

KANSAS

Wildlife & Parks

MARCH/APRIL 2012

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Spring Into Outdoor Fun

Spring is almost here. After the January weather we experienced across the state, it makes the wait that much more excruciating. Whether you like to hunt, fish, hike, or bike, Kansas has something great to offer every outdoor enthusiast.

Kansas has some of the best turkey hunting in the nation, offering exciting hunts for the Rio Grande or Eastern subspecies. The two sometimes share the same areas. This has resulted in some hybridization. Public hunting areas and Spring Turkey WIHA areas have consistently been some of the best places to take an old tom.

Early spring brings some of the best fishing Kansans will experience throughout the year. Walleye start the ball rolling, with males lining up on the rip-rap in March. The females stand out in deeper water and are less apt to bite, but the males can be aggressive. Just thinking of seeing those glowing marble eyes light up the water at night gets my fever up.

The white bass will make their annual pilgrimage up reservoir tributaries to spawn in early April. The Marais des Cygnes, Fall, Dragoon, Rock, Wakarusa, Smoky Hill, Solomon, and Neosho are just a few of the many rivers that act as white bass highways, and anybody who has caught whites on light tackle knows that there is nothing docile about the way they strike a jig. Get ready for some shoulder jerking action when you tangle with the white bass this spring.

Crappie head to the shore in April as the water temperature warms. What they might lack in fighting ability compared to the white bass, they make up for in willingness to bite and table fare. I can smell the fillets frying in the skillet right now.

I wouldn't want to leave out the catfish spawn, which usually gets underway in late May and

early June. When you catch them up against the bank spawning and feed them shrimp or crawdads, it can be a very good day. Some of my favorite memories include hitting the channel cat spawn and catching a limit of hard fighting, good eating catfish. I always pick the areas where I hit the crappie on the banks because they like to spawn in the same areas.

Make sure you check the regulations summary, which includes a lake-by-lake listing of size and creel limits. Also, check out the 2012 *Fishing Forecast* to find lakes with the kind of fishing you enjoy. Find it, along with weekly fishing reports, on the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism's website, www.kdwpt.state.ks.us.

Our children are the future of our outdoor resources and recreation. Kansas is proactive in giving opportunities to our youngsters. Check out our special youth hunting seasons or find an Outdoor Kids Day event or kids' fishing clinic near you. We all need to make an effort to get our kids outdoors. One good experience will get a child hooked for life.

There are hundreds of miles of trails in Kansas suited for hiking, biking, and horseback riding. Whether you chose to ride through the blooming redbuds in the east, by the sweet smelling plum thickets in the sandhills, or through the rolling tall-grasses of the Flint Hills, Kansas has a vast variety of terrain to explore and admire.

So, oil up the guns, reels, and bike chains. Sharpen your hooks or your shooting eye. Re-shoe the horse or your own feet, break out the golf clubs, and hit the great Kansas outdoors. The only thing wrong with spring in Kansas is there isn't enough time to do everything that Kansas has to offer. 

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March/April 2012

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Front Cover: A magnificent Rio Grande gobbler struts to attract hens during the spring breeding season. Turkey season opens April 11. Mike Blair snapped the shot. **Back Cover:** A float tube can be an economical alternative to a boat and is a great way to fish small waters close to home. Mike Blair took the photo.



Editorial Creed: To promote the conservation and wise use of our natural resources, to instill an understanding of our responsibilities to the land.

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Letters . . .

PHOTO ISSUE KUDOS

Mr. Miller,

I have been a subscriber for four or five years now and finally have gotten motivated to send you this e-mail. As a dedicated Coloradoan, I really enjoy each issue of *Kansas Wildlife & Parks* magazine but especially look forward to the annual photo issue every year. This year's photo magazine is truly wonderful once again. Thank you for all your work to produce such a fine publication. As I happily looked through the pages, one thing struck me that I thought I might mention. Each page is interestingly set with the subject photograph floated over a beautiful pastoral view somewhere across Kansas. As I turned each page and enjoyed each picture, I noticed something. The lovely background scene is the same picture throughout the magazine. That is surprising considering all the possible options you probably have for other beautiful view shots across Kansas. It's not a big thing, but wouldn't it be even more interesting if different scenes had been used for the background wallpaper? You probably have almost unlimited possibilities for beautiful views of rural Kansas to use for background shots, which would add even more interest to each page. Using different background shots might have made a big problem for you to match the best background with each picture, but might have been worth the effort.

This is only an observation and not meant to detract at all from the wonderful job you and your staff have done to produce this beautiful publication. Thanks again for your obvious dedication. We the readers are the winners because of your fine work.

Jon Ewell
Colorado Springs, Colo.

Good idea. Watch for next year's photo issue.

Miller

HUNTING with Kent Barrett HERITAGE

Preparation

Now that spring has arrived, we can look back on another hunting season. Now's a good time to reflect on this year's hunts and consider just how successful we were.

Typically, success is directly proportional to our level of preparation. Were you as prepared this season as you could have been? Kansas Hunter Education instructors teach students that ethical hunters have a responsibility to prepare themselves, both physically and mentally, as well as their equipment, before the hunt.

Every day I get reports of hunting incidents occurring around the world. I am convinced that a majority of these occur because of hunter fatigue. Whether they involve swinging on game, not identifying the target before shooting, unsafe equipment handling, and especially treestand incidents, most have some basis in hunter fatigue. It is difficult to perform well in activities requiring high levels of dexterity when tired.

The great Green Bay Packer head coach Vince Lombardi used to tell his players, "Fatigue makes cowards of us all." I know for sure that fatigue does not make me more nimble. Now would be a good time to begin a fitness regimen that, over the course of the year, would have you

prepared for the activities of next hunting season. Being responsible means that this would be a good time to check with your physician before you start a new fitness program. Physical preparation is part of being a responsible hunter.

Another aspect of preparation is mental. An ethical hunter knows his abilities so that during the hunt he or she can be successful within those capabilities. Through preparation and practice, we can come to know with a certain confidence what we are capable of doing with our chosen equipment. I believe this confidence allows hunters to fondly recall great memories of past successful hunts. Being unsure causes stress and anxiety, which is not the stuff of great memories.

Equipment preparation is our final consideration. Our equipment doesn't have to be the best, the most expensive or the most powerful. But it does have to be a good fit to us and be in good condition. A good cleaning and inspection provides a chance to know our equipment better, to ensure that it is in good working order and to make any needed repairs or changes well before the season begins. Sighting in doesn't have to be a long, painful or unpleasant experience. It can be combined easily with our pre-hunt practice sessions, making an effective use of our time at the range.

A little planning today followed up with some practice in the field tomorrow can have us well-prepared for opening day of whatever is our chosen season. Then we can look back with cherished memories of what makes a hunt great; family, friends and time spent in the beautiful Kansas outdoors.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES ONLINE

The Kansas Legislature is in session, and KDWPT wants to help anyone interested in the outdoors keep track of legislation that may impact wildlife and outdoor recreation. The latest developments in the 2012 Legislature are just a computer click away at Legislative Update Report.

The status of bills from last year is posted, and bills carried over are updated when acted upon. In addition, new bills that affect the agency will be posted as they come before either chamber of the Legislature. The page will be updated regularly throughout the session. For quick and easy notification of action, visitors to the page may subscribe to receive email updates.

The Legislative Update Report provides concise, up-to-date summaries of these issues. In addition, a link is provided to the Kansas Legislature website, which allows visitors to quickly and conveniently view the complete text of a bill and track its progress during the 2012 session.

To view the report, click the "Legislative Update Report" button on the KDWPT homepage, www.kdwpt.state.ks.us.

-KDWPT News

While the winter of 2011-2012 may be noted as a mild one weather-wise, it will go down in history for having the most reports of snowy owls in Kansas. At the time of this writing, there had been more than 100 reports of this magnificent northern owl species from across the state. Most birds were seen along the northern two tiers of counties, but some were reported as far south as Kingman, Pratt and Hamilton counties. Cheyenne Bottoms hosted as many as four snowy owls at one time, and multiple birds were observed at other locations in Russell County, Cinton Lake, Perry Lake and Quivira National Wildlife Refuge.

There has been much speculation as to why we saw this large influx of owls, called an irruption. The most widely accepted theory is that high numbers of lemmings (small rodents) in the Arctic breeding grounds led to a higher than normal production of young owls. Once these young birds fledged and began to hunt on their own, their natural instinct was to fly to less-harsh latitudes in search of more abundant prey. Snowy owl clutch sizes range from a low of zero to three eggs when prey is not abundant and to as many as fourteen when the lemming population is high. If they are successful in learning how to hunt on their own, they then move to areas of more abundant prey species, especially after they have depleted prey animals in their local area.

Snowy owls (*Bubo scandiacus*) are circumpolar, meaning they are found around the globe in the northern hemisphere. They are highly nomadic, traveling scores of miles in search of food, even from continent to continent, and they may even spend time out on pack ice, hundreds of miles from the nearest land. This species breeds in the tundra regions, many above the Arctic Circle. The total worldwide population of snowy owls is estimated at 300,000, but it has been declining slowly in many regions. Irruptive events such as we saw last winter happen only once every two or three decades, with smaller numbers seen in our region observed every three to five years. The last large irruption of snowy owls in Kansas occurred in 1974-1975, with 81 reports logged, so it may be a long time before we see something of this magnitude here again.

Snowy owls are the heaviest owls in North America, weighing from 40-70 ounces. They have a wingspan of 54-65 inches and can be 20-27 inches long. Adult males are almost totally white, and females and immature birds will have varying degrees of black or brownish-gray barring or spots. The younger the bird, the darker the barring, with female birds keeping some barring or spots their entire life. Most of the birds that have been observed in Kansas appeared to be young.

They are opportunistic hunters, feeding primarily on lemmings in the Arctic but also hares and other small to medium-sized mammals, waterfowl, shorebirds, grouse, gulls, fish, and carrion. Their movements after the breeding season are dependent on food supplies, so if food is scarce in an area, they tend to move on. They are considered diurnal, although most hunting activity probably occurs at dawn and dusk here in Kansas.

BIRD BRAIN with Mike Rader

A very Snowy winter in Kansas



Mike Rader photo

Most snowy owls were seen along roads and highways, in agricultural fields, and at marshes and lakes. Many of the birds seen in Kansas last winter were in very poor condition, with no fat reserves and reduced muscle mass. Of the dozen or more birds found dying or dead, most were either starving to death or extremely dehydrated. They get water from the food they eat, so if they are unsuccessful for a long period of time, they spiral into dehydration and malnourishment. It is suspected that many, if not most of the birds that we observed in Kansas, will not survive the 2,000-mile-plus trip back to the Arctic.

Perhaps the silver lining is that this winter's irruption afforded many Kansans the opportunity to see and observe these beautiful birds. It has given nature center staff and other wildlife education specialists the chance to provide more information to interested individuals and groups. I'd say there were more questions answered about snowy owls this winter than ever before in our state.

Mark Robbins at the University of Kansas and Chuck Otte with the Kansas Ornithological Society recorded all the credible snowy owl reports from Kansas. Most of the birds that did not survive were taken to KU and will become part of their permanent bird specimen collection. There will undoubtedly be research done on the sightings and bird specimens from this winter, possibly years into the future. It's good to know that birds that did not survive their trip to Kansas will become a valuable part of our natural history. More information on the snowy owl invasion can be found on the Kansas Ornithological Society's website - www.ksbirds.org.

Letters . . .

PHOTO ISSUE KUDOS, TOO

Editor:

Congratulations! You've outdone yourself again! We look forward to every issue, but especially this one (Jan./Feb.)! There are birds we had never even heard of and the scenery pictures are spectacular! You provide a wonderful service and we appreciate every page!!

Keep up the great work!!

Jim and Pat Meyer
(email)

Editor:

A compliment is in order for the fine collection of photos in the January/February 2012 issue of *Kansas Wildlife & Parks* magazine. A good piece of work, indeed. Many memories of a Kansas boyhood were prompted by these pictures.

Thanks very much.

D. J. Koener
Albuquerque, NM

BUDGING PHOTOGRAPHER

Dear Mr. Miller,

My name is Raquel Johnson. I live near El Dorado. My husband recently bought me a new Nikon D7000 camera. Not long ago I decided to take my camera out to take pictures and learn about the camera. It was a gloomy day with rain and mist. I was traveling along gravel roads near my home north of El Dorado Lake and east of highway 177 when I came across a huge flock of snow geese mixed with



IT'S THE LAW

with Kevin Jones

Alabama Rig?

Throughout the year we receive inquiries about whether a piece of equipment or some new method is legal for fishing or hunting in Kansas. Human inventiveness being what it is, there seems to be a never ending stream of ideas being put in action to create a new product. It is sometimes challenging to determine whether this latest product is legal in Kansas.

The Kansas statutes first establish that any method or means, – meaning technique or equipment – must be allowed by statute or regulation. If the law does not say it is legal, then it is illegal. In a limited number of situations, the statutes direct what is legal; however, the regulations usually list the legal equipment that may be used.

One of the more recent series of questions involves what is being called an Alabama rig for fishing and whether it is legal in Kansas. For those not aware of this rig, it has been described as a smaller version of an umbrella rig that may be cast by an angler rather than trolled. It most commonly consists of five stiff wires being bundled together at one end that forms a connection point for the fishing line. At the other end of the wires, swivel snaps are attached to each wire, and then the wires are splayed out in various configurations. Lures or baited hooks are then attached to the swivel snaps. When the rig is reeled in by the angler, the group of lures simulates a small school of bait. Reports of success and effectiveness vary, but the question is whether it is legal to use it in Kansas.

Kansas fishing regulations limit each fishing line to two baited hooks or lures. Therefore, in order to be legal, an Alabama rig may only have two baited hooks, or lures with hooks, attached to it. The remaining wires may be used for spinners, flashers or other attractors that do not have hooks.

Each state has its own set of laws concerning legal fishing equipment. Just because something may be legal in one state does not mean that it is legal in another state. Always read the fishing regulations for that state before fishing, and, if in doubt ask before acting.



WAY outside

BY BRUCE COCHRAN

WE APPRECIATE
WHAT YOU BOYS
ARE DOING.

THANKS, M'AM.
BUT WE'RE JUST
TURKEY HUNTERS.



Boat SAFE

with Erika Brooks

Get Ready To Boat!

Spring is just around the corner and warmer days are alluring to everyone who enjoys the outdoors, especially boaters. Whether taking advantage of early season fishing or just testing out the boat after a long winter's nap, many boaters find their way to the water this time of year.

While the air warms quickly, water temperatures stay cooler longer. If a boater is unprepared for an accident this time of year, events that might be minor in warmer weather can quickly turn into tragedy. Following some simple safety tips can help keep your Spring boating experience safe and enjoyable.

- Prepare your boat – plan ahead to check the condition of your boat and its equipment before you decide to head to the lake.
- Check the weather forecast – Spring in Kansas can be very volatile, and boaters should be prepared for bad weather on every outing. Strong winds and large waves increase the risks of a boater ending up in the water.
- File a float plan – Let someone know where you are going and when you plan to return.
- Dress for the water temperature, not the weather – Water robs the body of heat 25 times faster than air. Avoid 100 percent cotton garments. Dress in layers, and top it off with some kind of waterproof jacket.
- Bring extra clothes – Carry an extra set of clothes in a sealed plastic bag just in case somebody does get wet.
- Don't overload your boat – An overloaded boat sits lower in the water, which increases the chance of swamping or capsizing.
- Always wear a life jacket – A life jacket keeps a person afloat even after the shock of falling into cold water. They also provide excellent insulation against cold, wind and rain.
- Boat Sober – Alcohol affects balance, vision, judgment, and coordination – all factors of safe boating. Combined with the stressors of boating (sun, wind, noise, vibration), alcohol can impair a person on the water much faster than on land.



