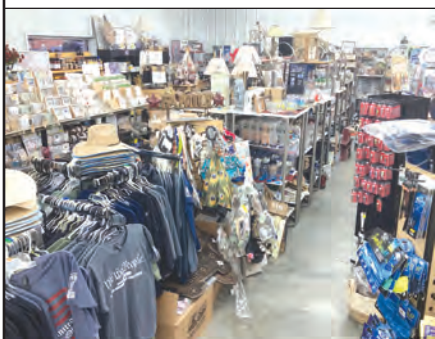
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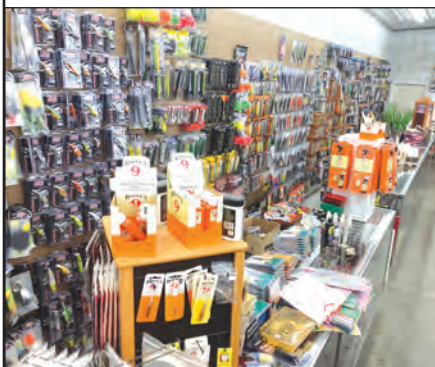


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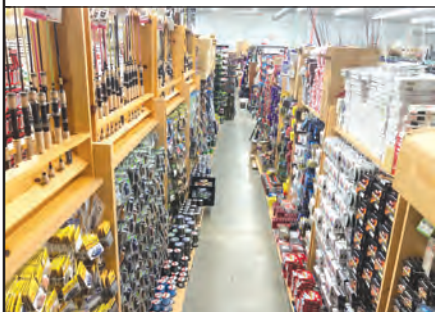
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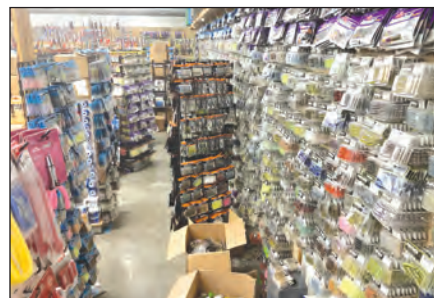
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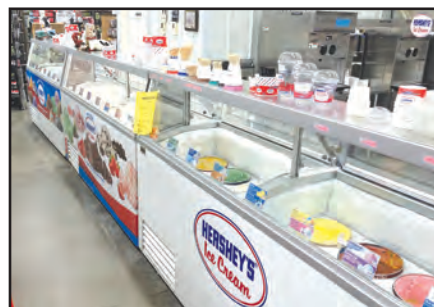
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quite so cute. Tom turkeys have more warts on their heads than their lady friends, according to Encyclopedia Britannica. Hens also weigh about half as much as their male counterparts.

6 Male and female turkey droppings are shaped differently.

Although you might expect there to be a few differences between the way male and female turkeys look, you might be surprised to find out that there's also a difference when it comes to their bathroom habits. According to the Pennsylvania Game Commission, male droppings are "j-shaped," while those of females take on a more "spiral or curlycue" shape.

7 Turkeys hear certain sounds better than humans.

When you think about animals with amazing hearing, dogs, elephants, bats, or owls likely come

to mind, but probably not turkeys. It turns out, however, turkeys can actually hear far-off and low-frequency sounds better than humans, according to the National Wild Turkey Federation. "Hearing allows the bird to detect a threat if its eyes are occupied on finding food," retired regional biologist Bob Eriksen for the NWTf explains. "Wild turkeys have an uncanny ability to locate the source of a sound." And for more fun facts about mother nature, check out 75 Animal Facts That Will Change the Way You View the Animal Kingdom.

8 Turkeys lived around 10 million years ago.

The woolly mammoth had its hey-day on Earth until about 10,500 years ago before eventually becoming extinct 4,000 years ago. While it's hard to imagine a turkey flying above a gigantic woolly mammoth, the birds have actually been around for a lot longer. In fact, turkeys have been on the scene for almost 10 million years, according to the University of Illinois.

9 Turkeys almost went extinct—twice.

While turkeys aren't currently an endangered species, there were two points in the past when we almost lost them completely. According to the Colorado Arts and Sciences Magazine, the California turkey went extinct about 10,000 to 12,000 years ago, likely due to climate change or over-hunting, or a combination of the two. And when European settlers arrived in America, turkeys again found themselves as targets of prolific hunting. The birds were totally gone from Connecticut by 1813, disappeared from Vermont

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around 1842, and by the 1930s, turkeys were again growing dangerously close to extinction before efforts were taken to make sure they weren't wiped out. And for more animals at risk of extinction.

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10 Turkeys once wore booties while being walked to the market.

As they say, these boots were made for walking and that's just what a herd of turkeys would do 200 years ago when they were being taken to market in England. The little bird-sized booties were meant to protect their feet as they were marching along, according to the University of Illinois.

