



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

Issue 326

Aug/Sept 2025

**FREE**

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

**Archery  
Tips**

**B.A.S.S.  
News**

**DNR  
Updates**

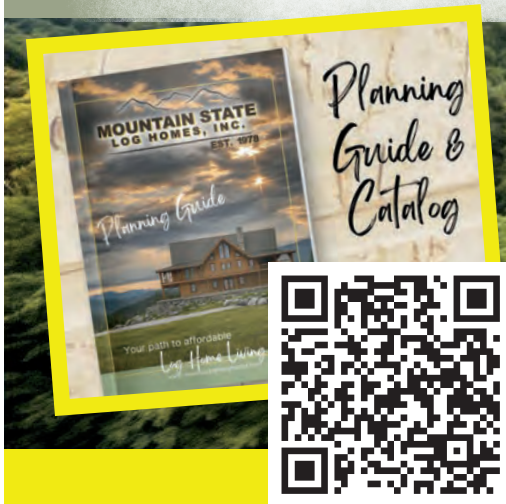


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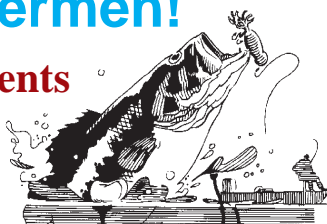
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## Cover Photo

Fishing in a Lewis County farm pond, Walker Furby caught a 24" largemouth bass. Most people are never fortunate to catch a largemouth this long. He is eight years old.

This magazine has in business for 35 years this month. Thanks to all the advertisers that make this FREE magazine possible.

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

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# Archery Season Guide

## ESSENTIAL GEAR, GAME REGULATIONS AND TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL HUNT

West Virginia's archery and crossbow seasons are right around the corner, offering hunters a thrilling opportunity to pursue white-tailed deer, black bear and wild boar across the state's scenic mountains and forests. With seasons running Sept. 27 through Dec. 31, 2025, bowhunters get more time in the woods, fewer crowds and closer encounters to game than firearms seasons often allow.



Mark Melega's team got 1st place on the Monongahela River.

Whether you're a seasoned bowhunter or someone who hasn't hunted in a few years, now is the time to gear up, review the hunting regulations and get your license. Here's everything you need to know to make the most of this fall's archery season.

## LONG SEASONS, BIG OPPORTUNITIES

If you've never felt your heart pounding as a deer steps within range or as a black bear shifts its weight just yards away, West Virginia's archery and crossbow seasons are your chance to experience the thrill and challenge of bow hunting.

With more than 90 days to pursue big game, West Virginia's archery and crossbow seasons run longer than other seasons, giving hunters more chances to tag out. Because the seasons for deer, bear and boar overlap, you even have the chance to hunt multiple species during the same day in some areas. Just don't forget that all harvested big game must be legally tagged and electronically registered at [WVhunt.com](http://WVhunt.com).

## WHITE-TAILED DEER

White-tailed deer are West Virginia's most popular game species, and the archery and crossbow season offers a prime opportunity to hunt them. You can harvest up to three deer with a bow or crossbow — one on your base license and

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two more with RB/RRB stamps (one stamp per additional deer).

Deer of either sex may be taken during the archery and cross-  
continue to the page 6

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bow season offers a prime opportunity to hunt them. You can harvest up to three deer with a bow or crossbow — one on your base license and two more with RB/RRB stamps (one stamp per additional deer).

Deer of either sex may be taken during the archery and crossbow season. However, crossbows are not permitted in Logan, McDowell, Mingo, and Wyoming counties unless you have a Class Y permit. See pages 26-28 of the Hunting Regulations Summary for details.

## **BLACK BEAR**

Bowhunting for black bears is a rewarding, high-adrenaline pursuit. Hunters may take up to two bears annually, provided one is taken in Boone, Fayette,

Kanawha, Logan, McDowell, Mingo, Raleigh or Wyoming County.

To hunt black bears, you must have a Bear Damage Stamp (Class DS) in addition to your base license. Dogs may NOT be

used during archery or crossbow seasons. For more info, see page 40 in the Hunting Regulations Summary.

## **WILD BOAR**

Wild boar hunting is legal only in Boone, Logan, Raleigh and Wyoming counties. During this challenging but exciting season, hunters may harvest one wild boar per year across all seasons. These elusive animals are tough to pattern, so look for signs of fresh wild boar activity and thick cover near food sources. For more info, see page 45 in the Hunting Regulations Summary.

## **WHERE TO HUNT: PUBLIC LANDS AND PRIME ARCHERY SPOTS**

West Virginia has nearly 1.5 million acres of public hunting land across 96 Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs), nine state for-

continue to the next page



Veteran angler, Tom Berga landed another quality Ohio River bass.



Rob Glover, from Morgantown, hooked a 45 1/4 lb. blue catfish.

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To plan a hunting trip on public land, use our interactive hunting map, which includes information about access points, amenities and available game. If you plan to hunt on private land, make sure you have written permission from the landowner and follow all hunting regulations.

#### WHAT MAKES A PRIME ARCHERY SPOT?

When choosing a hunting location, look for areas with natural cover and minimal pressure from other hunters. If you plan to hunt from a tree stand, choose a location that provides good visibility and allows you to take clear shots. Always use a safety harness when

hunting from a treestand. Other things to watch out for include:

Food sources, travel corridors and bedding areas

Ridges, saddles or creek bottoms that funnel animal movement

Signs of deer activity: rubs, scrapes and tracks

Dense cover for bear and boar

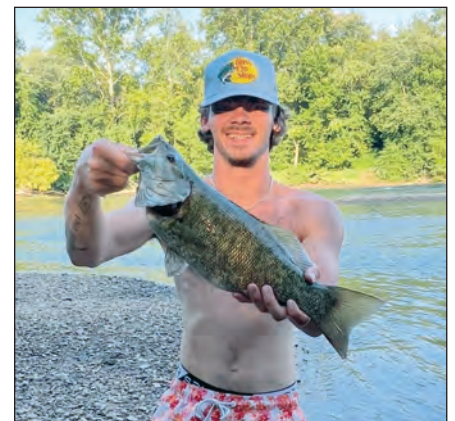
Scout early and always set up with the wind blowing away from where you expect animals to approach.