SPRING PRE-LAUNCH CHECKLIST

- Boat registration and certificate decal current
- Sound producing device, horn or whistle working
- Navigation lights, bulbs and fuses functional
- Life jackets, serviceable condition, proper number and type
- Fire extinguishers fully charged
- First aid kit, replace expired supplies and restock
- Fuel lines, check for cracks and good connections
- Electronic gear, check batteries
- Dock and anchor lines in good condition
- Boat trailer, wheel bearings, tires, and trailer lights
- Change oil (four-stroke motor)
- Check oil reservoir (two-stroke motor)
- Change lower unit grease

A little bit of preparation before you head to the lake can add to your enjoyment and safety on the water. Review the boating regulations and make sure you are familiar with the navigation rules. If you are under the age of 21, make sure you have passed an approved Boater Education course before operating a vessel. Most importantly, make the most of your outing and enjoy your spring boating adventure. Wear It Kansas!



Letters . . .

grays and Canadians. I got out of my car and snuck up on them to get pictures of them in the field and taking flight. Watching them take flight all at once was a beautiful sight. The picture of the wood duck was taken at Durachen creek near my home. The picture of Mallards and Canadian geese was taken on a watershed northeast of Rosalia. I am very impressed with my new camera and the pictures. I hope you can publish them for others to enjoy.

Thank you,

Raquel Johnson
(email)

PASSING IT ON

Editor:

I am going to guess that this month's (November/December 2011) article titled "The Power Of Passing It On" was written by you. If not your namesake did a magnificent job in sending a message. I, too, was fortunate to have a dad that put me ahead of hunting buddies when we took to the field. Although opportunities were not as frequent due to his obligations to work and support a family, I knew if he had a chance, I would be with him. I can also tell you that from the time my son was able to participate in the sport, I never left home without him. Well as you know if we keep on feeding them, they grow up, leave home, get married and have children of their own. He talks a lot about when his son will join him in the field. I guess apples do not fall far from the tree.

It was a great article with a message that was spot on.

Bill Van Deventer
(email)

Mr. Van Deventer:

Thanks for taking the time to email. It was me and it's all true. I am one of the lucky sons, as are you, your son and your grandson. Thanks, too, for passing it on.

Miller

The Way I See It

Todd Workman

First Aid And Other Turkey Hunting Skills

I was at a stop light, singing like the cutest turkey on this side of the Kansas River with my new diaphragm turkey call, when it became lodged in my throat. After a few unsuccessful attempts, I was able to regurgitate the call along with my chaw into my lap, by ramming my back against the seat several times – a sort of self imposed Heimlich Maneuver.

At that point, I did notice that several concerned motorists were staring at me. Whether it was my professional ability to exude the sounds of a love sick hen that had them mesmerized, or the sight of a man upping up a bright green object with the appropriate amount of spittle and tobacco is anybody's guess. I did observe a couple of drivers dry heaving. To them I want to offer my sincere apologies – but if I can put up with a little discomfort when I am polishing my turkey calling skills, they can put up with the side effects!

Every turkey hunter is struck with the fever this time of year. Pots are sanded, boxes are chalked, and the roof of your mouth is a raw piece of flesh. A month before the season, no turkey hunter can eat solid food. We all live on lukewarm soup and ice cream.

Equipment is the big reason that I am successful in the field (or so I tell the wife). There is no such thing as too many calls or too much camo clothing. I prefer to buy anything new that could be the difference between carrying out that finicky gobbler and trudging back to the truck with 200 pounds of gear and an empty tag. I suggest carrying two of every call that might work and one of everything else.

Camouflage clothing that fits the tree you are sitting under is important. There are hundreds of different types of deciduous and coniferous trees in Kansas. A serious turkey hunter will have clothing to match any scenario. You must convince your wife of the importance of being invisible in the field. I have a set that looks like my couch cushions because after the wife sees how much my turkey equipment cost, it is good to be invisible at home also.



Mike Blair photo

The firearm is the last important piece of the turkey puzzle. My shotgun is a matte black Winchester X2. I shoot 3 1/2-inch No. 4s. Always pattern your gun before the hunt so that you can find out where the dense part of the pattern is. I also like to practice shooting in positions that I am most likely to shoot a turkey from.

My most practiced shots are the shots that I have encountered in the field. The "turn and fall with a stick in your eye" and the "right leg numb" shot are two that any serious turkey hunter needs to practice. The "swivel and shoot with your pants around your ankles" shot is a must to master. (I practice this shot in low light conditions or at night because the neighbors just don't understand turkey hunting.) My favorite shot is the "Rooster Cogburn one-handed" shot, which is necessary when a gobbler has sneaked up beside you without gobbling. You swing the gun up and fire with the right arm fully extended. This shot can be effective but rather painful. I attempted this shot once on a sneaky eastern and while I killed the bird, I spent the next minute writhing in pain, blindly trying to find my shoulder. I have the utmost respect for the pain threshold of John Wayne.

Kansas offers prime turkey hunting across the entire state for two wild turkey subspecies – the Rio Grande and the Eastern. Our spring turkey hunters boast one of the highest success rates of any state in the nation. Now is the time to take inventory and start practicing. Good luck and here is hoping that you get to hit the turkey woods this spring.

Letters . . .

NO TO HUNTING LODGES

Editor:

A politician thinks only of his next election. A statesman thinks about the next generation. A shooter thinks only of putting a mounted deer head on his wall. A hunter thinks of providing meat to feed his family.

I take issue against the article "Commercial Operations Fill Niche," (September/October 2011). This state does not, I repeat, DOES NOT need more hunting lodges so that rich shooters can go out and "kill" a deer.

This state should provide more public hunting areas so that a true hunter can "harvest" food to put on the supper table at home.

(Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks should get their priorities straight!)

Kenneth L. Brinkman
Augusta

Mr. Brinkman,

We agree more than disagree. However, the article did not mention that more hunting lodges were needed. It did mention that hunting preserves, or controlled shooting areas, fill a niche for a customer base. Most of these operations cater to bird hunters, not the trophy deer hunters you dislike. Most CSAs are operated by landowners who started looking for a way to make their farming and ranching operations profitable.

In my opinion, hunter ethics are a personal matter and are not guided by where a hunter hunts. I know many who love to hunt trophy-sized deer for the challenge they present. However, they also love to process the meat and feed it to their families.

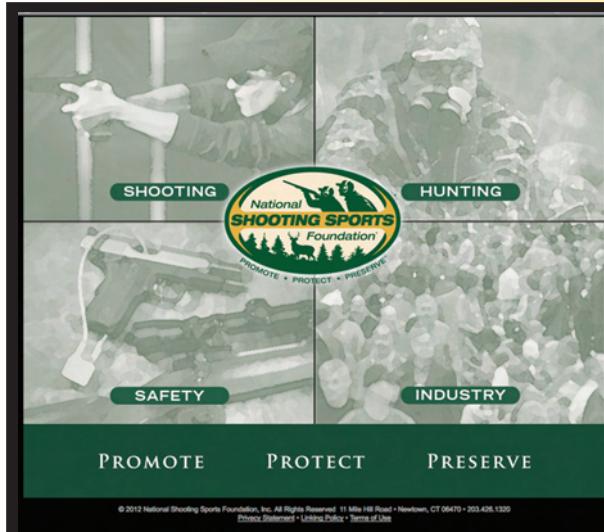
More than 97 percent of Kansas land is privately-owned, and buying a significant amount of land for public hunting is cost prohibitive. However, KDWPT leases more than 1 million acres of private land and opens it to hunters. I'd say we have our priorities right in line.

Miller

On The Web

with Mark Shoup

Outdoor Pressroom Wildflower Time



UNIVERSE WITHIN

Anyone who is interested in the outdoors has been enthralled by the nighttime sky, but have you ever thought about how that infinite universe up there mirrors the molecular world? Explore both at micro.magnet.fsu.edu/primer/java/scienceopticsu/powersof10. From the website:

"View the Milky Way at 10 million light years from the Earth. Then move through space towards the Earth in successive orders of magnitude until you reach a tall oak tree just outside the buildings of the National High Magnetic Field Laboratory in Tallahassee, Fla. After that, begin to move from the actual size of a leaf into a microscopic world that reveals leaf cell walls, the cell nucleus, chromatin, DNA, and finally into the subatomic universe of electrons and protons."

It's a fascinating journey, and the site is loaded with information and photographs of the microscopic world around us – from gemstone crystals to a single DNA – as well as resources for teachers.

NATIONAL SHOOTING SPORTS FOUNDATION

The National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) is a great source of information for anyone interested in hunting, shooting, gun safety, or the shooting industry. Its website, nssf.org, provides easy entry into each of these subjects. From here, the viewer may research topics such as where to hunt, what's new in your state, NSSF blog, finding outfitters and taxidermists, families hunting, targets, game recipes, educational materials, research and statistics, conservation groups, grants, and modern sporting arms. You can also find videos, the latest news, and even sign up for the group's periodic news package, which comes to your email weekly.

The NSSF is one of the country's most active advocates for the shooting sports and a great source of news, from Second Amendment issues to conservation.

A screenshot of the Molecular Expressions website, featuring a banner for "Science, Optics & You Interactive Java Tutorials". The banner includes a portrait of Carl Zeiss and links for "PHOTO GALLERY", "OPTICS TIMELINE", "STUDENT ACTIVITIES", "TEACHER RESOURCES", "TUTORIALS", "BACKGROUND", "INTEL PLAY", and "OLYMPUS MIC-D". Below the banner, a section titled "Secret Worlds: The Universe Within" describes the interactive journey through the universe and microscopic world. A search bar is visible in the top right corner.



WILD Mushroom Soup

Avid mushroom hunters are getting the itch to trapse through the woods this spring in search of the coveted morel and other delicious fungi. Although edible mushrooms can exist anytime when conditions permit, spring tends to the season of plenty. Though last fall a friend of mine happened upon a treasure trove of Oyster mushrooms. He asked me to help with making a soup of them, and I jumped at the chance.

The recipe at right serves eight, but like most soups, it gets better after being refrigerated 24 hours. What doesn't get eaten right away can be looked forward to the next night as an addition to the evening meal.

Finely chop 1/3 to 1/2 of the mushrooms and slice or chunk the rest. Finely chop the onions and garlic and set aside. Combine 1 1/2 boxes of broth, 1/2 stick of butter and the finely chopped mushrooms in a large saucepan over high heat. Bring to a boil for 10 minutes to infuse the flavors of the mushrooms into the broth.

While the broth is boiling, dissolve flour in the remaining cold broth in another bowl and mix in the egg yolks and cream. Reduce heat on the broth to medium-low and whisk in the mixture slowly. Then add in the sherry.

Next, melt 1/4 stick of butter in a frying pan and sauté the sliced or chunked mushroom over medium-high heat until they turn golden brown. Then add to simmering broth. Next, use the remaining butter in your frying pan and sauté the onions and garlic together until they turn brown, then add to the soup. Sauté and add the onions and garlic last because the mushrooms would pick up too much of the onion and garlic flavor and overpower the soup. It's mushroom soup, not onion or garlic soup. Simmer for at least 1/2 hour, stirring occasionally, then salt and pepper to taste. If soup is too thin, either simmer longer or add more flour.

MUSHROOM SOUP

two 32-ounce boxes of Swanson's chicken or beef broth
2 pounds of mushrooms
two eggs (yolks only)
one cup cream
1/2 cup cooking sherry
one stick butter
one medium yellow onion
two cloves garlic
1/2 cup flour
one teaspoon sea salt
two teaspoons ground black pepper



FISHIN' with Mike Miller

Catch Fish, Guaranteed

It's true. I can guarantee that you'll catch fish. Got your attention? Well, this isn't about a magic lure or secret fishing hole. The truth is that if you fish long enough and hard enough, you'll catch fish. Oh sure, it may take several hours or even days, but if you stay with it, you will catch fish. And if you pay attention along the way, you'll learn something that will help you catch fish next time.

Good fishermen aren't as lucky as they are optimistic. A long time ago, I decided that people who were optimists made the best anglers. Of course, I was including myself in with the optimists because I am optimistic when I go fishing. You can have all the best gear money can buy, and you won't catch a fish unless you have a pocket full of optimism.

Why? Well, a simple explanation makes sense. It takes optimism to get off the couch and go fishing. You have to believe you'll catch fish just to get motivated to go. And if you believe you're going to catch a fish on your next cast, you'll be ready when that fish strikes. You have to be optimistic to keep fishing after you've spent two hours casting without a bite. And you have to be optimistic to know you'll catch fish if you move to a



Gary Miller photo

new spot or tie on a new lure or get up and go tomorrow.

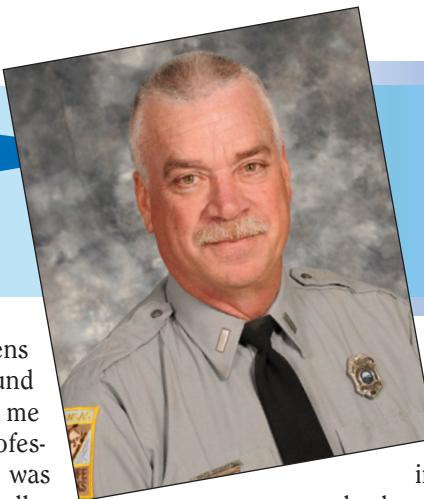
But it boils down to another trait that all successful anglers have, which is ultimately more important than but not possible without optimism. And that is perseverance. It's like the quote, "Genius is 1 percent inspiration and 99 percent perspiration." Being a successful angler is about persevering. Every really good angler I know has gone fishing without catching fish. They don't get discouraged, but they learn and they keep fishing. True anglers have an aptitude for fishing. They like to fish and they keep fishing. And if they keep fishing, they catch fish.

Fish for fun, fish longer and fish more often. There really isn't a secret lure or technique. It's all about perseverance.

PROFILE:

with Mark Shoup

Matt Stucker



I've been checked three times by game wardens in my life. Two times, I was fishing the rivers around Larned in the early 1980s, and Matt Stucker kept me honest. I was impressed by Stucker's polite, professional approach. He seemed to want to know if I was having a good time as much as if I was doing it legally.

Stucker grew up in Leavenworth. His father was not much of a hunter, but for some people, hunting and fishing must be dominate genetic imperatives. Stucker fished the urban streams around Leavenworth with his best friend, and his dad finally took him hunting when he was about 13. Then a cousin who liked to hunt inspired him, and he was hooked.

"My cousin was one of the first hunter education instructors in the state, and I was born just late enough that I had to take the course," Stucker recalls. "He helped me get into it, and my dad bought me my first shotgun when I was 15. A good friend of mine and I did a lot of duck hunting on the Perry marshes. That was my favorite game. We'd get up at 4 a.m., go out and break holes in the ice for our decoys, and slide the broken ice under the unbroken part. Guys who just threw their decoys out on the ice wondered why we always got the most ducks."

This passion continued through Stucker's college days at Kansas University, where he earned a bachelor's degree in environmental studies and wildlife management in 1980. Stucker explains his path to KDWPT:

"I always knew I wanted to do something where I was out and about with hunting and fishing. At first, my idea was to be a biologist, but when I got out of college, I was hired by the Department of Health and Environment, and they put me in the graphic art department, so I just kept putting in my applications to the Fish and Game Commission [now KDWPT]. My job was in Topeka, so I walked in to the Topeka Fish and Game office to visit a lot. On May 18, 1981, the Pratt Office called and asked if I wanted to be a game warden. I said, 'Sure.' When the job came open, they interviewed and hired me over the phone. That was the first time I seriously thought about being a game warden. They said, 'You need to be in Larned on Monday,' and Monday was less than a week away."

In 2000, Stucker was appointed district supervisor for the Law Enforcement Division (now a lieutenant's rank), and in addition to normal game warden duties, he serves as a firearms instructor and armorer. He also directs an eight-man hunting incident team that investigates serious hunting accidents.

When asked who has inspired him the most in his work, Stucker doesn't hesitate.

"That's an easy one — Jim Kellenberger," emphatically referring to the retired regional law enforcement supervisor for southwest Kansas. "He's the most dedicated man I've ever worked for, to both the job and the department. He was one of

the best at making sure that everything was covered. And he put me down in Louisiana for two weeks on a covert operation that led me into working undercover operations. Most anyone who has worked around him would say he's been instrumental in guiding their wildlife career."