11 Turkeys were named after the "Turkish" area despite being from North America.

You might have wondered why turkeys have the name that they do despite the fact that they originated in North America. Encyclopedia Britannica explains that when the bird became popular in England, the name turkey-cock, formerly used for the guinea fowl found in Islamic (or "Turkish") lands, was used to refer to the bird we know as a turkey today.

12 All but 12 U.S. states have turkeys.

While people in all 50 states enjoy turkey as a part of their

Thanksgiving dinners, the birds, specifically Eastern wild turkeys, can be found roaming wild in 38 states in the U.S., according to the National Wild Turkey Federation. They can also be spotted in various provinces up in Canada.

13 Turkey beards grow three to five inches per year.

Yes, turkeys have beards, but they aren't made of hair. Instead, turkey beards consist of modified feathers that form bristles or filaments, according to the Pennsylvania Game Commission. Some turkeys even have multiple beards that can each grow up to three to five inches each year.

14 Turkeys can—and will—attack humans.

Turkeys may not have the fierce reputation that some fang-gnashing, claw-showing predators have earned, but that doesn't mean that they don't have an aggressive side. In fact, turkeys are fully willing and able to attack humans. That's why the Massachusetts government provides tips on how to pre-

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vent conflicts with turkeys while both CBS Boston and Good Day Sacramento offer insights into what to do should you find yourself as a victim of a turkey attack. 15 Store-bought turkeys can't fly.

The turkey that you buy at the grocery store has been bred and raised to provide you with as much meat as possible. Because of this, they end up with unnaturally large breasts which hinder their ability to fly, according to The Patriot News.

16 Wild turkeys, however, can soar for over a mile.

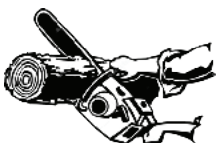
Wild turkeys, on the other hand, are perfectly capable of taking flight. In fact, according to The Patriot News, they can reach speeds of up to 55 miles per hour

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hour while in the air. And the Pennsylvania Game Commission reports they can soar for a mile or more by alternating between strong wingbeats and gliding.

17 Turkeys can run 12 miles per hour.

Some turkeys may not be able to fly, but their inability to get airborne doesn't completely slow them down. Even while on the ground, they can still move at a pretty good clip, running upwards of 12 miles an hour, according to the Pennsylvania Game Commission.

18 Frying a turkey can lead to an explosion.

In 2018, firefighters across the country conducted demonstrations to show the public how attempting to fry the main dish for a Thanksgiving dinner can result in what IFL Science refers to as "exploding turkeys." In videos posted to social media of these fowl-fueled infernos, flames blast up into the air when a turkey is dropped into hot oil.

19 Turkeys have more than doubled in size in the last 40 years.

If you're able to feed your entire family with one turkey at Thanksgiving, that's due to the fact that the birds have gotten much bigger over the years. As recently as 1980, the typical U.S. domesticated turkey weighed less than 19 pounds at slaughter—not much bigger than a wild turkey, according to the Pew Research Center. But nowadays, the average bird we carve up on Thanksgiving weighs 29.8 pounds, more than twice the average weight nearly 40 years ago.



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20 We eat nearly 50 million turkeys each Thanksgiving.

Around 88 percent of Americans choose the traditional bird for their Thanksgiving meal, which means that around 46 million turkeys are eaten in the U.S. on that one day each year, according to the University of Illinois. It's also a popular pick for other holidays as well, with 22 million and 19 million eaten each year on Christmas and Easter, respectively.

21 Nearly 229 million turkeys were produced in the U.S. last year.

There are more than 330 million people in the United States. And in 2019 alone, 229 million turkeys were produced across the country.



Dale Shaffer got this buck with a side hammer in Presston County.

April/May 2025 ~ Page 36

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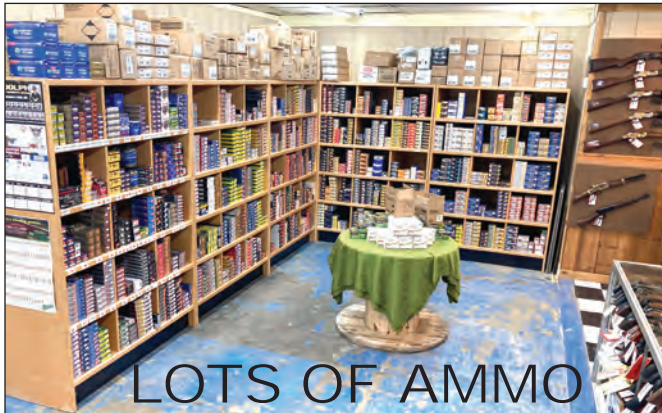
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