#### WHAT YOU NEED TO HUNT WITH A BOW IN WEST VIRGINIA

In addition to finding a good  
continue to the next page



Marty Rogers, from Point Pleasant, reeled in a flathead catfish.

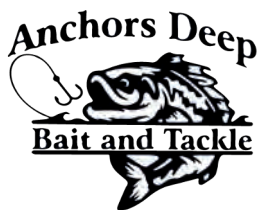


Alex Mobley hooked a fine Coal River smallmouth bass.



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hunting location, make sure you have the right gear. Not only does it enhance your accuracy and efficiency in the field but also ensures you comply with state hunting regulations. Here's some of the basics you'll need.

## HUNTING LICENSE AND STAMPS

Hunters who are 15 and older must have a valid base hunting license and the correct stamps for the species they plan to pursue. Hunters under the age of 15 may

hunt without a license when accompanied by a licensed adult.

Depending on your license and the game you plan to pursue, you may also need one or more of the following:

Conservation Stamp (Class CS)

Big Game Stamp (Class BG)

RB/RRB stamps for extra deer (limit of two and must be purchased before opening day)

Bear Damage Stamp (Class DS)

Buy all required licenses and stamps online at [WVhunt.com](http://WVhunt.com) by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 26.

## LEGAL ARCHERY EQUIPMENT

Taking the time to choose the right gear will make your hunting experience safer, more enjoyable and successful. Just make sure you give yourself plenty of time to check your gear and practice your shot before the season starts.

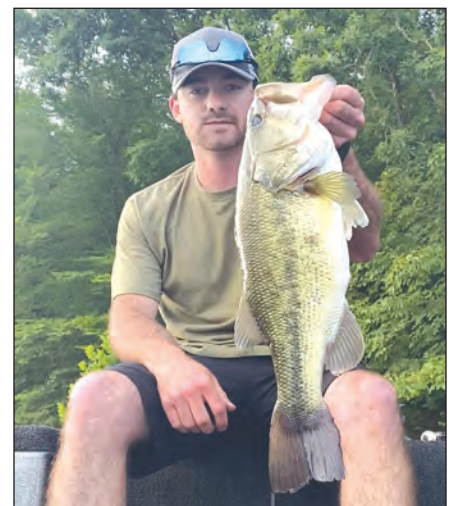
Crossbows must have a minimum 125-pound draw weight and safety mechanism

Arrows and bolts must be at least 16 inches long with broadheads at least 3/4 inch wide and with two sharp-cutting edges

continue to page 11



Luke King, from Burnsville, caught & released a fine musky.



Hunter Simmons, from Spencer, has a fine largemouth bass.



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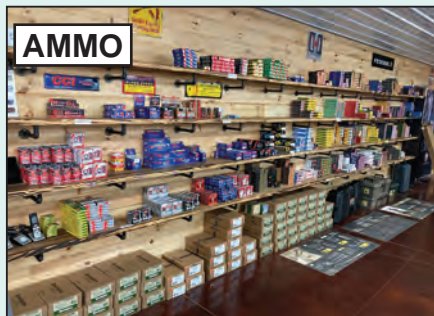


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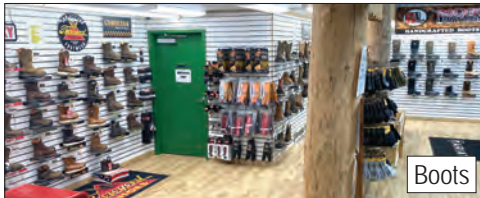
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Explosive or poisoned tips are illegal

Only single-string crossbows are allowed

Devices that hold bows at full draw require a modified bow permit

To learn more about rules and regulations regarding arrows, bolts and bow and crossbow features, see page six in the Hunting Regulations Summary.

## OTHER HUNTING GEAR ESSENTIALS

In addition to a reliable bow or crossbow, the following items are

often used.

Camouflage clothing and insulated boots

Rangefinder for accurate distance judgment

Field dressing kit to prepare harvested game

Safety harness is required if you hunt from a tree stand

Lastly, don't forget to wear at least 400 square inches of blaze orange during overlapping firearm deer seasons, unless you are in a bow-hunting-only area. To review firearms deer season dates and areas, check the Hunting Regulations Summary.

**HAVEN'T HUNTED IN A WHILE? TAKE THE SHOT THIS FALL!**

With long seasons, exciting species and beautiful public lands to hunt, there's no better place than West Virginia to hunt this fall.

## National Hunting & Fishing Show

### At Stonewall Jackson

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (WVDNR) announced that tickets are now on sale for National Hunting and Fishing Day, the state's largest outdoor-focused celebration, returning to Stonewall Resort State Park in Roanoke on Saturday, Sept. 6.

Hosted in partnership with the West Virginia Wildlife Federation, this annual event showcases the best of West Virginia's hunting, fishing and outdoor traditions through family-friendly activities, live demonstrations and hands-on exhibits. The event will be open

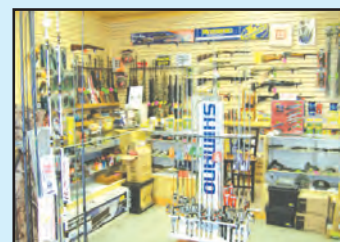
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Hunter Haines has his hands full with a flathead catfish.



Mason Conley has a 44 lb. flathead catfish from the Elk River.



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from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., with free weekend parking and shuttle service to select activity areas.

“National Hunting and Fishing Day is a great opportunity for West Virginians of all ages to connect with nature, learn new outdoor skills and celebrate our state’s rich outdoor traditions,” said WVDNR Director Brett

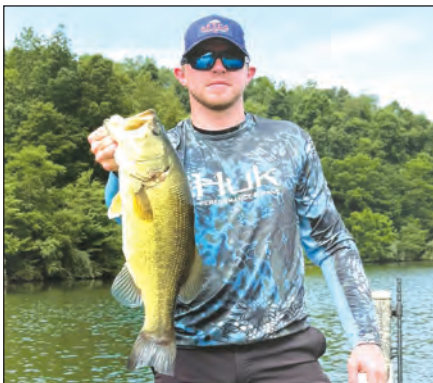
McMillion. “Whether you’re a seasoned sportsman or just getting started, we encourage you to bring your family to this incredible event. There’s something for everyone to enjoy.”