Many things about Stucker's career have been satisfying. "The ability to pass on my knowledge to younger officers has been especially gratifying. One specific case that stands out is the North Carolina case, where four or five guys camped near the Stafford/Pawnee County line for five days. We were on them almost 24/7, and none of them had antlered deer permits. Every deer they killed were bucks, and they never kept any meat. We got them prosecuted in federal court."

Stucker reveals his soft spot, however, when he relates what may have been the most satisfying accomplishment of his career. "I worked with Representative Mitch Holmes and [agency attorney] Chris Tymeson for three years to get the 'Life Hunt' law passed. Under this legislation, 10 deer permits are allocated per year for nonresident youngsters with life-threatening illnesses. [Resident permits are over the counter.] There is no drawing; they just work through a nonprofit organization and can obtain a voucher for a permit any time during the season. These experiences have been so uplifting for these kids, but perhaps more so for me."

Stucker has hopes for this agency, particularly his division. "I believe we could be one of the best wildlife law enforcement agencies in the country," he says. "We are geographically located in the perfect spot to impact illegal trade in wildlife. That is my hope, and we're getting there."

"My concern is that kids today are more into playing computer games than getting outside enough," he continues. "We may be losing out on the heritage, but I still see kids who are into it."

Having grown up in Larned, I had to ask how Stucker likes the town.

"I love it!" he exclaimed. "When I first came out here, it didn't take six months for me to say, 'Why would I want to go back east?' The locals are just fantastic, and there is so much more to do outside here. I step outside, and within a few minutes, I have places where local landowners are kind enough to let me hunt. And I feel liked I'm respected locally, too."

Although Stucker has been with the agency 31 years, he has no plans for retirement any time soon. "I still have passion," he says. "This is one of the best jobs you can do. I wouldn't want to do anything else."

And that respect? It's more than local.

THE CHANGING FACE OF OUTDOOR TELEVISION

Outdoor television shows are more popular today than ever before. A wide variety, both in quality and content, are available for viewing on several outdoor-related networks. And up until a few years ago, the faces seen on these shows were mostly males. But that's all changed now, and there are more females filming and hosting all or part of many outdoor television shows.

Some would argue they're just pretty faces to attract male viewers and improve ratings. But a pretty face without content likely wouldn't last too long. Successful females today have to generate quality footage and get the job done come crunch time, regardless of whether they're chasing black bears, trophy whitetails or dangerous African big game. One such hunter who has done exactly that over the last half-dozen years is Nicole Jones.

Jones, and her fiancé, Pat Reeve, host Driven TV on The Outdoor Channel. They were in Topeka in January for the Monster Buck Classic, meeting fans and doing seminars. Promotion is part of the game, and the couple was busy signing autographs and promoting the outdoor lifestyle.

"I love to hunt," Jones said. "I grew up in southern Illinois and started hunting when I was 6 years old with my dad. I have two older brothers, and hunting allows our family to have some quality bonding time."

Jones was a third-grade school teacher before making the switch to outdoor television. The couple travels all over the world hunting and filming, and they wouldn't have it any other way. It's a full-time job for both, and there's plenty of marketing, promotion, contacts, and hunt scheduling and filming to coordinate and plan. Reeve has been in the outdoor business for 20 years, and there's really not a lot of down time, even outside of hunting seasons.

"Nicole has taken on a lot more responsibility," Reeve said. "She really does a great job."

Jones' career has allowed her to pay it forward to some degree.

"My Dad and I are really close, and



he's never hunted outside of Illinois," Jones said. "I took him to Saskatchewan and filmed his hunt. It was pretty special to be able to take him somewhere since he's the one that got me started 20-some years ago."

Family is obviously important to Jones as she talked about Reeve's four children, ages 6 to 15, and turkey hunting this spring.

"We'd love to bring them out here to Kansas and hunt turkeys," Jones said. "Kansas is so cool in that it doesn't restrict kids like some other states do, and you can get them started early."

Reeve and Jones try to film their shows to have appeal to hunters and their families. While most hunters are still male, that demographic has changed a bit over the years, and more females are trying it or wanting to get involved.

"Seeing Nicole on television paves the way for new hunters wanting to give it a try," Reeve said. "The wives and girlfriends think it looks like fun, and they want to participate, and there are a lot of young girls that look up to her as a role model."

This responsibility is one Jones doesn't take lightly. The rewards are worthwhile.

"It's fun to do these shows and have individual kids tell you you're an inspiration to them," Jones said. "That's the

reason we do what we do."

The couple likely spends more time together than the average couple since there's not much separation of free time and work. They film each other's hunts most of the time and it works out well. And the fact Nicole is female really doesn't hinder how it all comes together in the end.

"She's a trooper," Reeve said. "I've been in this business a long time and had a lot of camera guys, and Nicole holds her own just fine. I know I can count on her to get the shot when it counts."

But as you might suspect, spending 24 hours a day together seven days a week might put a bit of a strain on any relationship, personal or professional.

"It has its challenges," they both said smiling. "But we're no different than any other couple in that regard."

Putting it all together and telling a story on film is what it's all about when making a television show. It can be a grind, and both Jones and Reeve know you have to get up and out of bed when that alarm clock goes off seemingly way too early.

"We love doing it as a team," Jones said.

"At the end of the day, the experiences we share bond us as a couple," Reeve said. "You've got to love what you do."

Outdoor Recreation Management System

At long last, the Parks Division is almost ready to launch our Outdoor Recreation Management System (ORMS). Though widely rumored to be a "reservation system," ORMS is much more. Yes, it will allow users to reserve campsites from the comfort of their home computer, but customers planning a weekend getaway can also look online to see a photo of each campsite and whether or not that site is rented. ORMS will, in most cases, save our customers money.

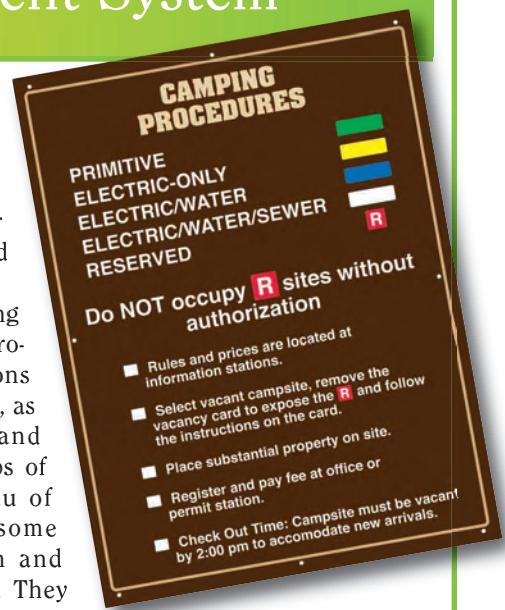
Previously, customers paid a fee for each service purchased. This added up to 50 cents per day, per campsite, plus 50 cents per day for utility service, plus 50 cents per day for daily entrance. ORMS introduces a flat fee per continuous stay. Now, the \$3 fee will cover the campsite rental and utility service for the user's continuous stay. The cost of the annual camping permit was reduced by \$50 this year, so users will see an even greater savings. Second vehicle permits were eliminated, making it easier for users to purchase each permit.

Park staff, too, can look within the system to see what sites are full and who is on that site. This will make emergency notifications much faster. The system will enable staff to mark as unavailable sites that have issues, such as off-line breakers or broken hydrants, and put them back online as they are repaired. We will have data at our fingertips that tells us what sites are rented most often and

which ones see little use, enabling us to make management decisions about how many sites need upgrades or which campgrounds need a change in use.

The vendor providing our system platform provides either reservations or licensing to 40 states, as well as some local and county parks, the Corps of Engineers and Bureau of Reclamation, plus some Canadian, Australian and Puerto Rican systems. They have a lot of experience in meeting the customer needs.

All of our state park offices will be hosting an open house on March 31 to allow customers to purchase their park permits on the last day of off-season pricing and to give demonstrations on the ORMS system.



Have Fun And Be Safe Around The Water

Spring is in the air, and that means the summer recreation season cannot be far behind. Sunrises and sunsets from the beach, fishing, boating, camping, water-skiing, nature hikes, sand volleyball, fireflies, trail rides, campfires and s'mores, family and friends—you can revisit all these memories or build new ones at Kansas state parks. To keep from spoiling those memories, we want to remind our visitors to "Keep It Safe" this summer.

Especially around the water, parents are advised to keep an eye on their children. Lake beaches are not smooth gradual slopes like swimming pools, but may contain steep drop offs and holes even within delineated swimming areas. Outside of marked beaches, the water is even deeper and potentially more dangerous. Wave action can be considerable when the wind is high, and swimming will take more effort. A small child could easily float far away from shore in just a few minutes. Due to the volume of water in the reservoir, the water temperature takes longer to respond to changes in the air temperature and is usually much cooler than a pool would be. Hypothermia is a risk in the water even on warm spring days. When water temperatures are at 70 degrees, a healthy adult can lose consciousness within two to seven hours in the water. Children and older people will be affected in less time than that. There are no lifeguards on duty, so your safety and that of your children is your responsi-

bility.

Also, wildlife can be unpredictable. We encourage visitors to keep their eyes open for wildlife, but also keep their distance. Don't approach wildlife, just stand still and observe it. Allow it plenty of room to escape if your presence makes it feel threatened. And wild animals don't read signs; they can show up just about anywhere, particularly anywhere that smells like food. Keep your food items stored in secure containers. Pay attention to where you walk when moving through campgrounds or paths, so you don't get surprised by a wild creature that you have startled and is reacting to you.

Nature is natural – not straight lines, a little ragged and unkempt around the edges. The terrain in campgrounds can be uneven. On the trails or the boundaries of campgrounds, you might find weeds or even poison ivy that has gone unreported. Bugs, snakes and other creatures can show up uninvited.

However, the need to use care and common sense need not spoil your outdoor adventures. On the contrary, being aware of your surroundings just might allow you to experience nature in all its breath-taking beauty, from a dew-misted spider web sparkling in the morning sun to the smell of wildflowers at dusk. Unplug, relax and enjoy the sunrises and sunsets that Kansas rolls out so spectacularly every day.

Go With The Flow

with Mark VanScoyoc

Color change on the stream due to environmental cues

As temperatures, and hopefully water levels, are on the rise in streams and rivers across the state during spring, some incredible changes are quietly occurring that for the most part go unnoticed.

Increases in temperature and water flow are major cues that trigger spawning



behavior in fish species. Along with these environmental cues, drastic changes in the appearance of many species of stream fish are also occurring. These cues trigger hormonal changes in fish, which in turn cause pigment cells called chromatophores or iridophores to expand or contract thereby

releasing pigments that give different fish species the colors we see when they are at the height of their spawning activity. Other physical changes may also occur, such as the development of small horn-like projections called tubercles. These tubercles may be used in the actual reproductive act for many species or may just be for display to stimulate breeding

behavior. These features have come to be known as distinguishing characteristics for identifying species of stream fish, such as hornyhead chubs, southern redbelly dace, redfin darter, or the cardinal shiner (pictured left). Even the most common fish in the state, the red shiner, takes on brilliant hues of red in its fins and develops tubercles during its spawning season.

Without these environmental cues and the supporting habitat to trigger these changes in stream fish, most would only perceive these to be "silver minnows" that appear identical to one another for the majority of the year. Look below the surface of a stream during these spawning times, and you'll be surprised at what you'll see.

NATIONAL HONORS TO BARBER COUNTY RANCH

The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) has honored the Alexander Ranch of Barber County with the 2011 National Private Lands Fish and Wildlife Stewardship Award. The award recognizes an individual- or family-run farm, ranch, or forest operation that has incorporated proactive conservation and environmental protection measures into its operation. The Alexander Ranch is owned and operated by Ted, Brian, and Mona Alexander.

The Alexander Ranch became eligible for the national award by winning the 2011 Kansas Wildlife Habitat Conservation Award. This national award program receives one nomination from each of the 56 states and territories represented by AFWA.

The Alexanders' decades of dedication to the improvement of native grasslands in an area once over-grazed and degraded by the encroachment of eastern redcedar deserves statewide recognition. Their management efforts created a heterogeneous grassland that benefits livestock and a diverse group of wildlife species.

The ranch covers more than 7,000 acres and has flourished as a custom grazing operation for 27 years. Partnering with several agencies, the Alexanders leveraged resources to optimize the land's environmental capabilities. Through these partnerships, the ranch operated on a rotational grazing system with three grazing cells, each split into many smaller paddocks, allowing 40-45 days post-grazing recovery time for the grass in each paddock. However, in the past two years, the Alexander Ranch experimented with higher stocking rate, higher stock density, and herd impact along with a shorter grazing seasons – resulting in longer periods of grass recovery – which seems to be a success.

Additionally, a cooperative effort with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program and KDWPT was key to many of the accomplishments on the ranch,



Corky Pugh, AFWA 2009 past president, awards Ted and Brian Alexander with AFWA's 2011 National Private Lands Fish and Wildlife Stewardship Award as Cutis Taylor, AFWA 2011 past president, watches.

which is home to many wildlife and aquatic species considered at-risk or in need of conservation. This partnership helped the Alexanders interseed forbs on old cropland acres previously converted to native grass, enhance water developments, restore riparian areas, and expand the grazing system.

The ranch has also entered into a "Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances" with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services. This voluntary agreement guarantees to address the conservation needs of a species before they become listed as endangered or threatened by specifying actions that will remove or reduce threats to the species.

In addition to their outstanding conservation accomplishments, the Alexanders have shared what they learned with other ranchers, either through one-on-one mentoring or through one of the many conservation organizations Ted and Brian belong to. They have opened their ranch to training opportunities for public, state, and federal agency staff and have allowed many university students to conduct wildlife research, including the interaction of wildlife and grazing practices.

The Alexander Ranch is a great example of how excellent ecosystem management can benefit both the producer and Kansas wildlife.

—Chris Berens, habitat conservation ecologist, Pratt



Historically Speaking with Ron Kaufman

Rocky Ford Fishing Area

Some of the larger streams and rivers in Kansas once powered saw and flour mills to serve the state's growing population. The remains of one such mill can be seen at Rocky Ford Fishing Area, along the Big Blue River northwest of Manhattan. The river was once called the "Merrimac" of Kansas, referring to the Merrimack River in New Hampshire and Massachusetts, which powered a number of 19th-century textile mills. The Little and Big Blue rivers were considered to be among the finest mill streams in the U.S.

Under normal conditions, Rocky Ford's flat rock bottom made it a safe river crossing for Native Americans and early pioneers. The Rocky Ford Mill and dam was built on the east side of the river in 1866 at a cost of \$100,000, and was used as a saw and flour mill. The dam was 342 feet long with a 10-foot fall and was made of stout oak timbers and rock. The dam was called "superb," and the mill reportedly had enough reserve power to run a string of mills all the way to Manhattan (about 3 miles at the time).

The four-story, 40-foot-by-60-foot mill was built on solid rock, and its cement walls were 4 feet thick up to the second floor. In the early 1900s, the dam was reconstructed in concrete, and the mill was converted to a power plant by the Rocky Ford Milling and Power Company. The new dam was hollow, a feature used by employees to walk to and from company-owned housing on the west side of the river to their work stations at the power plant on the east side.

Rocky Ford Fishing Area was donated to the Kansas Forestry Fish and Game Commission by Kansas Power and

Light in 1967. In 1988, a retaining walkway was constructed below the dam, improving angler access and fishery habitat. The dam and mill's foundation still stand, dominating the Rocky Ford Fishing Area.

Rocky Ford Fishing Area is located northeast of Manhattan, east of the Big Blue River. From Manhattan, drive north on US-24 (Tuttle Creek Blvd) to Barnes Road. Proceed east on Barnes Road to Rocky Ford Road, located north of the Barnes Road bridge over the Big Blue River.

Maxwell Game Refuge

The refuge is located in McPherson County north of Canton. Its story began in 1859 when Henry Gault Maxwell drove a small herd of bison to the area and established a homestead. He later dreamed of preserving a piece of the prairie so future generations could experience what the region was like before it was settled. After the elder Maxwell's death, his two sons became successful businessmen and never forgot their father's dream. The last surviving son, Henry Irving Maxwell, crafted his will to fulfill his father's vision. In 1943, Henry Irving Maxwell's estate began purchasing land to create a wildlife refuge. In 1944, 2,560 acres were deeded to the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT), which created the refuge. KDWPT later added 260 acres to the west of the refuge and in 1954, built McPherson State Fishing Lake and campground areas.

A herd of about 200 bison are managed at Maxwell Wildlife Refuge. They are descended from a starting herd of seven cows and three bulls purchased in 1951 from the Wichita Mountains National Wildlife Refuge in Oklahoma. A small herd of elk, which once were common in Kansas, is also kept at Maxwell Wildlife Refuge.

Maxwell Wildlife Refuge is located about 6 miles north of Canton. From US-56, take 27th Ave. and drive north to Pueblo Road, then west on Pueblo Road about 1 mile. The Visitor Center is just west of the wildlife area office.

CHECK THE CHICKADEE AT TAX TIME

If you haven't already paid your state income taxes, KDWPT reminds state taxpayers of the opportunity to brighten the new year's landscape by doing something good for wildlife. The Kansas State Income Tax form provides everyone with the chance to feel good about filing when they check the Chickadee Checkoff box. Checking this box gives a portion of returns or any additional contribution to all wildlife, not just birds.

Since 1981, the Chickadee Checkoff Program has helped with endangered species protection, habitat protection, and wildlife appreciation projects in Kansas. The program has sponsored many popular programs, such as the Nursing Home Bird Feeder Program and Outdoor Wildlife Learning Sites (OWLS) at Kansas schools. OWLS has allowed the development of outdoor laboratories at more than 200 schools across the state. Other programs sponsored by the Chickadee Checkoff include the Kansas Backyard Wildlife Habitat Improvement and Certification Program, the Bluebird Nest Box Project, the Songbird Bundle habitat planting,

and surveying and protection of sensitive species. Additionally, the Checkoff has served to document bald eagle nesting success and winter roosts in Kansas.

More than \$4.2 million has been contributed to Chickadee Checkoff since its inception. In recent years, about 10,000 taxpayers have donated to the program each year, but they have given more than twice what they gave when the program began — from an average of \$5.24 per donation to more than \$12. With the help of the Kansas Society of Certified Public Accountants (KSCPA), the mean annual donations total \$143,590. It's a relatively small amount that goes a long way, especially when used to match federal funds.

For details, visit the KDWPT website, www.kdwpt.ks.us. Click "Other Services/Wildlife Diversity/Chickadee Checkoff."

—KDWPT News



Glen Elder Hunt A Success

There were 18 happy and tired kids leaving the Waconda Lake area and heading back toward their homes on the night of Saturday, Dec. 10. These new hunters had just wrapped up a full day's worth of activities after participating in the 2011 Waconda Lake Youth, Women, and Celebrity Pheasant Hunt. This was the 14th year for the event, which has become an annual tradition. The event is co-sponsored by the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism and the Wichita-based Pass It On - Outdoor Mentors, Inc. organization.

The day began before sunrise with a biscuit-and-gravy breakfast served by the Waconda Struttin' Dusters Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation. The young hunters listened to a short talk about regulations and safety and then were introduced to the celebrities and heroes who were joining them for this special hunt.

Celebrities included John Gillotte, the 2010 National Youth Crappiemasters Champion; Wayne Hubbard, creator and host of Urban American Outdoors TV show; and Guy Caster, former professional drag race car driver. The youth were also joined by four true heroes, soldiers who had been wounded in action, including Colonel Phil McCune and Colonel Tom Kurlick from the Fort Riley Warrior Transition Battalion, and Captain Aaron Isaacson and Second Lieutenant Chad Blow from the Kansas National Guard of Topeka.

Near-perfect morning weather greeted the hunters after breakfast. They were divided into three groups to hunt for the rest of the morning. Several non-hunting adults, parents, and family members went with each group to serve as mentors for the inexperienced hunters. The groups hunted in portions of Glen Elder State Park and the refuges of Glen Elder Wildlife Area.

The young hunters were definitely up to the challenge as the groups managed to bag 16 roosters in just three hours of hunting. Many of the young hunters harvested their first pheasants, and nearly everyone had the opportunity to take a shot or two at the tough birds. A couple of the kids actually harvested multiple birds, and even Colonel Kurlick got his first pheasant ever.

Lunch was served by volunteers from the Waconda Lake Association. The lake

association also sponsored a longest tail feather contest for the youth hunters. Devin Basnatt's 22 1/2 inch tail feather beat out the other 12 youth entrants by more than 1 inch.

After lunch, a trap shoot was held near the Glen Elder Area Office. Three shooting stations were available for the participants to hone their shooting skills. A few of the young hunters and their mentors decided to continue hunting during the afternoon at other locations on the wildlife area.

The day's events concluded in the evening with a Hunters' Banquet at Memorial Hall in Downs. After the meal, each young hunter received a prize package and got autographs from the celebrities. Attendees also listened to information about youth and mentor hunting opportunities, the importance of recruiting new hunters, and the work of conservation organizations.

This year's youth participants were: Bryce Nichols - Beloit; Rhiley Kaser - Osborne; Bryce Griffin, Andrea Howard,

nesses that made financial contributions for the event made it cost-free for participants. Major donors were: Osborne Pheasants Forever Chapter, Waconda Pheasants Forever Chapter, Brush Art Corporation, Midway Coop, Sunflower Manufacturing, Waconda Lake Association, Waconda Struttin' Dusters-NWTF Chapter, Nextech Television, Miller Welding, Farmway Coop, and Wayne's Sporting Goods. Other Donors include: Lakeside Convenience, Bob's Inc., Miller Hardware, Culligan Water Conditioning, Cunningham Telephone and Cable, Domoney Furniture, State Bank of Downs, Myers Sporting and Supply, Lori's Lodge, Pheasant Creek Lodge, Beloit ALCO, Flowers, Plants and Things, and Corner Drug and Gift.

Of course the event couldn't happen without the volunteers and mentors. Nearly 50 adults gave up a substantial portion of their day (or weekend) to help offer this experience to the young hunters. Everyone associated believes the Waconda



Noah Bradley, Matt Parks, and Cole Sauber - Salina; Cody Heiland - Topeka; Ryan and Megan Richards - Stillwell; Marcus Florence - Olathe; Derek McCarthy - Kansas City, Brandon Regester, Dylan Brittain, Nick Miller, and Jakhai Adams - Wichita; and Devin Basnatt and Sabian Dolvig - Rose Hill.

Support from local groups and busi-

Lake Youth, Women & Celebrity Pheasant Hunt is vital to our hunting heritage and the young participants. To learn more about these organizations and other events they offer visit their websites at www.kdwpt.state.ks.us or www.outdoormentors.org.

- Chris Lecuyer, public lands manager

The best times of your life just got less expensive



photo courtesy of Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation

She'll be 16 before you know it and off to college in the blink of an eye. Don't miss a single chance to be on the water with your daughter by purchasing a multi-year youth fishing license.

The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism offers resident multi-year hunting and fishing licenses for youth 16-21. For a one-time investment of \$42.50, you can give your teenager a hunting or fishing license that will last until they turn 21. A combination multi-year hunting/fishing license is \$72.50. (Regular one-year licenses are \$20.50, so if you buy your daughter the multi-year fishing license for her sixteenth birthday, you'll save more than a hundred bucks!)

And you'll be investing in more than time with your teenager. Your license dollars help fund Kansas' wildlife and fisheries management and conservation programs.

You can purchase a multi-year youth license wherever licenses are sold, through the website www.kdwpt.state.ks.us or by calling 620-672-5911.

Resident multi-year licenses are perfect for:

- ✓ Birthdays
- ✓ Graduations
- ✓ Holidays
- ✓ Special celebrations



Department of Wildlife, Parks
and Tourism

2012 Sportsmen's

TURKEY

2012 FALL TURKEY:

- Season: Oct. 1 - Nov. 27, 2012 and Dec. 10-31, 2012; and Jan. 14-31, 2013.

BIG GAME

DEER:

- Youth/Persons with Disabilities: Sept. 8-16
- Archery: Sept. 17 - Dec. 31, 2012
- Muzzleloader: Sept. 17 - Sept. 30, 2012
- Early Firearm (Subunit 19) Oct. 13-21, 2012
- Regular Firearm: Nov. 28 - Dec. 9, 2012
- Firearm Extended Whitetail Antlerless Season: Jan.1 - Jan. 13, 2013
- Archery Extended Whitetail Antlerless Season (DMU 19 only): Jan. 14 - Jan. 31, 2013
- Special Extended Firearms Whitetail Antlerless Season: Jan. 14 - Jan. 20, 2013
(Open for unit 7, 8 and 15 only.)

ELK (residents only)

Outside Fort Riley:

- Muzzleloader: Sept. 1-30, 2012
- Archery: Sept. 17 - Dec. 31, 2012
- Firearm: Nov. 28 - Dec. 9, 2012 and Jan.1 - March 15, 2013

On Fort Riley:

- Muzzleloader and archery: Sept. 1-30, 2012
- Firearm Season for Holders of Any-Elk Permits: Oct. 1 - Dec. 31, 2012
Antlerless Only
- Firearm First Segment: Oct. 1-31, 2012
- Firearm Second Segment: Nov. 1-30, 2012
- Firearm Third Segment: Dec. 1-31, 2012

Antelope

- Firearm: Oct. 5-8, 2012
- Archery: Sept. 22-30 & Oct. 13-31, 2012
- Muzzleloader: Oct. 1-8, 2012

MIGRATORY GAME BIRDS

DOVE (Mourning, white-winged, Eurasian collared, and ringed turtle doves)

- Season: Sept.1 - Oct. 31 and Nov. 3-11, 2012
- Daily bag limit: 15
- Possession limit: 30

EARLY TEAL

- High Plains Season: To be set
- Low Plains Season: To be set
- Daily bag limit: 4
- Possession limit: 8

EXOTIC DOVE

(Eurasian collared and ringed turtle doves only)

- Season: Nov. 20, 2012 - Feb. 28, 2013
- Daily bag limit: No limit
- Possession limit: No limit

RAIL (Sora and Virginia)

- Season: Sept. 1 - Nov 9, 2012
- Daily bag limit: 25
- Possession limit: 25

SNIPE

- Season: Sept. 1 - Dec. 16, 2012
- Daily bag limit: 8
- Possession limit: 16

WOODCOCK

- Season: Oct. 13 - Nov. 26, 2012
- Daily bag limit: 3
- Possession limit: 6

SANDHILL CRANE

- Season: Nov. 7, 2012 - Jan. 3, 2013
- Daily bag limit: 3
- Possession limit: 6

Calendar

MIGRATORY GAME BIRDS

To be set

FURBEARERS

TRAPPING

- Season: Nov. 14, 2012 - Feb. 15, 2013
Badger, bobcat, mink, muskrat, opossum, raccoon, swift fox, red fox, gray fox, striped skunk, weasel.

RUNNING

- Season: March 1 - Nov. 1, 2012

BEAVER, OTTER TRAPPING

- Season Dates (statewide):
Nov. 14, 2011 - March 31, 2013

UPLAND GAME BIRDS

PRAIRIE CHICKEN

- Early Season (East Unit): Sept. 15 - Oct. 15, 2012
- Regular Season (East and Northwest Units):
Nov. 17, 2012 - Jan. 31, 2013
- Regular Season (Southwest Unit):
Nov. 17 - Dec. 31, 2012
- Daily Bag Limit: 2 (East and Northwest Units)
1 (Southwest Unit)
- Possession Limit: twice daily bag

PHEASANTS

- Season: Nov. 10, 2012 - Jan. 31, 2013
- Youth Season: Nov. 3-4 2012
- Daily bag limit: 4 cocks in regular season, 2 cocks in youth season

QUAIL

- Season: Nov. 10, 2012 - Jan. 31, 2013
- Youth Season: Nov. 3 - 4, 2011
- Daily Bag Limit Quail: 8 in regular season, 4 in youth season

SMALL GAME ANIMALS

SQUIRREL

- Season: June 1, 2012 - Feb. 28, 2013
- Daily bag limit: 5
- Possession limit: 20

RABBITS (Cottontail & Jack rabbit)

- Season: All year
- Daily bag limit: 10
- Possession limit: 30

CROW

- Season: Nov. 10, 2012 - March 10, 2013
- Daily bag/Possession Limit: No Limit

FISHING SEASONS

TROUT

- Season: Nov. 1, 2012 - April 15, 2013
- Daily creel limit: 5
- Area open: Designated trout waters listed at www.kdwpt.state.ks.us

BULLFROG

- Season: July 1 - Oct. 31, 2012
- Daily creel limit: 8
- Possession limit: 24

FLOATLINE FISHING

- Season: July 15 - Sept. 15, 2012
- Area open: Hillsdale, Council Grove, Tuttle Creek, Kanopolis, John Redmond, Toronto, Wilson and Pomona reservoirs.

HANDFISHING (flathead catfish only)

- Season: June 15 - August 31, 2012
- Area open: Arkansas River, Kansas River and federal reservoirs 150 yards from beyond the dam upstream to the end of the federal property.
- Daily creel limit: 5
- Special permit required

PADDLEFISH SNAGGING

- Season: March 15 - May 15, 2012
- Daily creel limit: 2
- Season limit: 6 (Permit required)

A Gobbler

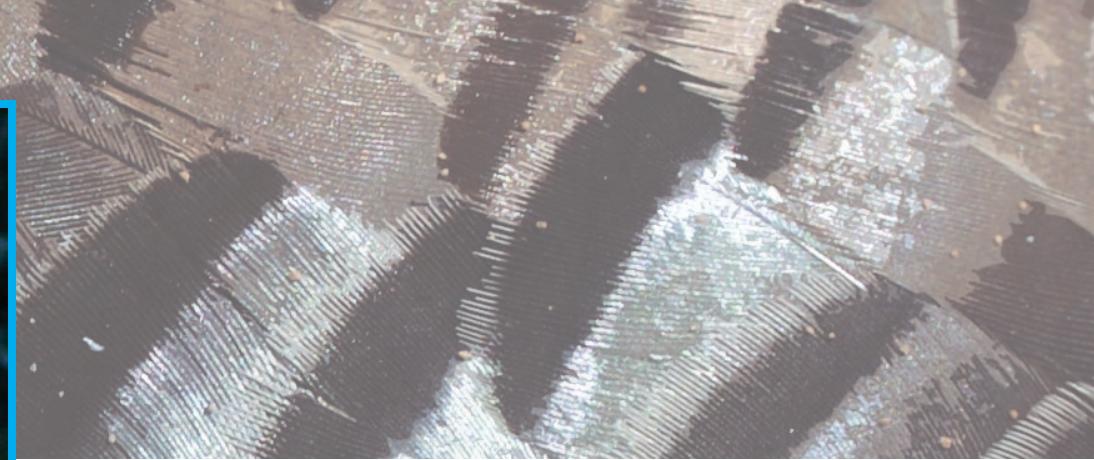
For Seth

Mike Blair photo

by Col. Jeff Vordermark (ret.)

assistant professor at the United States Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth

A father and son hunting duo continue their quest for an elusive trophy gobbler. However, this hunt carried special meaning because the son would soon be shipping out to Army basic training.



chance at a real trophy bird before life's currents swept him away from home. I was so committed that I had let a longbeard at 30 yards walk only four days earlier because I was by myself that morning. I figured that having an extra bird around on the weekend upped the percentages a bit for Seth.

We had hunted hard over the past few years, and it had come down to this season, the last chance to share in a milestone memory. It had to be now, before he would graduate from high school in just three short weeks, spend his last summer at home, ship out to Army basic training at what is affectionately called "Fort Benning's School for Boys," commence an extended tour of duty in the service of his country, and cross the threshold of manhood. For so many reasons, it had to be this season, before time was lost, and he was on his own.