General admission is \$10 and children 14 and younger get in for free. Those who complete an

online ticket purchase by 11:59 p.m. on Sept. 5 will receive five complimentary food tickets for A Taste of West Virginia State Parks, a ticketed activity that features signature dishes prepared by state park chefs. For more information about this deal and to buy tickets, visit [WVDnr.gov/national-hunting-and-fishing-day](http://WVDnr.gov/national-hunting-and-fishing-day).

The popular Outdoor Youth Challenge is also back this year, and provides kids a chance to try various outdoor activities related to hunting and fishing. Participating youth will be entered into prize drawings, including scholarships to Conservation Camp and a lifetime hunting and fishing license.

To buy tickets and learn more, visit [WVDnr.gov/national-hunting-and-fishing-day](http://WVDnr.gov/national-hunting-and-fishing-day).



Alex Goff reeled in a quality largemouth bass.



Buster Owens has a 4 lb., 1 oz. lunker bass at a tournament.





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## WV Squirrel Hunting

### START YOUR HUNTING JOURNEY WITH THIS BEGINNER-FRIENDLY SEASON

If you didn't grow up hunting, getting started as an adult can feel intimidating. Maybe you've always been curious about harvesting your own wild game, spending more time in the woods, or learning a skill that connects you more deeply with nature. But where do you begin? West Virginia's squirrel season is one of the easiest ways to start your hunting journey. Not only is it affordable and accessible, but it's a great way to build skills and confidence while enjoying the beauty of the fall forest.

In this beginner's guide, we'll

cover the basics of planning your first squirrel hunt — from understanding squirrel behavior and what gear you'll need, to where you can hunt and the regulations you need to follow. Whether you're hunting for food or sport, this is your invitation to take that first step.

### UNDERSTANDING SQUIRREL BEHAVIOR AND HUNTING BASICS

Squirrels are active, abundant and found all over West Virginia, which makes this small game species a great target for new hunters. The most common species you'll

see are gray and fox squirrels, both of which can be hunted in  
continue to the next page



Brian Galloway caught and released a nice musky.



William Booth, from Jane Lew, hooked a large flathead catfish.

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the fall and early winter.

Squirrels are most active in the early morning and late afternoon and like to hang out around hard mast trees, such as hickories and oaks. Early in the season, focus on hickory trees. As fall progresses and leaves start to drop, shift your attention to oak stands where acorns become their primary food source. You're in a good spot if you find a patch of woods with several mature mast trees and signs of squirrel activity, like cut nut shells.

There are two main tactics for squirrel hunting:

**Walk and Stalk:** Walk slowly

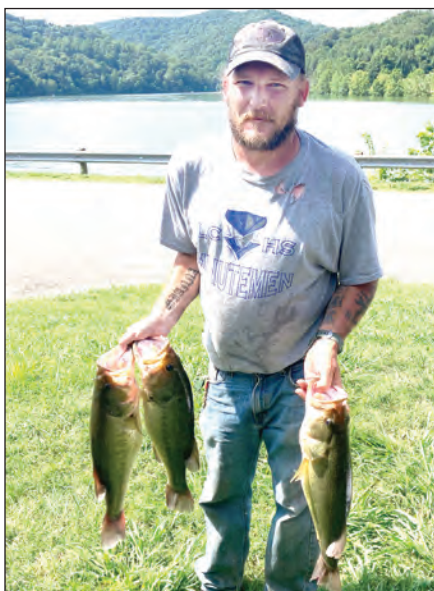
through the woods, pausing every few steps to look and listen for rustling leaves and squirrel chatter.

**Sit or Stand:** Sit or stand quietly near a food source and wait for squirrels to move into view. This method requires patience, but it's effective, especially when squir-

rels have been spooked and are hiding nearby.

New hunters often overlook the importance of being still. If you hear squirrels but can't see them, sit tight. They usually return after a few minutes if the woods go quiet again.

continue to the next page



Shawn & Dakota Riddle won the July Stonewall Jackson event with 17 lbs., 1 oz.

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Nathan Shaffer landed 2 quality bass at the Friday Eve event. Photo courtesy of Burnsville Docks.

wider shot pattern and more margin for error. A .22 caliber rifle is a lightweight, quiet and accurate option, best used when leaves start to fall and visibility improves.

Always practice safe firearm handling and ensure you're confident using your equipment before heading into the field.

### CLOTHING AND GEAR

Less is more when it comes to squirrel hunting. Camouflage or earth-toned clothing will help you blend in with the woods. Sturdy boots will keep you steady and comfortable as you walk through the woods and over uneven terrain. Also, consider carrying a small backpack with water, snacks, extra ammo, binoculars

continue to the next page

### WHERE TO HUNT SQUIRREL IN WEST VIRGINIA

West Virginia has nearly 1.5 million acres of public hunting land across 96 Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs), nine state forests and sprawling national forest lands, so you're never too far from a great place to hunt.

Many WMAs and state forests offer excellent small game habitat, with plenty of hardwoods where squirrels feed and nest. These areas are managed by the WVDNR and are open to the public during squirrel season. To plan your hunt, use our interactive hunting map, which makes it easy to find public land near you.

And if you are invited or want to hunt on private land, make sure to get written permission from the landowner before the season

starts.

### WEST VIRGINIA SQUIRREL HUNTING GEAR GUIDE

You don't need expensive equipment or a lot of experience to go squirrel hunting. Here are a few essentials to get started safely and comfortably.

### FIREARMS

When leaves are still on the trees and squirrels are harder to spot, use a shotgun, which gives you a



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and your phone or compass for navigation.

West Virginia's squirrel season runs concurrently with many deer firearms seasons, so make sure you also have a blaze orange garment of at least 400 square inches.

**RULES AND REGULATIONS TO REMEMBER**

West Virginia's 2025-2026 squirrel season runs from September 13 to February 28. A youth season is also scheduled for September 6-7 for hunters ages 15 and younger.

Before you head into the woods, you'll need a valid hunting license and, depending on which license you buy, you also may need to buy a Conservation Stamp (Class CS). You'll also need to complete a hunter education course, which is required for all hunters born on or after Jan. 1, 1975. During this class, you'll learn about firearm safety, wildlife conservation, basic hunting skills and West Virginia's hunting regulations. Completing this class is your first step toward becoming a responsible and confident hunter.

Always check the current Hunting Regulations Summary for updates, including season dates, legal hunting hours and public



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With minimal gear, plenty of public land and a long season to hone your skills, West Virginia's squirrel season is a great time

to start your hunting journey. Whether you're heading out solo or with a mentor, now's the time to take that first step.

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Jordan Ridgeway reeled in a huge rainbow trout.



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# Bass Fishing Is Very Popular

1. Bass Are One Of The Most Abundant Freshwater Fish In North America

Bass, (Largemouth Bass and their sub-species) are pretty dang common. In fact, They're available widely and in huge numbers, with the range present in all the lower 48 states. Mississippi and Georgia have even gone ahead to declare largemouth their state fish!

This fish constitutes the largest share of all the fish found in North America. This means that for most Americans, bass fishing is available locally.

The easy availability minimizes travel costs, turning bass fishing into a convenient pastime.

The fish is also widely available in its natural habitat. Bass are referred to as stocked fish which means they're also available in

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non-native fisheries or a wide array of different environments. So, you can find bass fish in nearly any water source both naturally, and stocked.

People have literally caught bass in retention ponds, canals, ditches, lakes, rivers, reservoirs- even old swimming pools!

Simply put- Bass are abundant and highly adaptive. If there is water...there is a chance it holds bass.

2. Bass Are Not Difficult To Catch (Or Are They...?)

Anglers love bass fishing because they are effortless to catch — compared to other fish species with roughly the same size. (Much easier said than done, right?)

Bass can be caught on a wide variety of fishing reels, tackle, and baits. They are opportunistic feeders and known to eat...well, just about everything!

continue to the next page



Mike Gilmore has a huge North Bend Lake largemouth bass.



Attention on deck! Calling all vets looking for some "reel therapy" on the water [catfishing](#).

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**Charlie Brookover**

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That means that anglers of all different backgrounds, and skill levels, can catch and land a bass with basic rod and reel combos or advanced custom specialty gear.

### 3. Bass Are Powerful, Aggressive And Excellent Fighters!

If you've ever seen a big bass explode on a topwater lure, you'll agree that these fish are powerful,

aggressive, and amazing fighters.

Largemouth Bass are capable of growing over 15 lbs in size... which is just huge! They are also known for extremely hard hits and absolutely smash live bait and lures.

Head shakes, powerful runs and acrobatic jumps make bass one of the most exciting fish to catch,

which no doubt makes them a popular favorite among anglers.

### 4. Bass Come in a Variety of Sizes & Sub-Species

Don't forget there are a number of other subspecies of bass such as White Bass, Redeye Bass, Shoal Bass, Spotted Bass, Striped Bass, etc...

But for the sake of this article, I am primarily referring to the largemouth bass and smallmouth bass, which are both very popular all over the country (and the world!)

Largemouth bass also goes by:  
continue to page 20

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Kaden Thaxton hooked a Poca River largemouth bass.

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Black bass  
 Bigmouth bass  
 Florida largemouth  
 Widemouth bass

The fish is readily available in the southern states and is commonly found in ponds, swamps, lakes, and still water bodies with adequate vegetation. It favors mud, gravel, or sand-bottom lakes and ponds that feature other species.

Largemouth bass boasts an average length of about 15 to 16 inches (38.1 to 40.6 cm). The largest largemouth bass in the US recorded 29.5 inches, while the heaviest weight reported is 10.1 kg (22 lbs, 4 oz.).

In general, female bass are typically larger than male bass. The most common bass species are largemouth bass and smallmouth

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bass.

### Smallmouth Bass

These are common in colder water and around the Great Lakes area. Though most anglers pre-

fer largemouth bass, smallmouth bass is also meaty, thus excellent for those fishing for consumption.

They average between 12 to 16  
 continue to page 22

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**Advertising Info On Page 3**



Drew Salada caught an unusual Asian carp at the Winfield Locks.



Janie Brown hooked a flathead catfish at the Hannibal Dam.



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inches (30.4 to 40.6 cm) in size, with the largest smallmouth bass recording a length of 27 inches (68.6 cm).

### 5. Bass Are Ideal for Tournament Fishing

Tournament fishing is a big crowd puller, and bass fishing tournaments are no exception. It's no wonder that competitive bass tournaments are wildly popular with both casual and professional anglers.

Several big tournaments take place in various locations all year round, thereby prompting bass fishing from the amateur to the professional level.

Many anglers look forward to competing with fellow fishing enthusiasts, showing off their skills while hoping to catch the biggest bass, and win big prize money!

The average bass tournament consists of live fish weigh-ins that continue to page 24



Zach Chidester reeled in a 29 inch walleye.



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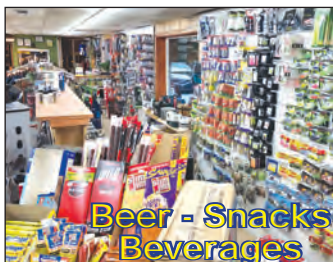


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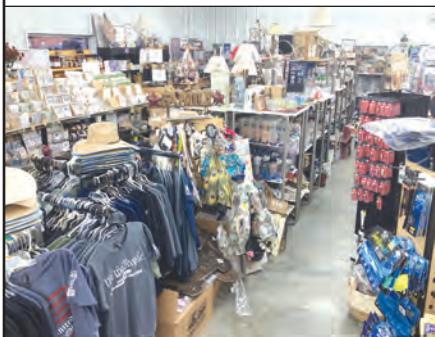
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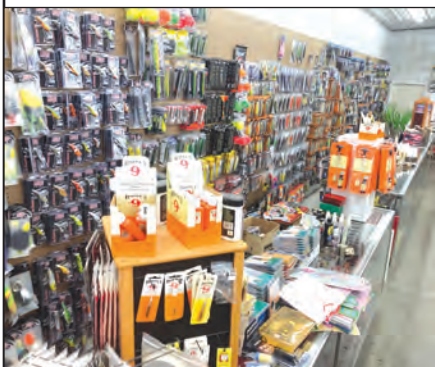
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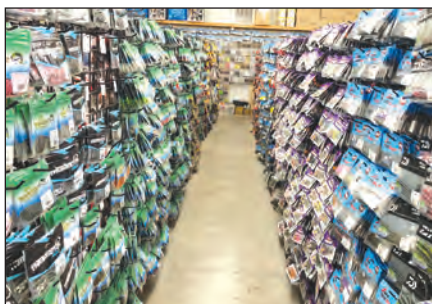