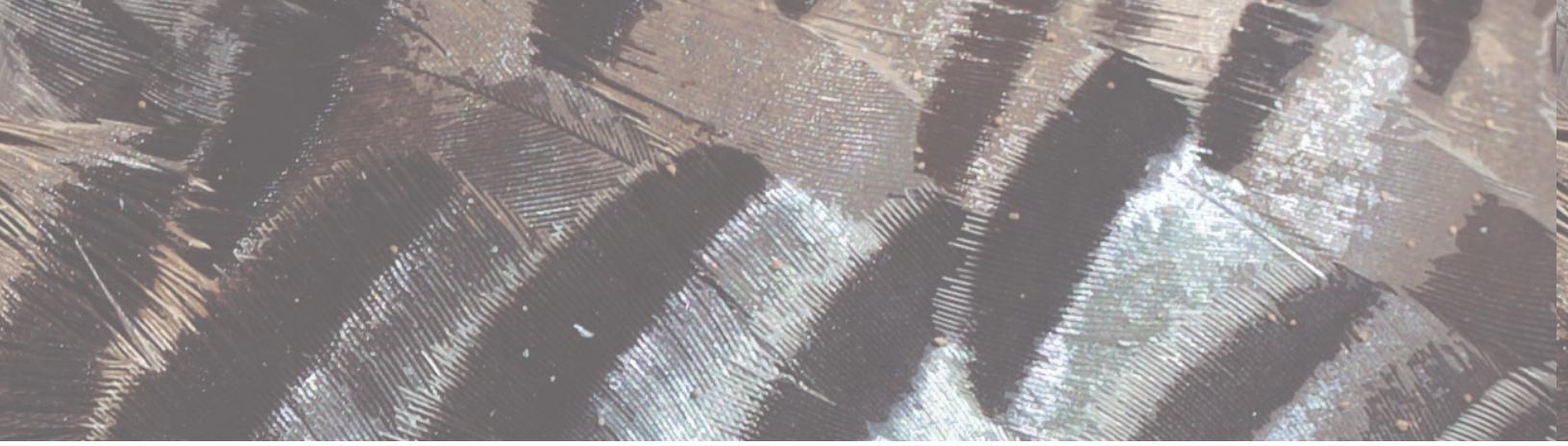
Yet while all these represented good reasons for us to be out on this particular morning, there was also a selfish aspect to my efforts. You see, here is my confession as the father of a budding hunter. I knew mornings like this would become a rare privilege in the seasons and years to come. He is not only my youngest, but the best hunting partner someone could ask for. He wakes when he should, is ready before me, carries his own weight on long slogs to the duck blind or the deer stand, and does not complain. He's a pretty darn good shot, too. He respects the game he pursues and can find his own way out of the woods without a GPS. It seems that

all my effort to date had brought him to a credible point in his development as a hunter. The only thing lacking was a big bird to provide the tangible proof of our collective progress. The time for me to "come through" was drawing to a close, and I really wanted to produce something special. I will miss him when he leaves, and so I wanted this for me as much as for him.

Seth had already proved his skill in taking two jakes in three seasons. One was a Rio he had stalked on his own and shot out of a group at only 6 yards. Chances at gobblers had certainly been there, but as none had come home in the bed of the truck, there was always an irrational sense of inadequacy lurking in the recesses of my mind. I clearly recall the big tom at 24 yards last year during bow season, just a few steps away from the decoy and Seth's effective range. While fumbling with a digital camera, I managed to drop the call, which hit the metal frame of my folding chair in the blind. In the still of the morning, that "clunk" was awfully loud. The tom certainly thought so — he folded up strut shop and scooted quickly out of range while I was left feeling chagrined.

On closing day a couple years ago, there was a ridge-top bird that snuck in behind us so close we could clearly hear each individual footfalls in the leaves. He passed within yards but never offered a glimpse. We were left to marvel at his ability to remain invisible while marking for future reference the fact that he did not play by the rules and go to the decoy out

*I*wish I had a video camera! That was one of many thoughts running through my head as a marvelous eastern turkey continued to strut in full display only 25 yards away. Four seasons of disappointment were washed away as this bird gave my youngest son Seth and I the show that we had sought. Forget the Outdoor Channel programs — this had them all beat. Plus, I was on the verge of fulfilling a commitment I had made to myself this year. I wanted to get my soon-to-graduate, Army-bound son a



in the wide open.

So on this morning, I took Seth for the umpteenth time to get a mature turkey, a no-kidding gobbler with a big beard. Up early again, crawl in to camouflage gear, grab a bite, and head off to the woods.

It was still dark when we had the decoys set and the birds started gobbling on the roost. I had a back-and-forth with two birds, one on the same ridge about 200 yards away and another deep in the hollow to our west. The bird on the ridge was plenty vocal until he left the roost and went his merry way. We never got a glimpse of him, and I figured he had to be with hens, thus a tough target for a stalk. Meanwhile, the bird in the hollow had drifted away and added his voice to a chorus in a strutting zone that previously had proved very difficult for us to infiltrate. There was just too much open space for the birds' sharp eyes, but I had an ace up my sleeve. Knowledge of the terrain is so much better than blind luck when hunting turkeys. A hilltop near a favored roosting site where the gobblers trolled for hens later in the day would be our best bet. This was the same place where Seth had discovered a year earlier that there were indeed copperheads in

Kansas, and where poor timing had cost me a stalk on two noisy birds late in the season. Since it was close to the strutting zone, we headed there as quickly and quietly as we could.

Hiking up to the top, we stopped to catch our breath and listen. No gobbling. Perhaps a few strokes from my pot call might generate a

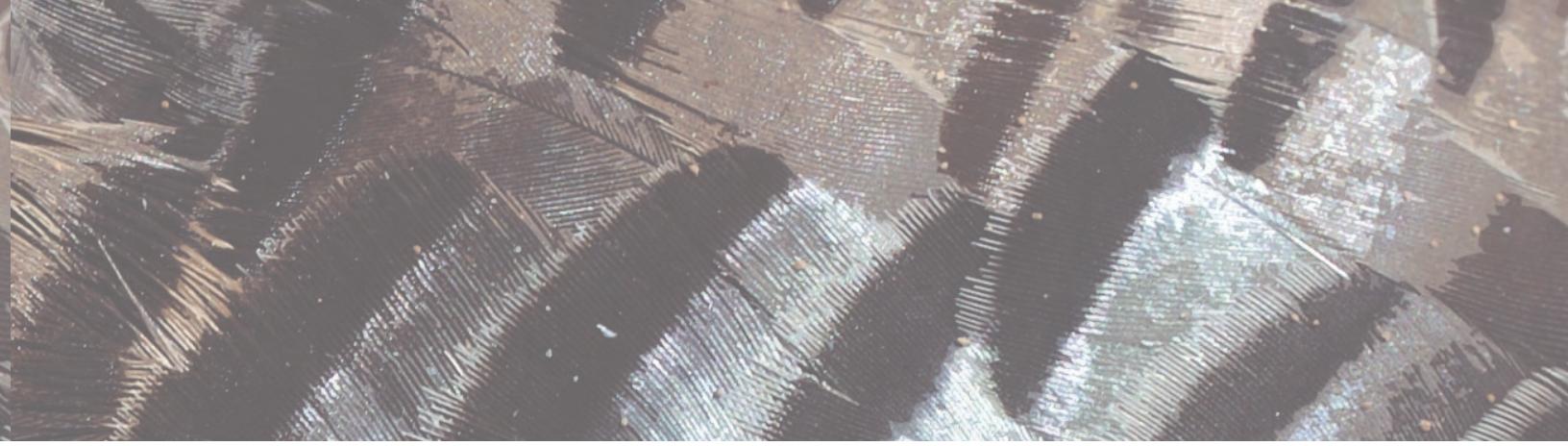


Mike Miller photo



Mike Blair photo

Bagging a tom turkey can be ridiculously easy one morning, then seeming impossible the next. Scouting an area and knowing the lay of the land will give the hunter an edge he'll need.



response and help us to pinpoint a bird. Sure enough, an immediate response from below. The next question to answer was, "Now what?" We could stay on the ridge and get set up with a little time to spare or risk a move down the hill and possibly bump the bird if it had already decided to come to us.

Seth was all for option two, but I knew the bird would be tempted to come to us because this part of the property is seldom disturbed. I had stayed out on previous trips waiting for the right morning to take Seth there. I told him we should stay. He was all for taking the fight to the bird. I opted for patience, put a single decoy out, and called again. There was an immediate response, this time much closer. This bird was not only interested, but heading to us rapidly. Clearly, a move would have jeopardized our opportunity, but what happened next could have spelled disaster as two deer showed up and spotted us. They bounded away, snorting an alarm that could have alerted the gobbler, but my concern was allayed only moments later when the bird sounded off again, clearly very close.

Seth had hunkered down using an old fallen tree for cover, having managed to squeeze into an impossibly small opening. He was not, from my angle, in the best position if the bird opted to swing to our left before coming into the open. "You need to move over here," I whispered loudly. He did, but with considerably more noise and effort than I was comfortable with. First the deer, now a loud and prolonged



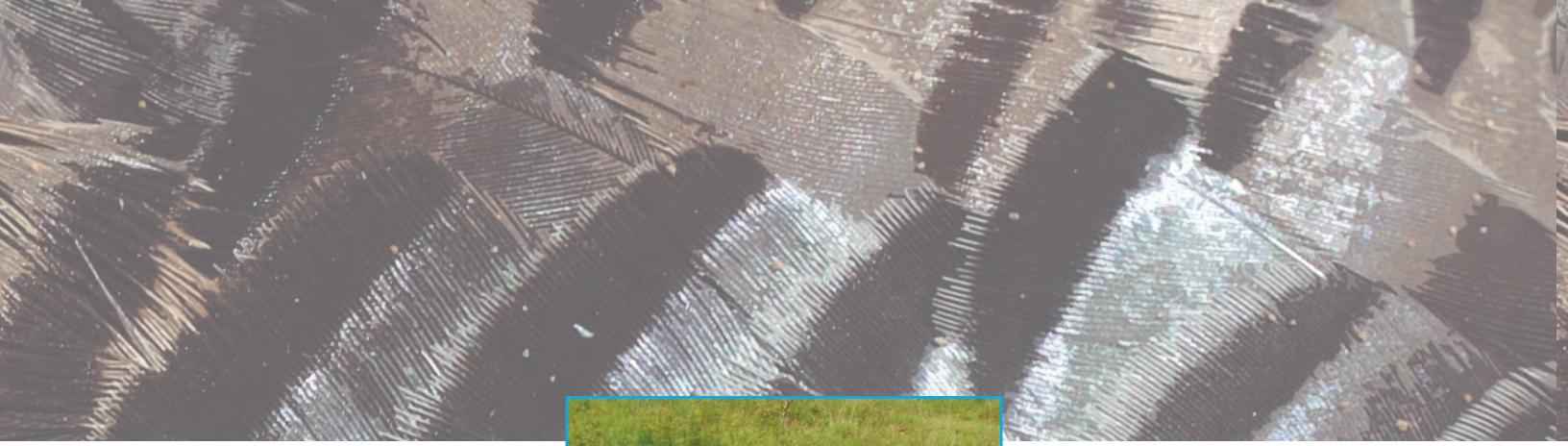
Mike Blair photo

No hunter will forget the sight of a mature tom strutting in the early-morning sunlight. It's what keeps turkey hunters getting up at 4 a.m. morning after morning.

position shift. My only hope was that this turkey was more interested in breeding than caution.

Suddenly, all my concerns were wiped out by the arrival of Mr. Longbeard, and the bird did not take the path of least resistance by coming up a large trail as I had expected. It came straight up the hill, through brush, trees and over rock ledges. The gobbler was seriously intent on the hen it believed to be on top of the hill. Seth got the gun up at the same time the bird went in to full strut before entering our little clearing. The gun stayed up and the bird stayed in strut. Thick brush in

the way made for a very "iffy" shot, so Seth wisely held off until he could get a better one. The question now was if Seth would be able to hold the gun up on target for an extended period because that gobbler was doing its best to pull the hen it had heard away, not closing the gap. We could only see the tom's tail as it kept strutting and adding more moves to the dance routine in an effort to entice a hen. The situation went from tense to interminable. Minutes passed as the bird accomplished a very credible imitation of an arcade target — back and forth, back and forth in a small area.



I believe that many hunters are inclined to be impatient at this point. I've been guilty myself, and would either have taken a bad shot or been inclined to yelp some to draw the bird closer. Either option might result in no bird at all. Instead, I softly purred every so often and scratched the leaves. The tom could hear me. It kept strutting and rattling feathers. Quite a show, but still no shot, so I decided to stop calling and see if the bird would come out of strut and put its head up so Seth — whose arms were now visibly tired as the gun was shaking — could get a clear shot.

No luck. Instead, the tom started drumming. I couldn't have been



happier at this point. To have a large bird strutting, rattling, and drumming like this so close to us was great. I became intent on reading the bird's behavior in an effort to ensure that this hunt did not end with an "almost." I found my brain going through all the old data banks on turkeys from magazine articles to stories shared with others to my own experiences and settled on something I thought might change the game.

I rustled the leaves some more, and softly yelped. It worked instantly. Around the brush it came and stomped head-on to Seth, still in strut. The moment of truth was at hand; the big tom was now clear of the brush. We had no concealment aside from the camouflage we were wearing. Now we couldn't move at all. At eye level, this puffed out, strutting bird looked much bigger than a 22-pound critter should. It gobbed at 14 yards for good measure, which was an incredible experience if you have never been in the blast radius of a full gobble. At 12 yards, I told Seth to shoot. Having been brought up to be respectful, mind his manners, and listen to his elders, he obliged.

After the shot, it was game over. There would be no disappointment for me on this special day. A morning that had started like so



Success! After numerous close calls with elusive gobblers, Seth finally put his tag on this one. Father and son used good strategy, patience and just a little luck to bag the bird. *photos by Jeff Vordermark*



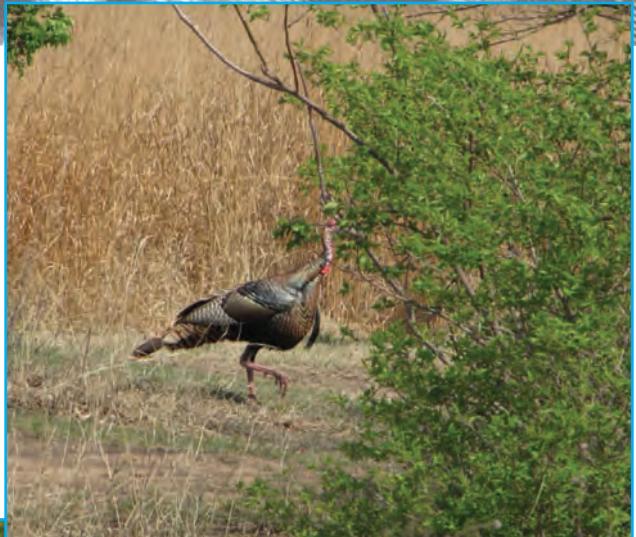
many others ended with much more than a memory. His first question once we finally composed ourselves after the shot, the high-fiving, jumping, and congratulatory hugs was "Could you hear my heart beating?"

"No," I answered, "but now do you know why I like turkey hunting so much?"

Seth stood a little taller that day, even under the weight of the bird he hauled out. He refused to let me

share the load but was more than happy to pose for more pictures back at the truck.

I recounted the adventure to a proud Mama when we finally reached home. The bird had a 10-inch beard and a very large frame. It was paraded before neighbors, weighed, measured, photographed, plucked,



Mike Miller photo



Mike Blair photo

dressed, and placed with care into the freezer in anticipation of a special family meal. Meanwhile, the fan and beard has become a visible reminder of the bird and our adventure that day. Even months later, I find that I constantly replay the memory of this truly awesome hunt in my head, but man, do I ever wish I had had a video camera. 