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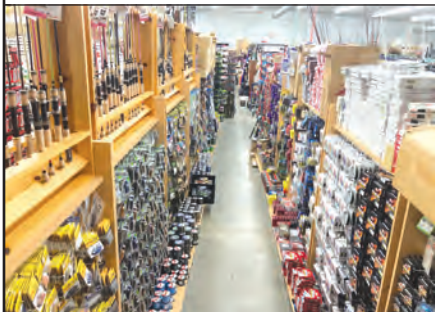
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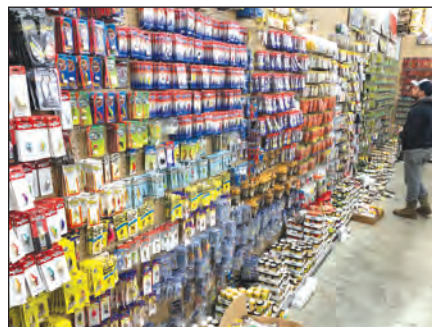


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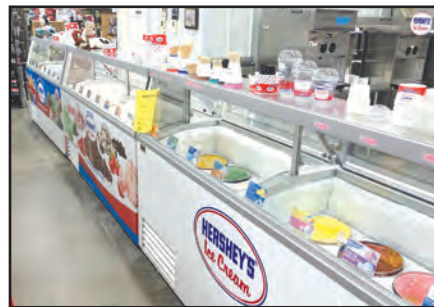
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Rosetta Lott caught a flathead catfish. Photo courtesy of Carls' Pawn Shop in Parkersburg.

attract massive audiences, while other fishing enthusiasts prefer the CWR system (catch-weight-release system), advocating for bass health.

WV has numerous day, evening and night time bass tournaments every year.

Today, recreational game fishing for largemouth bass is a multi-billion dollar industry. The sport has also led to the development of ultramodern fishing gear designed to catch largemouth bass.

This includes drift boats, electronic depth finder instruments, fish finding instruments, special bass boats, float tubes, specialty lures...and so much more.

#### 6. Bass Fishing Is Relatively Inexpensive

Unlike some types of fishing that require you to use fancy fishing rods, costly lures, big boats, or expensive equipment, bass fishing is quite affordable.

The relatively low cost of bass fishing makes it easier for beginners to try out the activity. Many people are more willing to spend a few dollars to purchase basic



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fishing equipment than invest hundreds of dollars in pricier versions.

#### 7. There's a Thriving Bass Fishing Community Around The World

According to industry statistics, there are approximately 30 million bass anglers in America, with Florida playing host to the largest number. The numbers keep grow-

ing as more and more people join the sport.

As a result, many fishing clubs and associations exist with members sharing a common interest in fishing bass.

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## Limited Permit Area Antlerless Deer

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (WVDNR) announced today that hunters may now apply to hunt in 10 limited permit areas during the 2025 antlerless deer season. Applications must be submitted online at WVhunt.com by midnight on Sept. 5.

“We’re proud to offer hunters opportunities that not only support West Virginia’s strong hunting traditions but also play a vital role in managing our deer population responsibly,” said WVDNR Director Brett McMillion. “Whether you’re a seasoned hunter or returning after time away, these lottery hunts provide a chance to enjoy our public lands and contribute to conservation.”

Each year, the WVDNR issues a limited number of Class N stamps to residents and Class NN stamps to nonresidents to hunt antlerless deer in designated counties and public lands where additional harvest is needed. The following locations are open for the 2025 lottery:

Camp Creek State Forest



Amanda McIntyre has a rainbow trout. Photo courtesy of Middle Mountain Sporting Goods in Elkins.

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continue to the next page

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Applicants must apply online at [WVhunt.com](http://WVhunt.com). Group applicants must provide the DNR ID number for each hunter to enter the lottery. Hunters also may call their local WVDNR district office for help with the application process.

Starting Sept. 15, applicants may check their application status by logging into their account at [WVhunt.com](http://WVhunt.com). Successful applicants will be notified by mail by the first week of October. Hunters who receive a permit may hunt antlerless deer on private and public land on Oct. 23-26, Nov. 24 – Dec. 7, Dec. 11-14 and Dec. 28-31.

### State Park Lottery Hunts

The WVDNR is also accepting applications for controlled deer hunts at Beech Fork, Bluestone,

Cacapon Resort, North Bend, Pipestem Resort and Twin Falls Resort state parks. There is a \$15 application fee and applications may include up to two hunters. Applications must be submitted online at [WVhunt.com](http://WVhunt.com) by midnight on Aug. 31.

Permits will be randomly drawn on Sept. 3. Successful applicants will be notified between Sept. 8-26 and must confirm their intent to participate. Hunters chosen for

more than one hunt will be asked to choose one hunt. Detailed information will be provided closer to the hunt dates.

All participants must possess a valid West Virginia hunting license within one week of notification or be legally exempt from purchasing a license. West Virginia hunting regulations apply to all controlled hunts, and deer harvested during these hunts do not count toward the hunter's annual bag limit.

To purchase a hunting license and stamps, visit [WVhunt.com](http://WVhunt.com). For more detailed information about these lottery hunts, visit [WVDnr.gov/wv-lottery-hunts](http://WVDnr.gov/wv-lottery-hunts). For more information about antlerless deer season dates and bag limits, consult the 2025-2026 Hunting and Trapping Regulations Summary at [WVDnr.gov/hunting-regulations](http://WVDnr.gov/hunting-regulations).



Rider Rollings landed a nice Ohio River flathead catfish.

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# Hunter Education Classes

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — As excitement builds for fall hunting in West Virginia, the Division of Natural Resources (WVDNR) is reminding anyone born on or after Jan. 1, 1975, that completing a hunter education course is a legal requirement before buying a hunting license.

“Hunter education is the foundation of safe and responsible hunting,” said WVDNR Director Brett McMillion. “Our program is designed to give new hunters the knowledge and confidence they need to enjoy West Virginia’s traditions while prioritizing safety and conservation.”

The free, two-day course includes 10 hours of instruction on firearm safety, wildlife management, ethics, survival skills, first aid, game identification and other essentials. After completing the class, students must pass a written exam and demonstrate safe firearm handling during a hands-on practical under the supervision of a Natural Resources Police officer or certified volunteer instructor.

“Taking this class is the first step toward becoming part of West Virginia’s proud hunting tradition,” said Natural Resources Police Colonel Bobby Cales. “We emphasize the rules and regulations of our state, but also the responsibility that comes with carrying a firearm and being in the woods.”

Even if a hunter already meets West Virginia’s requirements, completing hunter education is strongly recommended for those planning to hunt in another state that requires proof of hunter education before issuing a license. To

continue to the next page

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Easton Justivid had a crankbait for an Ohio Rver freshwater drum.



Nicole Pyles hooked a huge large-mouth on a WV camping trip.





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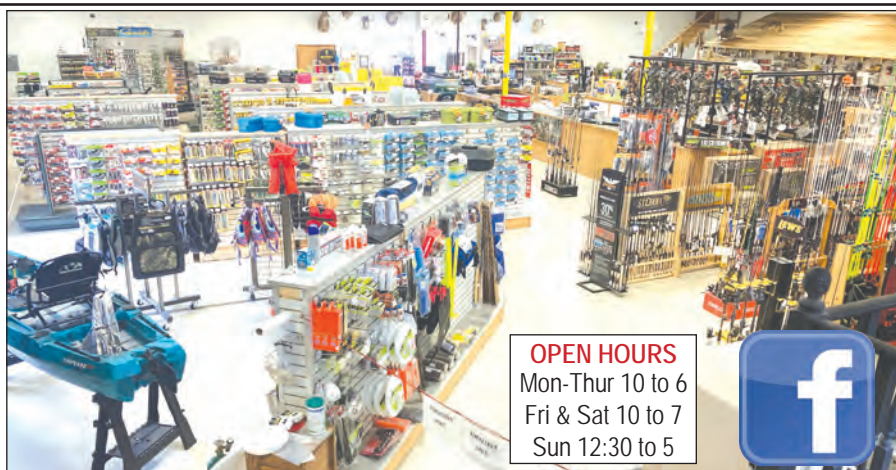
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learn more about West Virginia's hunter education program, visit [WVdnr.gov/hunter-education](http://WVdnr.gov/hunter-education). To find and register for a free class near you, visit [register-ed.com/programs/westvirginia](http://register-ed.com/programs/westvirginia).

Fall Hunting Seasons in West Virginia

West Virginia's slate of fall hunting seasons will start on Aug. 30 with the early split of the black bear firearms season. Squirrel season follows on Sept. 13, and archery seasons for white-tailed deer, black bear and wild boar open on Sept. 27. Fall turkey sea-

sons are in October, and the early firearms season for antlerless deer opens Oct. 23, with additional opportunities in November and December. The traditional buck firearms season runs Nov. 24 to Dec. 7.

For a complete list of season dates and regulations, download the 2025 Hunting Regulations Summary at [WVdnr.gov/hunting-regulations](http://WVdnr.gov/hunting-regulations). To purchase a West Virginia hunting license, visit [WVhunt.com](http://WVhunt.com).

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Matt McCoy reeled in a huge smallmouth bass.



Monty & Chris Koontz doubled turkey hunting this year.

## DVR Spotlight

### Deer Survey

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (WVDNR) announced today that biologists will conduct spotlight surveys across the state in August and September to monitor white-tailed deer populations.

These nighttime surveys are a critical part of the agency's deer management plan and help wildlife managers estimate local deer numbers, track population trends and make informed decisions about future hunting seasons and habitat conservation efforts.

This year's surveys will take place from Aug. 18-29 and Sept. 15-26, and start 30 minutes after sunset. During the survey period, WVDNR staff will drive predetermined routes along county roads, using spotlights to count deer.

During the survey period, residents may notice marked WVDNR vehicles using spotlights at night along these routes. All surveys are conducted safely and responsibly, with precautions in place to limit disturbance to landowners and wildlife.

For more information about the surveys or local survey routes, contact your WVDNR district office.



Josh Murray caught and released a large musky this spring.

## Late Season Catfishing

If you plan on fishing for catfish late in the season, you want to ensure you're as prepared as possible to make your catch. You also want to be safe and protected while on the water to reduce any risk of injury.

As you get your rod and reel ready, make sure you have all your boating safety equipment, such as life jackets, flags, and fire extinguishers, along for the ride.

Then, you can be as ready as possible when you take your boat to your favorite fishing spot, increasing your chances of having a good time and seeing success in your efforts.

Here are a few of the best tips for late-season catfish fishing.

Understanding Catfish Behavior in Late Season

The later in the season, the more

the water temperature drops, which means fish habitat and behavior start to change. They'll typically move into deeper waters where the changing temperature affects them less, and they can be more comfortable until warmer

continue to page 32



John Christopher caught an 11 1/4 lb. rainbow spring trout.