Colonel (retired) Jeff Vordermark is an assistant professor at the United States Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth. A Kansas native, he returned upon retirement to take advantage of the outdoors opportunities in the Sunflower State. His retirement goal is to never miss another opening day.

Most turkey hunts end like the top photo: – close but no cigar. However, when everything works out right, calling a gobbler to within shotgun range is a satisfying hunting accomplishment.

2012

FISHING FORECAST



Mike Miller photo

Use the following pages to find high-quality fishing for the sport fish you prefer. The forecast lists reservoirs (water bodies larger than 1,200 acres), lakes (waters from 10 to 1,200 acres), and ponds (waters less than 10 acres) for each species. Ratings include the Density Rating, which is the number of high-quality fish captured per unit of effort by fisheries biologists; Preferred Rating, which is the number of fish at a preferred length for that species; Lunker Rating, which is the number of fish sampled at a length most anglers consider a trophy; and Biggest Fish, which is simply the largest fish caught during sampling. The Biologist's Rating is a rating of E - excellent, G - good, F - fair or P - poor given by the biologist who considers other factors in addition to sampling. In theory, a lake with a Density Rating of 24 will have twice as many high-quality fish per acre as a lake with a Density Rating of 12.

The 3-year Average figure represents a three-year average in density ratings of a particular species. This column provides a history, allowing the angler to compare past fishing outings at the lake with the ratings.

Lengths for high-quality, preferred- and lunker-sized fish are different for each species and are listed in parenthesis at the top of each column. This information will help you find lakes with high populations, as well as those which have larger fish. You may view these tables on the KDWPT's webpage www.kdwpt.state.ks.us or a brochure can be mailed or picked up at a KDWPT office.

Combined with the 2012 *Fishing Regulations Summary*, the 2012 *Fish Atlas* and the Weekly Fishing Reports, the 2012 *Fishing Forecast* is a tool that will help you catch more fish, and it will help you select lakes that provide the kind of fish and type of fishing you desire. Kansas anglers can choose from 24 federal reservoirs, 258 community lakes, 58 state fishing lakes, as well as 150,000 privately-owned farm ponds and 10,000 miles of fishable streams. Better get busy – as the old saying goes — so much water, so little time.

CHANNEL CATFISH

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>16")	Preferred Rating (>24")	Lunker Rating (>28")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	3-Year Average (>18")
RESERVOIRS						
KANOPOLIS	5.00	0.00	0.00	3.96	F	3.75
SEBELIUS (NORTON)	4.90	1.80	0.60	18.29	G	3.40
PERRY	4.20	0.45	0.10	16.31	G	3.65
GLEN ELDER	4.18	0.55	0.09	16.18	G	3.37
LACYGNE	4.17	0.08	0.00	4.96	E	4.17
CLINTON	4.06	0.13	0.13	14.11	G	4.88
POMONA	3.58	0.17	0.00	7.50	E	3.58
BIG HILL	2.90	0.20	0.10	7.98	G	2.81
WILSON	2.90	0.25	0.05	9.08	G	2.83
MELVERN	2.75	0.13	0.00	8.29	G	2.50
TUTTLE CREEK	2.50	1.20	0.40	12.13	G	2.45
HILLSDALE	2.42	0.25	0.00	8.85	G	3.25
CHENEY	1.35	0.55	0.15	14.33	G	0.85
COUNCIL GROVE	1.33	0.33	0.00	6.99	G	1.13
LOVEWELL	1.33	0.27	0.07	8.02	G	1.70
LAKES						
GARNETT-CRYSTAL LAKE	14.00	0.00	0.00	3.93	E	9.20
BOURBON SFL	12.00	1.00	0.33	18.52	E	9.63
NEBO SFL	10.00	0.25	0.00	6.56	G	6.38
JETMORE CITY LAKE	9.00	4.50	0.00	5.38	G	6.75
CARBONDALE CITY LAKE - EAST	8.17	0.83	0.00	9.26	G	9.33
CLARK SFL	7.83	0.17	0.00	5.41	G	7.23
PLEASANTON - WEST LAKE	7.00	1.00	0.33	11.20	E	8.00
PLEASANTON - EAST LAKE	6.83	0.33	0.17	8.34	E	7.67
DOUGLAS SFL	6.67	0.17	0.00	5.01	G	7.42
HOLTON - BANNER CREEK LAKE	6.50	1.50	0.25	16.42	G	5.88
TOPEKA - LK. HAMMOND (YMCA)	6.33	0.00	0.00	3.73	G	8.17
HOLTON-PRairie LAKE	6.25	0.25	0.00	5.95	G	6.25
EUREKA CITY LAKE	5.83	2.33	0.00	11.46	G	9.00
CRITZER LAKE	5.83	0.33	0.00	5.46	E	6.08
ATCHISON CITY LAKE 23 (WARNOCK)	5.75	0.25	0.00	4.85	G	5.75
OLATHE-CEDAR LAKE	5.25	0.00	0.00	4.56	F	5.13
PRATT CO. LAKE	5.00	1.00	0.00	6.41	G	4.50
DOUGLAS CO.-LONESTAR LAKE	4.83	0.17	0.17	10.38	G	5.92
MARION CO. LAKE	4.50	1.00	0.67	13.40	G	3.58
PLAINVILLE LAKE	4.33	0.67	0.33	9.99	G	3.17
BELLEVILLE-ROCKY POND	4.25	0.00	0.00	4.42	G	3.63
SABETHA - PONY CREEK LAKE	4.17	1.83	0.50	12.46	F	7.17
PT CO.-CROSS CREEK LAKE	4.00	0.33	0.00	5.21	G	4.00
OTTAWA SFL	3.83	0.33	0.00	6.68	G	3.08
MADISON CITY LAKE	3.83	1.00	0.50	14.99	G	3.42
WILSON SFL	3.67	0.17	0.00	5.40	E	4.83
WOODSON SFL	3.60	0.60	0.00	8.77	E	3.72
SEDAN - OLD (NORTH) CITY LAKE	3.50	1.00	0.25	9.26	G	2.75
YATES CENTER CITY LAKE-NEW	3.33	0.33	0.00	10.01	E	3.92
LOGAN CITY LAKE	3.33	0.00	0.00	3.04	G	1.83
GARNETT CITY LAKE-NORTH	3.33	0.00	0.00	5.06	G	3.67
PAOLA CITY LAKE	3.33	0.33	0.17	8.82	F	3.75
WELLINGTON-HARGIS CREEK LAKE	3.25	0.25	0.00	7.98	G	3.25
SEDAN - NEW (SOUTH) CITY LAKE	3.25	0.25	0.25	14.11	G	3.13
CRAWFORD SFL	3.17	0.00	0.00	5.63	G	3.67
HORSETHIEF	2.67	0.33	0.00	4.46	G	2.21
WELLINGTON CITY LAKE	2.63	0.00	0.00	4.12	F	2.19
BONE CREEK LAKE	2.63	0.88	0.00	6.79	G	3.38
ATCHISON SFL	2.50	0.00	0.00	3.10	F	2.50
ATCHISON CITY LAKE #8	2.50	0.00	0.00	3.63	F	2.50
SHAWNEE SFL	2.50	0.00	0.00	2.97	G	1.92
SEDWICK CO.-LAKE AFTON	2.50	0.00	0.00	4.06	E	1.60
COWLEY SFL	2.33	0.00	0.00	3.13	G	2.04
MIDDLE CREEK SFL	2.33	0.00	0.00	3.52	F	2.75
MCPHERSON SFL	2.33	0.33	0.00	6.17	E	4.83
OSAGE CITY LAKE	2.25	0.25	0.00	5.94	F	2.73
HOWARD-POLK DANIELS LAKE	2.25	0.00	0.00	3.97	G	2.43
NEOSHO SFL	2.25	0.00	0.00	3.85	G	3.75
CHASE SFL	2.00	0.17	0.00	7.36	G	4.00
ROOKS STATE LAKE	2.00	0.33	0.00	7.26	G	1.67
LEAVENWORTH SFL	2.00	0.33	0.17	13.50	F	2.92
HARVEY CO. LAKE - EAST	2.00	0.00	0.00	3.92	E	1.65
LYON SFL	1.83	0.33	0.17	16.53	G	2.92
WINFIELD CITY LAKE	1.80	0.00	0.00	4.74	G	1.80
BUTLER SFL	1.75	0.00	0.00	4.70	G	2.75
JAWHAWK BOY SCOUT LAKE	1.75	0.25	0.00	6.50	F	1.75
ESKRIDGE-LAKE WABAUNSEE	1.67	0.83	0.50	12.08	F	1.67
OSAGE SFL	1.50	0.33	0.17	18.33	F	3.17

CHANNEL CATFISH

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>16")	Preferred Rating (>24")	Lunker Rating (>28")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	3-Year Average (>18")
PONDS						
FORT LEAVENWORTH-MERRITT LAKE	3.33	0.00	0.00	4.41	F	3.33
WEBSTER-STILLING BASIN	1.67	0.00	0.00	2.41	F	1.67
BALDWIN - SPRING CREEK LAKE	1.33	0.00	0.00	4.97	F	1.33
LAWRENCE-P. DAWSON BILLINGS-S	1.33	0.00	0.00	4.19	F	1.33
GLEN ELDER STATE PARK POND	1.00	0.00	0.00	1.36	F	1.00
ATCHISON CITY LAKE #7	1.00	0.00	0.00	2.55	F	1.00
LAWRENCE-MARY'S LAKE	0.67	0.00	0.00	1.27	F	0.67
SEVERY CITY LAKE	0.67	0.00	0.00	2.98	P	0.33
TROY 4-H LAKE	0.67	0.00	0.00	1.41	F	0.67
JEWELL CITY LAKE	0.50	0.00	0.00	1.21	G	0.42



FLATHEAD CATFISH

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>20")	Preferred Rating (>28")	Lunker Rating (>34")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	3-Year Average (>20")
RESERVOIRS						
TUTTLE CREEK	0.25	0.05	0.00	9.09	F	0.18
SEBELIUS (NORTON)	0.20	0.20	0.00	8.42	G	0.20
WILSON	0.20	0.00	0.00	4.35	F	0.13
POMONA	0.17	0.00	0.00	2.52	G	0.17
KIRWIN	0.17	0.00	0.00	4.12	G	0.13
TORONTO	0.13	0.00	0.00	5.79	G	0.13
MILFORD	0.10	0.00	0.00	3.36	G	0.08
LAKES						
OLPE CITY LAKE	0.50	0.50	0.25	9.92	P	0.38
CHASE SFL	0.33	0.00	0.00	3.09	P	0.25
WINFIELD CITY LAKE	0.30	0.00	0.00	3.51	G	0.30
HERINGTON CITY LAKE-NEW	0.25	0.25	0.13	9.31	G	0.19
HOLTON - BANNER CREEK LAKE	0.25	0.00	0.00	2.98	F	0.25
MIDDLE CREEK SFL	0.17	0.17	0.17	10.07	F	0.17
PLEASANTON - EAST LAKE	0.17	0.17	0.17	8.38	F	0.17
YATES CENTER CITY LAKE-NEW	0.17	0.00	0.00	3.00	P	0.17
SHAWNEE CO.-LAKE SHAWNEE	0.13	0.00	0.00	2.88	F	0.13
PONDS						
ATCHISON CITY LAKE #7	0.50	0.00	0.00	1.54	P	0.50

BLUE CATFISH

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>20")	Preferred Rating (>30")	Lunker Rating (>35")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	3-Year Average (>20")
RESERVOIRS						
EL DORADO	1.13	0.00	0.00	7.47	F	0.84
MILFORD	1.05	0.00	0.00	11.57	G	1.03
WOLF CREEK	1.00	0.07	0.00	12.08	P	1.00
LACYGNE	0.17	0.00	0.00	3.99	F	0.33
WILSON	0.15	0.00	0.00	3.10	F	0.08
LOVEWELL	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.87	P	0.00
PERRY	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.18	P	0.05
LAKES						
YATES CENTER CITY LAKE-NEW	0.33	0.00	0.00	7.76	P	0.33
GARNETT CITY LAKE-NORTH	0.33	0.00	0.00	3.21	G	0.29

BLUEGILL

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>6")	Preferred Rating (>8")	Lunker Rating (>10")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	3-Year Average (>6")
RESERVOIRS						
SEBELIUS (NORTON)	12.00	0.38	0.00	0.48	G	7.25
BIG HILL	8.18	0.18	0.00	0.33	G	5.02
HILLSDALE	7.00	0.00	0.00	0.46	F	5.83
LACYGNE	4.31	0.00	0.00	0.31	G	4.13
MILFORD	3.38	0.00	0.00	0.41	F	1.88
WEBSTER	3.25	0.00	0.00	0.42	F	12.73
GLEN ELDER	3.24	0.00	0.00	0.35	F	5.80
TUTTLE CREEK	2.69	0.00	0.00	0.40	F	0.98
PERRY	2.05	0.00	0.00	0.40	F	1.98
LAKES						
LOGAN CITY LAKE	124.67	0.00	0.00	0.33	G	68.22
BROWN SFL	57.00	4.25	0.00	0.50	G	24.50
GARDNER CITY LAKE	49.00	0.00	0.00	0.34	G	33.85
ROOKS STATE LAKE	27.50	2.25	0.00	0.50	G	21.25
HOLTON - BANNER CREEK LAKE	23.75	0.13	0.00	0.37	G	16.58
PAOLA CITY LAKE	23.67	0.00	0.00	0.35	F	10.14
ATCHISON SFL	23.25	0.25	0.00	0.41	G	13.42
GRAHAM CO.-ANTELOPE LAKE	20.75	5.00	0.00	0.50	G	15.42
SHAWNEE CO.-LAKE SHAWNEE	20.38	0.50	0.00	0.39	G	10.25
JEWELL SFL	20.00	2.25	0.00	0.50	G	9.33
PT CO.-CROSS CREEK LAKE	18.75	0.00	0.00	0.31	G	22.38
PRATT CO. LAKE	17.75	0.75	0.00	0.56	G	7.25
NEOSHO SFL	16.50	0.00	0.00	0.30	G	10.75
GEARY SFL	16.00	0.00	0.00	0.22	G	6.25
BOURBON SFL	15.67	0.00	0.00	0.30	G	9.06
SCOTT STATE LAKE	15.50	0.50	0.00	0.40	F	9.75
MCPHERSON SFL	14.50	1.50	0.00	0.29	F	15.50
ESKRIDGE-LAKE WABAUNSEE	14.50	0.00	0.00	0.30	G	14.50
OLATHE-CEDAR LAKE	14.00	0.00	0.00	0.22	F	6.58
ATCHISON CITY LAKE #8	13.50	0.00	0.00	0.25	G	13.50
ATCHISON CITY LAKE 23 (WARNOCK)	13.50	0.50	0.00	0.47	G	13.50
MIAMI SFL	13.00	1.00	0.00	0.43	F	5.42
GARNETT-CRYSTAL LAKE	12.50	0.00	0.00	0.30	G	6.25
HERINGTON CITY LAKE-OLD	12.25	0.00	0.00	0.32	G	4.60
POTTAWATOMIE SFL #1	12.25	0.00	0.00	0.30	G	10.67
DOUGLAS SFL	11.50	0.00	0.00	0.24	F	8.92
EUREKA CITY LAKE	11.00	0.00	0.00	0.31	G	10.92
TOPEKA - LK HAMMOND (YMCA)	9.00	3.00	0.00	0.44	G	16.25
LENEXA-LAKE LENEXA	8.00	0.00	0.00	0.25	F	15.75
KIOWA SFL	7.75	0.00	0.00	0.34	F	3.42
OTTAWA SFL	7.50	0.00	0.00	0.30	G	9.96
JETMORE CITY LAKE	7.50	2.00	0.00	0.50	F	9.38
SEDAN - OLD (NORTH) CITY LAKE	7.00	0.00	0.00	0.28	G	6.92
BELLEVILLE-ROCKY POND	6.75	0.00	0.00	0.31	F	5.58
NEBO SFL	6.75	0.00	0.00	0.26	F	4.50
SABETHA - PONY CREEK LAKE	6.50	0.00	0.00	0.37	F	16.08
WELLINGTON-HARGIS CREEK LAKE	6.50	0.00	0.00	0.29	F	8.25
DOUGLAS CO.-LONESTAR LAKE	6.00	0.25	0.00	0.31	F	6.33
CRAWFORD SFL	6.00	0.00	0.00	0.22	F	2.08
PLEASANTON - WEST LAKE	6.00	1.50	0.00	0.40	G	9.42
CHASE SFL	5.50	0.00	0.00	0.29	G	4.69
BONE CREEK LAKE	5.00	1.00	0.00	0.46	G	2.64



BLUEGILL

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>6")	Preferred Rating (>8")	Lunker Rating (>10")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	3-Year Average (>6")
LAKES						
MIDDLE CREEK SFL	4.75	0.00	0.00	0.22	F	3.25
THAYER CITY LAKE	4.50	0.00	0.00	0.28	G	2.50
WINFIELD CITY LAKE	4.30	0.00	0.00	0.24	G	3.15
COWLEY SFL	4.25	0.00	0.00	0.29	G	6.63
HARVEY CO. LAKE - EAST	4.25	0.00	0.00	0.35	E	2.25
BOURBON CO. CEDAR CREEK LAKE	4.00	0.00	0.00	0.26	F	4.00
HOWARD-POLK DANIELS LAKE	4.00	0.00	0.00	0.19	G	3.58
LYON SFL	4.00	0.50	0.00	0.32	G	6.50
CLARK SFL	4.00	0.13	0.13	0.56	F	4.46
OLATHE-LAKE OLATHE	3.75	0.00	0.00	0.27	F	6.00
OSAGE SFL	3.50	0.00	0.00	0.27	F	1.75
GARRETT CITY LAKE-NORTH	3.50	0.00	0.00	0.30	F	4.50
CHANUTE CITY LAKE	3.50	0.00	0.00	0.21	F	5.50
PLEASANTON - EAST LAKE	3.25	0.00	0.00	0.23	F	2.67
YATES CENTER CITY LAKE-NEW	3.00	1.25	0.00	0.44	F	2.25
SHERIDAN SFL	3.00	0.00	0.00	0.30	P	1.42
CENTRALIA CITY LAKE	2.63	0.00	0.00	0.37	F	2.54
CARBONDALE CITY LAKE - EAST	2.25	0.00	0.00	0.21	P	1.25
SEDAN - NEW (SOUTH) CITY LAKE	2.25	0.00	0.00	0.27	G	1.67
HOLTON-PRairie LAKE	2.25	0.00	0.00	0.21	F	2.25
MADISON CITY LAKE	1.75	0.00	0.00	0.31	G	2.92
BUTLER SFL	1.75	0.25	0.00	0.55	F	1.92
JEFFREY EC - MAKE UP LAKE	1.75	0.00	0.00	0.21	P	1.00
PONDS						
JEWELL CITY LAKE	32.00	0.50	0.00	0.39	G	77.28
BALDWIN - SPRING CREEK LAKE	18.50	0.00	0.00	0.22	F	11.25
GLEN ELDER STATE PARK POND	15.50	0.00	0.00	0.18	F	15.50
SEVERY CITY LAKE	10.50	0.00	0.00	0.21	G	6.50
FORT LEAVENWORTH-MERRITT LAKE	8.00	0.00	0.00	0.34	P	8.00
ATCHISON CITY LAKE #7	6.00	0.00	0.00	0.16	F	6.00
TROY 4-H LAKE	5.00	0.00	0.00	0.41	F	5.00
WEBSTER-STILLING BASIN	3.50	0.00	0.00	0.34	F	6.75
LAWRENCE-MARY'S LAKE	3.00	0.00	0.00	0.21	P	3.00
LAWRENCE-P. DAWSON BILLINGS-N	1.50	0.00	0.00	0.27	P	0.75

REDEAR

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>7")	Preferred Rating (>9")	Lunker Rating (>11")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	3-Year Average (>7")
RESERVOIRS						
BIG HILL	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.42	F	0.79
LAKES						
BONE CREEK LAKE	32.00	2.71	0.00	0.88	E	13.54
DOUGLAS SFL	24.50	0.00	0.00	0.32	F	13.75
JEWELL SFL	14.00	2.50	0.00	0.62	G	9.25
MONTGOMERY SFL	8.00	1.25	0.00	0.64	E	4.17
SEDAN - OLD (NORTH) CITY LAKE	5.75	0.00	0.00	0.55	F	3.25
COWLEY SFL	5.25	2.00	0.00	0.86	F	7.63
BROWN SFL	3.50	0.50	0.00	0.72	F	1.88
GARRETT CITY LAKE-NORTH	3.50	1.00	0.00	0.65	G	3.50
LEAVENWORTH SFL	3.00	0.25	0.00	0.47	F	7.67
THAYER CITY LAKE	3.00	1.00	0.00	0.72	G	3.25
BUTLER SFL	2.75	0.00	0.00	0.42	P	1.50
DOUGLAS CO.-LONESTAR LAKE	2.75	1.75	0.00	0.78	F	2.67
OSAGE SFL	2.75	0.25	0.00	0.56	F	1.38
BOURBON SFL	2.33	0.67	0.00	0.61	G	1.94
LYON SFL	2.25	0.75	0.00	0.60	F	4.00
WILSON SFL	2.25	0.75	0.00	0.60	G	1.33
ATCHISON CITY LAKE 23 (WARNOCK)	2.25	2.25	0.00	1.03	F	2.25
NEOSHO SFL	2.00	0.50	0.00	0.58	G	6.17
HOWARD-POLK DANIELS LAKE	1.50	0.00	0.00	0.37	P	0.67
ROOKS STATE LAKE	1.50	0.00	0.00	0.43	P	0.75
ATCHISON SFL	1.50	0.25	0.00	0.56	G	6.50
JETMORE CITY LAKE	1.25	0.00	0.00	0.44	G	1.00
WOODSON SFL	0.80	0.00	0.00	0.33	F	0.65
PONDS						
BALDWIN - SPRING CREEK LAKE	6.00	0.00	0.00	0.50	F	6.00
JEWELL CITY LAKE	2.00	2.00	0.00	0.92	F	3.00
LAWRENCE-P. DAWSON BILLINGS-N	1.50	0.50	0.00	0.45	P	0.75
SEVERY CITY LAKE	1.50	1.00	0.00	0.64	G	5.25
LAWRENCE-MARY'S LAKE	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.37	P	1.00
WEBSTER-STILLING BASIN	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.04	P	0.00

BLACK CRAPPIE

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>8")	Preferred Rating (>10")	Lunker Rating (>12")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	3-Year Average (>8")
RESERVOIRS						
KIRWIN	10.00	1.13	0.06	1.22	G	6.51
SEBELIUS (NORTON)	3.75	3.75	0.38	1.19	G	8.08
WEBSTER	3.69	3.44	0.38	1.14	G	9.88
GLEN ELDER	3.18	2.76	0.00	1.01	F	2.04
BIG HILL	2.27	0.27	0.09	0.71	G	2.22
HILLSDALE	2.06	0.25	0.00	0.70	F	1.25
CEDAR BLUFF	1.55	0.80	0.25	1.12	F	1.15
LOVEL WELL	0.69	0.31	0.00	0.97	P	1.78
CLINTON	0.52	0.09	0.04	0.97	P	0.55
WILSON	0.44	0.44	0.25	1.32	P	0.36
TUTTLE CREEK	0.31	0.25	0.00	0.85	P	0.31
MARION	0.31	0.13	0.00	0.77	P	0.34
PERRY	0.30	0.00	0.00	0.44	P	0.39
LAKES						
BELLEVILLE-ROCKY POND	63.75	0.25	0.25	1.03	G	23.58
BROWN SFL	58.00	11.75	0.25	0.90	G	30.08
HOLTON - BANNER CREEK LAKE	39.38	5.25	0.00	0.81	G	29.75
GRAHAM CO.-ANTELOPE LAKE	16.75	12.50	0.25	1.06	G	18.33
NEOSHO SFL	12.00	0.00	0.00	0.35	G	15.33
OSAGE SFL	12.00	0.50	0.00	0.55	F	14.00
PT CO.-CROSS CREEK LAKE	10.50	1.75	0.25	0.90	G	7.88
ESKRIDGE-LAKE WABAUNSEE	8.50	0.00	0.00	0.41	G	5.13
CENTRALIA CITY LAKE	6.63	0.00	0.00	0.39	F	4.08
DOUGLAS CO.-LONESTAR LAKE	6.00	0.50	0.00	0.65	F	5.92
PRATT CO. LAKE	5.50	2.75	0.00	0.82	F	2.39
HARVEY CO. LAKE - EAST	5.25	1.25	0.00	0.77	P	10.00
COWLEY SFL	5.00	1.00	0.00	0.57	F	3.75
POTTAWATOMIE SFL #1	4.00	0.75	0.00	0.64	F	3.75
MONTGOMERY SFL	3.75	1.75	0.25	0.90	G	3.17
ATCHISON CITY LAKE 23 (WARNOCK)	3.75	0.50	0.00	0.78	F	3.75
LENEXA-LAKE LENEXA	3.50	1.00	0.00	0.56	F	1.75
ATCHISON CITY LAKE #8	3.50	0.50	0.00	0.60	F	3.50
THAYER CITY LAKE	3.25	1.00	0.00	0.60	F	1.75
GARNETT-CRYSTAL LAKE	3.00	0.00	0.00	0.27	G	2.00
GARDNER CITY LAKE	2.75	0.75	0.00	0.58	F	1.37
ATCHISON SFL	2.75	1.25	0.25	1.36	F	2.83
SHAWNEE CO.-LAKE SHAWNEE	2.63	0.00	0.00	0.52	P	2.92
JEWELL SFL	2.50	2.25	0.75	1.12	F	1.33
PAOLA CITY LAKE	2.33	0.00	0.00	0.45	F	3.69
YATES CENTER CITY LAKE-NEW	2.00	0.00	0.00	0.44	P	2.00
BOURBON SFL	2.00	0.33	0.00	0.48	G	3.88
MCPHERSON SFL	2.00	0.00	0.00	0.26	P	1.25
POTTAWATOMIE SFL #2	2.00	1.00	0.25	1.20	F	1.75
WILSON SFL	1.75	1.00	0.00	0.66	G	1.75
PLAINVILLE LAKE	1.75	1.75	1.50	1.45	F	1.92
CRAWFORD SFL	1.75	0.00	0.00	0.34	F	0.67
SHERIDAN SFL	1.75	1.75	0.00	0.76	F	2.67
LYON SFL	1.75	0.50	0.00	0.80	F	1.50
BARBER SFL-LOWER	1.50	0.50	0.00	0.61	P	0.83
BONE CREEK LAKE	1.43	0.29	0.00	0.76	G	0.84
CRITZER LAKE	1.25	0.50	0.00	0.61	F	0.88
PLEASANTON - EAST LAKE	1.00	0.50	0.00	0.56	F	1.50
GARNETT CITY LAKE-NORTH	1.00	1.00	0.50	0.93	F	2.00
KIOWA SFL	1.00	0.25	0.00	0.88	P	0.75
SABETHA - PONY CREEK LAKE	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.38	F	19.92
JAWHAWK BOY SCOUT LAKE	1.00	0.25	0.25	1.74	F	1.25
DOUGLAS SFL	0.75	0.00	0.00	0.29	P	1.00
MIDDLE CREEK SFL	0.75	0.00	0.00	0.26	F	1.13
MOLINE NEW (NORTH) CITY LAKE	0.75	0.00	0.00	0.34	P	0.42
KINGMAN SFL	0.75	0.50	0.25	1.48	P	1.25
SEDAN - OLD (NORTH) CITY LAKE	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.30	P	0.75
MIAMI SFL	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.34	F	6.58
NEBO SFL	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.27	P	0.25
ELLIS CITY LAKE	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.22	P	0.17
WINFIELD CITY LAKE	0.30	0.10	0.00	0.88	P	0.23
BOURBON CO. CEDAR CREEK LAKE	0.25	0.25	0.00	0.62	G	1.00
EUREKA CITY LAKE	0.25	0.25	0.00	0.52	P	0.25
OTTAWA SFL	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.45	P	0.54
ROOKS STATE LAKE	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.47	P	0.25
PONDS						
BALDWIN - SPRING CREEK LAKE	24.00	0.50	0.00	0.58	F	15.67
GLEN ELDER STATE PARK POND	2.00	1.00	0.00	0.74	P	2.00
TROY 4-H LAKE	1.00	1.00	0.50	0.97	F	1.00
LAWRENCE-P. DAWSON BILLINGS-N	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.28	P	0.50