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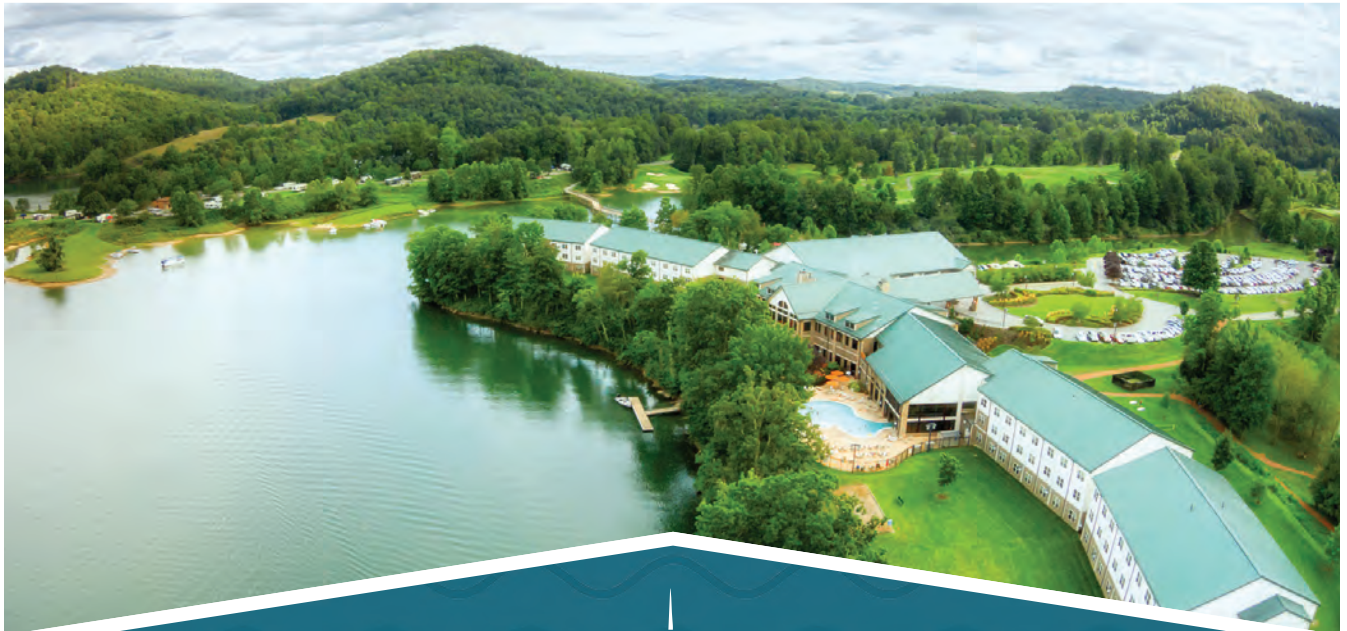


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weather comes around again.

Their metabolism will also slow down, and they'll become less active. Since they will feed less frequently, you'll need more strategic location and bait choices if you're going to catch them. That can make for a great challenge and add to the experience of catfish fishing.

### What Are the Ideal Locations for Late-Season Catfishing?

One of the most important aspects of fishing is finding the best fishing spots.

To reel in some catfish late in the season, you'll want to focus on deep holes and channels, including the deeper parts of lakes and rivers, where these fish tend to group in colder weather. You can also look for warm water inflows, where warmer water enters a lake or river.

Additionally, consider areas around sunken logs, underwater ledges, and brush piles, which provide shelter and are great spots for finding fish. Many fish make their way to these areas because they're looking for protection from predators, so it's a common place to find them.

### Use the Right Baits and Techniques

Choose live bait like shad, minnows, and small bluegill, or freshly cut bait pieces like shad or carp, as they release strong scents that attract fish from a distance.

No matter the bait you choose, use slow and methodical movements when presenting it. This technique will help match the reduced activity levels of the fish you're trying to catch.

### Tackle and Gear Considerations

When you're catfish fishing, you'll want sturdy rods and reels. It's essential to ensure that your equipment will handle larger fish's weight and fighting ability, especially if you're fishing in deeper waters where bringing your catch to the surface may take some time.

You also need a sensitive line since that helps you detect subtle bites from less aggressive fish. Use appropriate weights to keep your bait near the bottom, and consider slip sinker rigs to provide you with better bite detection. That combination can give you more opportunities for a great catch.

### Timing and Patience

Late afternoon and early evening are the prime times to catch these fish, as they'll start becoming more active when the water cools. It's crucial to be patient, though.

Prepare for longer wait times be-

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tween bites since fish are typically less aggressive when the water is colder.

### Safety and Comfort

While you're out on the water in colder temps, be sure to dress appropriately since late-season weather can be unpredictable.

Choose layered clothing options to help you stay warm and dry and

continue to the next page

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Nathan Wayne reeled in a huge rainbow trout.

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to give you choices if you become too warm or cold. Of course, it's not just about what you wear. You also want to make sure your boat is safe and secure.

To do that, ensure that it's equipped with all the necessary safety gear and that you're prepared for changing weather conditions that might create choppy waters. By paying close attention and being prepared, you can have a better fishing experience and minimize the risk of a boating accident or ending up in cold waters without the right safety gear.

Pay Attention to Local Knowledge and Regulations

Before heading out for your fishing trip, check local fishing reports and contact other local anglers to stay updated and aware. This information can help you get a lot of insight into the activity and patterns of fish in the area so you know how to be prepared for  
continue to the next page



Matt Cronin caught a 42" flathead catfish on a bass jig lure.

# GUN SHOWS



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## R & R SHOWS

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**SEPT. 27-28, 2025** - PARKERSBURG, WV - NAT'L GUARD ARMORY

**OCT. 11-12, 2025** - HURRICANE, WV - PUTNAM CO. PARKS & RECS CONVENTION CENTER

**OCT. 18-19, 2025** - ELKINS, WV - PHIL GAINER COMMUNITY CENTER

**OCT. 25-26, 2025** - CLARKSBURG, NAT'L GUARD ARMORY

**NOV. 8-9, 2025** - LEWSIBURG, WV - STATE FAIR GROUNDS-WV BUILDING

**DEC. 13-14, 2025** - FLATWOODS, WV - DAYS INN CONFERENCE CENTER

**DEC. 20-21, 2025** - PARKERSBURG, WV - NAT'L GUARD ARMORY

**JAN. 3-4, 2026** - CLARKSBURG, WV - NAT'L GUARD ARMORY

**JAN. 10-11, 2026** - HURRICANE, WV - PUTNAM CO. PARKS & RECS CONFERENCE CENTER

**JAN. 31-FEB. 1, 2026** - LEWISBURG, WV - STATE FAIRGROUNDS - WV BUILDING

**FEB. 7-8, 2026** - FLATWOODS, WV - DAYS INN CONFERENCE CENTER

**FEB. 14-15, 2026** - PARKERSBURG, WV - NAT'L GUARD ARMORY

**MAR. 28-29, 2026** - HURRICANE, WV - PUTNAM CO. PARKS & RECS CONFERENCE CENTER

**APR. 11-12, 2026** - CLARKSBURG, WV - NAT'L GUARD ARMORY

MORE DATES/LOCATIONS TO COME



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your excursion.

The more you know about the quirks of local waterways, the easier it is for you to find the best fishing spots, too.

No matter what other anglers suggest, though, follow local regulations and fishing limits. Most localities have specific requirements about the size and number of fish you can catch and keep, and you don't want to run afoul of the law.

Boating and fishing regulations are in place to ensure sustainable fishing practices, so they're essential.

## Adapting to Weather Conditions

As we mentioned, fish are generally less active during sudden cold fronts, so you'll want to adjust your fishing strategy accordingly. If you can fish during an extended period of stable weather, you'll have a more predictable and productive outcome.

There are never guarantees, but you want to set yourself up for fun and success as much as possible.

## Stay Safe on All Your Catfish Fishing Adventures

Knowing how to stay safe when fishing from a boat is essential. One of the best ways to do that is to take a boating education course through Boat-Ed!

Our online safety course will give you valuable information about safety and etiquette so you can safely boat and fish.



John Hull reeled in a huge Kanawha River flathead catfish.

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## Fishing Trivia

People have been fishing for, at least, 40000 years, which is a long time! And people continue to practice this ancient hobby. The main difference is that they don't fish because their lives depend on it. They fish because it is fun. Plus, fishing is a great way to connect with nature, with others, and with your past.

Fish can swim backward

While there is no reason for fish to swim backward, most of them can do it if the need arises. The sharks can't, though. Their hard fins don't bend. Therefore, they can neither swim backward nor stop swimming suddenly. It is a little funny how the top predator can't swim as it pleases. But everything should have some sort of balance, right?

In fact, if you manage to grab a shark by its tail and pull it, it will die. But who in heaven will do that?

The first fishing hooks were made out of bone, stone, or wood.

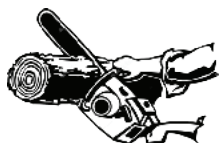
People started fishing with their bare hands. But as time passed by, people started to realize that they can use some tools to make fish-

continue to page 36

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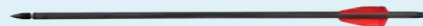


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ing easier. So, they begin to use harpoons, nets, and fishing hooks.

However, there weren't any blacksmiths around to make metal hooks. So, people created hooks with what they had around. That's how they invented the gorge, the first fishing hook. It was a straight piece of wood or bone with two pointy ends. Some anglers still use the legendary gorge today.

Later on, the shape changed to the curved shape we know today. Bluefin tuna: The treasure of the sea

In some countries, canned tuna is so inexpensive that people use it to feed their cats. But bluefin meat is a different story. The price per pound sits around 20 to 200 dollars. So, a 300-pound fish could put between 6000 and 60000 dollars in your pocket. Crazy, right?

Two of the most expensive bluefin tunas ever sold had a price tag of 736 thousand and 3.1 million dollars. Yes, they were worth more than your house or car!

However, you can't fish bluefin as you please, as they are protected by some regulations. Plus, fishing them is not easy. Bluefins lurk in the depths, and you must battle them for hours. And even though you manage to reel the fish in, if you don't dispatch it properly, you can render the meat useless. A little sad if you ask us. So, it takes strength, ability, luck, and never of steel to catch them.

Black marlin, Sailfish, and Swordfish: The speed demons of the sea  
In terms of speed, the sailfish, black marlin, and swordfish have no match. They are the fastest fish in the world. Well, in this case,

seas. The sailfish alone can swim up to 70 miles per hour, which equals 61 knots. It is faster than most yachts available and faster than your average boat. Be ready for a hell of a fight.



Victoria Hart is pleased with her Middle Island Creek catfish.



## DEER FROM 2024



Michael Cooper used his bow for a wide spread 17 point buck.



Mikey Brown hunted in Logan County for an impressive buck.



Shelby McCasland hunted in Brooke County for her 9 point.

Archery season begins on Sept 28. Send in your buck or bear pics. Form is on page 38. Good luck and hunt safely!



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[www.rockcave.iga.com](http://www.rockcave.iga.com)

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



Cliff Jones caught a 38" blue catfish from the Ohio River.

## LARGE FISH & GAME PICS WANTED

CLIP OUT TO MAIL

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_  
 State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fish \_\_\_\_\_ Pound \_\_\_\_\_ Oz \_\_\_\_\_  
 Deer \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_ #Points \_\_\_\_\_

We are looking for **LARGE** fish & game pictures from 2025.



**NO  
DOES**

Send Photo To:  
**WVS**  
**P.O. Box 5521**  
**Vienna, WV**  
**26105**

**TEXT 304-482-7217**

Photos Will Be Returned

E-mail [wvasport@gmail.com](mailto:wvasport@gmail.com)

**Advertise In The W. Va. Sportsman - Details Are On Page 3 - Low Rates**

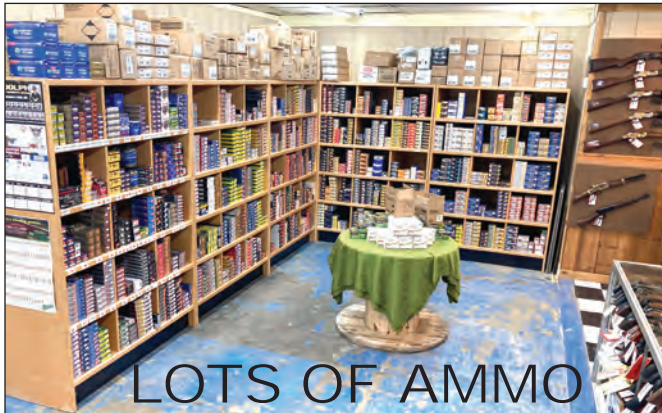




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**304-372-1323**

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