WHITE CRAPPIE

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>8")	Preferred Rating (>10")	Lunker Rating (>12")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	3-Year Average (>8")
RESERVOIRS						
LOVEWELL	34.81	3.63	0.56	1.18	G	23.54
HILLSDALE	29.38	15.56	0.75	1.11	G	28.54
MELVERN	25.63	11.25	0.94	1.34	G	21.31
BIG HILL	21.00	5.91	0.27	0.84	E	17.67
PERRY	19.85	10.10	0.45	1.53	G	31.33
ELK CITY	15.19	7.00	3.31	2.67	E	9.02
TUTTLE CREEK	14.00	4.25	0.63	1.43	G	7.65
MILFORD	13.06	5.06	0.94	1.70	G	7.52
CLINTON	13.04	5.35	0.30	1.24	F	11.88
TORONTO	7.81	3.38	1.00	1.75	G	4.44
POMONA	7.44	4.13	0.50	1.32	G	5.91
LACYGNE	6.81	3.19	0.06	0.88	G	6.83
KIRWIN	6.75	5.94	2.19	1.95	G	9.50
FALL RIVER	6.06	4.19	1.06	2.43	G	8.42
EL DORADO	4.81	2.44	0.88	1.30	G	4.00
LAKES						
OLATHE-CEDAR LAKE	71.50	35.50	3.50	1.55	G	38.58
WELLINGTON-HARGIS CREEK LAKE	67.00	25.00	4.50	1.15	E	72.75
SCOTT STATE LAKE	64.50	5.25	0.00	0.62	F	40.83
CARBONDALE CITY LAKE - EAST	47.75	14.50	2.25	1.14	G	28.50
HOWARD-POLE DANIELS LAKE	43.75	11.00	1.00	2.43	E	41.17
ESKRIDGE-LAKE WABAUNSEE	35.75	1.75	0.75	1.11	G	31.50
HERINGTON CITY LAKE-OLD	33.88	7.38	0.88	1.11	G	31.82
HERINGTON CITY LAKE-NEW	29.38	6.13	0.50	1.16	G	13.39
EUREKA CITY LAKE	28.75	5.25	2.75	1.72	G	41.75
OSAGE CITY LAKE	24.00	3.50	0.00	0.75	F	14.00
PAOLA CITY LAKE	20.33	7.00	0.00	0.81	F	9.86
HARVEY CO. LAKE - EAST	19.75	6.25	0.25	1.06	E	32.25
GEARY SFL	19.00	3.50	0.00	0.69	G	12.75
MOLINE NEW (NORTH) CITY LAKE	17.75	2.50	1.00	1.03	G	18.67
ATCHISON CITY LAKE #8	17.50	6.00	1.50	1.04	F	17.50
NEOSHO SFL	17.50	1.00	0.00	0.63	G	27.33
WOODSON SFL	15.20	2.40	0.20	0.97	E	21.48
CHASE SFL	15.00	2.75	0.00	0.75	F	16.17
WELLINGTON CITY LAKE	14.75	1.63	0.25	1.01	F	8.21
SEDAN - OLD (NORTH) CITY LAKE	14.25	1.75	0.75	1.03	G	16.33
SEDAN - NEW (SOUTH) CITY LAKE	13.75	4.50	1.50	1.22	G	21.25
ATCHISON SFL	9.50	0.50	0.00	0.77	F	3.83
ELLIS CITY LAKE	9.50	7.50	1.50	1.54	F	6.33
GARNETT-CRYSTAL LAKE	9.50	1.50	0.50	0.94	G	5.75
BARBER SFL-LOWER	9.25	0.00	0.00	0.37	P	3.33
OLATHE-LAKE OLATHE	9.25	0.50	0.00	0.52	F	6.75
JEFFREY EC - MAKE UP LAKE	8.75	2.50	0.50	1.22	F	4.92
HOLTON-PRAIRIE LAKE	8.50	0.75	0.25	1.12	F	8.50
PLEASANTON - WEST LAKE	8.50	0.50	0.50	1.57	G	25.00
NEBO SFL	8.25	2.25	0.75	1.71	F	5.00
CENTRALIA CITY LAKE	8.13	0.38	0.13	0.55	F	4.58
DOUGLAS CO.-LONESTAR LAKE	8.00	2.25	0.00	0.71	F	4.83
MCPHERSON SFL	7.50	1.00	0.50	0.90	P	7.25
CRAWFORD SFL	7.50	0.75	0.25	0.83	F	4.43
HOLTON - BANNER CREEK LAKE	7.00	3.75	1.25	1.37	F	4.88
PLEASANTON CITY LAKE - OLD	7.00	4.00	0.50	0.65	G	12.75
KIOWA SFL	6.75	1.50	0.50	0.92	F	3.83
PRATT CO. LAKE	6.50	3.00	0.00	0.89	F	2.72
OLPE CITY LAKE	6.50	0.50	0.25	1.00	P	4.75
OSAGE SFL	6.50	0.50	0.25	1.39	F	7.75
PREScott CITY LAKE	6.00	3.00	0.00	0.63	G	6.00
HORSETHIEF	5.50	2.75	0.25	1.33	F	9.75
LYON SFL	5.50	5.25	0.75	0.92	F	3.38
POTTAWATOMIE SFL #2	5.00	0.25	0.00	0.37	F	2.42
PLEASANTON - EAST LAKE	4.75	0.50	0.25	0.80	G	3.92
MEADE STATE LAKE	4.00	2.25	1.25	1.94	F	4.42
ATCHISON CITY LAKE 23 (WARNOCK)	4.00	1.25	0.00	0.59	P	4.00
WASHINGTON SFL	3.75	1.75	0.50	1.05	F	1.67
BOURBON CO. CEDAR CREEK LAKE	3.50	2.75	0.75	1.27	G	2.00
PONDS						
GLEN ELDER STATE PARK POND	8.50	4.00	0.50	0.82	F	8.50
ATCHISON CITY LAKE #7	6.50	0.50	0.50	1.09	F	6.50
LAWRENCE-MARY'S LAKE	5.50	1.50	0.00	0.68	P	5.50
BALDWIN - SPRING CREEK LAKE	5.00	1.00	0.00	0.56	F	3.33
SEVERY CITY LAKE	3.50	2.50	1.00	0.91	G	3.50
LAWRENCE-P. DAWSON BILLINGS-N	3.00	1.00	0.00	0.45	P	3.25
FORT LEAVENWORTH-MERRITT LAKE	3.00	1.50	1.00	1.32	F	3.00
LAWRENCE-P. DAWSON BILLINGS-S	2.00	0.50	0.00	0.73	P	1.50

LARGEMOUTH BASS						
IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>12")	Preferred Rating (>15")	Lunker Rating (>20")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	3-Year Average (>12")
RESERVOIRS						
SEBELIUS (NORTON)	79.55	22.39	0.00	3.40	G	52.37
LACYGNE	61.80	36.52	3.37	6.31	E	66.11
WILSON	34.27	7.93	0.00	4.33	E	30.52
WEBSTER	20.59	8.24	0.00	4.34	F	9.87
PERRY	15.89	12.42	1.16	6.37	G	23.44
HILLSDALE	15.59	6.57	0.20	5.58	F	12.49
BIG HILL	13.96	2.70	0.00	3.75	E	19.24
KIRWIN	10.59	0.59	0.00	2.84	F	4.16
CEDAR BLUFF	8.04	6.29	0.00	3.60	P	8.55
GLEN ELDER	5.35	2.41	0.00	2.71	F	2.67
EL DORADO	4.71	1.18	0.00	2.23	P	3.44
CLINTON	3.14	1.26	0.00	3.96	P	3.75
MELVERN	2.96	0.74	0.00	2.31	P	2.40
LAKES						
BUTLER SFL	155.88	76.47	5.88	6.06	E	144.55
BROWN SFL	149.02	39.22	0.98	5.97	G	118.63
GARNETT-CRYSTAL LAKE	129.41	82.35	7.84	6.08	E	123.84
POTTAWATOMIE SFL #1	125.74	14.08	0.00	4.39	E	142.03
GARNETT CITY LAKE-NORTH	112.61	40.34	0.00	4.08	E	120.19
MOLINE NEW (NORTH) CITY LAKE	110.18	29.94	0.00	3.75	G	91.30
MIAMI SFL	101.96	25.49	0.00	4.99	G	79.91
OLATHE-LAKE OLATHE	99.22	21.09	0.78	5.74	G	76.61
COWLEY SFL	99.02	20.59	1.96	5.03	G	104.23
OTTAWA SFL	97.65	11.76	1.18	6.03	G	70.20
MCPHERSON SFL	89.71	49.26	5.88	6.70	E	85.61
HOWARD-POLK DANIELS LAKE	88.62	37.13	4.79	7.05	E	64.84
ATCHISON CITY LAKE 23 (WARNOCK)	87.06	2.35	0.00	3.56	G	87.06
SHAWNEE SFL	82.97	35.93	2.61	4.96	G	56.37
POTTAWATOMIE SFL #2	82.13	50.66	2.30	4.74	G	57.44
PLAINVILLE LAKE	80.39	72.55	1.96	7.10	G	32.84
SEDAN - OLD (NORTH) CITY LAKE	79.04	37.13	1.20	5.51	E	81.74
ATCHISON CITY LAKE #8	76.47	45.10	7.84	5.67	G	76.47
HOLTON-PRAIRIE LAKE	74.51	55.88	3.92	6.51	G	74.51
LEAVENWORTH SFL	74.51	21.57	0.98	4.16	G	70.88
PLEASANTON - WEST LAKE	74.47	21.28	3.19	5.36	E	129.31
NEOSHO SFL	72.94	22.35	2.94	5.60	G	50.55
OLATHE-CEDAR LAKE	71.25	35.00	2.50	5.95	G	64.66
ATWOOD-LAKE ATWOOD-MAIN	70.21	15.60	0.00	4.12	G	64.63
GREAT BEND-VETS PARK LAKE	67.99	43.51	0.00	5.20	F	46.90
HOLTON - BANNER CREEK LAKE	66.81	50.00	1.68	6.28	G	64.47
LYON SFL	65.87	3.99	0.00	1.52	G	110.49
NEBO SFL	62.92	41.57	5.62	7.49	G	62.02
MADISON CITY LAKE	62.87	31.94	2.00	5.40	E	53.64
PLEASANTON CITY LAKE - OLD	60.78	7.84	0.98	4.71	G	60.78
SEDAN - NEW (SOUTH) CITY LAKE	59.02	12.83	0.00	3.09	G	51.79
KIOWA SFL	58.93	29.46	0.00	2.33	F	51.91
DOUGLAS CO.-LONESTAR LAKE	58.82	25.00	0.74	5.03	G	62.53
ATCHISON SFL	58.82	21.32	0.00	4.79	F	55.14
PT CO-CROSS CREEK LAKE	58.52	7.73	1.10	4.72	G	67.53
WILSON SFL	58.24	26.88	1.79	6.06	E	34.91
OSAGE SFL	58.24	5.29	1.18	5.20	G	55.37
JETMORE CITY LAKE	57.26	16.15	0.00	3.38	G	30.05
SABETHA - PONY CREEK LAKE	57.14	23.53	0.00	4.94	F	72.04
BOURBON CO. LAKE	55.74	27.87	1.09	5.05	G	49.77
GARDNER CITY LAKE	55.63	8.75	0.00	4.01	F	56.60
MELVERN RIVER POND	55.04	24.81	0.00	3.02	G	65.11
CHANUTE CITY LAKE	54.62	22.69	1.68	5.75	F	37.48
MOLINE OLD (SOUTH) CITY LAKE	53.89	7.98	0.00	2.20	F	49.34
GRAHAM CO.-ANTELOPE LAKE	50.74	20.59	0.00	3.08	F	46.60
EUREKA CITY LAKE	49.90	11.98	2.99	7.28	E	43.10
JAWHAWK BOY SCOUT LAKE	48.24	24.71	1.18	4.96	F	59.41
SHERIDAN SFL	47.79	7.35	0.00	4.48	F	67.71
PAOLA CITY LAKE	46.32	8.09	0.74	4.27	F	58.98
YATES CENTER CITY LAKE-NEW	46.32	11.03	0.00	2.87	G	35.84
LEBO CITY LAKE	45.59	15.69	0.49	4.41	G	30.53
CLARK SFL	45.49	34.12	2.13	5.17	G	44.51
LENEXA-LAKE LENEXA	45.00	18.75	5.00	6.15	G	69.58
OSAWATOMIE CITY LAKE	42.65	5.88	0.00	3.51	F	35.09
PRATT CO. LAKE	38.08	16.11	0.00	3.43	G	52.04
CRAWFORD SFL	37.56	16.74	1.36	6.15	F	24.22
CRITZER LAKE	37.25	1.96	0.49	4.92	G	21.18
HARVEY CO. LAKE - EAST	37.06	11.18	0.00	4.43	G	20.70
BELLEVILLE-ROCKY POND	34.56	26.47	0.00	4.12	G	67.36
BONE CREEK LAKE	33.56	22.49	0.35	4.59	G	38.20



Mike Blair photo

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>12")	Preferred Rating (>15")	Lunker Rating (>20")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	3-Year Average (>12")
LAKES						
MEADE STATE LAKE	32.44	32.44	0.00	4.38	F	51.78
HORSETHIEF	31.89	4.91	0.00	3.31	P	31.89
WOODSON SFL	31.86	9.80	0.49	5.47	E	19.96
YATES CENTER-SOUTH OWL LAKE	31.55	16.58	0.00	3.88	E	35.02
CARBONDALE CITY LAKE - EAST	30.94	12.97	0.00	3.86	F	19.46
LOGAN CITY LAKE	30.88	23.53	0.00	4.37	G	32.56
ESKRIDGE-LAKE WABAUNSEE	29.63	13.47	1.80	5.24	F	26.39
CHASE SFL	28.57	15.13	0.00	3.35	G	26.18
COUNCIL GROVE CITY LAKE	28.43	8.82	0.00	2.20	G	22.31
THAYER CITY LAKE	27.94	22.06	4.41	4.93	F	30.97
OSAGE CITY LAKE	25.74	8.91	0.99	5.19	F	21.10
MIDDLE CREEK SFL	25.00	6.25	0.00	4.06	F	22.83
MARION CO. LAKE	23.87	6.56	0.00	3.55	G	32.64
SHAWNEE CO.-LAKE SHAWNEE	21.18	7.65	0.00	4.14	F	37.89
WELLINGTON-HARGIS CREEK LAKE	21.01	11.76	0.84	4.14	F	21.01
WICHITA-KDOT-WEST BORROW PIT	19.20	5.91	0.00	2.57	F	17.15
BARBER SFL-LOWER	18.73	9.36	0.00	2.53	F	26.95
ELLIS CITY LAKE	17.36	4.96	0.83	5.78	F	12.03
JEWELL SFL	17.11	12.30	0.00	5.16	G	8.97
SCOTT STATE LAKE	16.86	10.47	1.16	6.92	G	27.68
MONTGOMERY SFL	15.74	7.41	0.00	4.30	G	23.48
BOURBON SFL	15.29	1.76	0.00	3.81	F	32.68
WINFIELD CITY LAKE	12.94	4.71	0.59	4.70	F	9.39
ROOKS STATE LAKE	12.75	12.75	0.00	4.13	G	7.94
KINGMAN SFL	12.50	8.09	0.00	4.39	F	19.31
CENTRALIA CITY LAKE	12.00	12.00	0.00	4.46	P	10.88
COLDWATER LAKE	11.54	0.00	0.00	1.57	P	27.79
GOODMAN SFL	11.34	11.34	3.78	8.02	F	33.15
HARVEY CO. LAKE - WEST	7.19	1.20	0.00	4.03	F	5.51
WASHINGTON SFL	6.86	1.96	0.00	1.90	P	6.86
GREAT BEND-STONE PARK LAKE	6.70	4.46	0.00	2.16	F	4.37
DOUGLAS SFL	5.88	3.68	0.00	4.40	F	10.03
ANTHONY CITY LAKE	5.88	1.96	0.98	5.70	P	9.68
PONDS						
BALDWIN - SPRING CREEK LAKE	173.53	29.41	5.88	4.95	G	112.32
NEMAHA WILDLIFE AREA POND	138.69	6.12	0.00	3.19	G	83.75
YATES CENTER KIDS PONDS	130.60	48.51	0.00	3.11	E	133.54
STERLING CITY LAKE	123.53	19.61	0.00	NA	F	123.53
NEW STRAWN CITY LAKE	121.57	60.78	0.00	3.62	E	96.57
OVERBROOK LAKE	102.94	11.76	0.00	3.68	G	70.02
EMPORIA-JONES PARK-NORTH PND	80.00	10.00	0.00	2.20	G	70.00
SEVERY CITY LAKE	77.84	14.97	2.99	3.75	G	109.28
TROY 4-H LAKE	52.94	0.00	0.00	1.13	F	52.94
JEWELL CITY LAKE	51.47	17.65	0.00	3.38	G	32.52
EMPORIA-PETER PAN PARK	48.00	48.00	0.00	2.98	G	52.24
OVERBROOK KIDS POND	44.44	44.44	0.00	2.82	G	37.28
ATCHISON CITY LAKE #7	37.25	9.80	0.00	4.38	F	37.25
WICHITA-KDOT-EAST BORROW PIT	29.67	17.80	0.00	4.24	F	21.61
BLACK KETTLE SFL	15.65	11.76	0.00	NA	F	25.86
GLEN ELDER STATE PARK POND	14.71	5.88	0.00	4.23	F	14.71

SPOTTED BASS

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>11")	Preferred Rating (>14")	Lunker Rating (>17")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	3-Year Average (>11")
RESERVOIRS						
SEBELIUS (NORTON)	13.55	4.12	0.00	2.23	G	11.99
MELVERN	8.13	2.96	0.00	1.49	F	5.53
CEDAR BLUFF	3.15	1.40	0.00	1.77	F	1.75
WILSON	0.77	0.00	0.00	1.03	P	0.53
EL DORADO	0.59	0.00	0.00	1.01	P	0.55
LAKES						
WILSON SFL	35.84	9.86	0.00	1.90	E	23.83
HOWARD-POLK DANIELS LAKE	26.35	8.38	0.00	1.50	G	20.81
WINFIELD CITY LAKE	14.12	9.41	0.00	2.27	F	14.20
CRAWFORD SFL	10.41	1.36	0.00	1.88	F	6.07
COUNCIL GROVE CITY LAKE	8.82	0.00	0.00	1.04	G	9.04
CHASE SFL	8.40	0.84	0.00	1.28	G	9.19
BOURBON SFL	8.24	0.00	0.00	1.12	G	28.31
MARION CO. LAKE	2.98	0.60	0.00	2.17	F	6.54
CHANUTE CITY LAKE	0.84	0.00	0.00	1.58	P	0.68
YATES CENTER CITY LAKE-NEW	0.74	0.00	0.00	1.10	P	0.67
YATES CENTER-SOUTH OWL LAKE	0.53	0.53	0.00	1.59	F	0.53
EUREKA CITY LAKE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.34	F	4.90

SMALLMOUTH BASS

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>11")	Preferred Rating (>14")	Lunker Rating (>17")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	3-Year Average (>11")
RESERVOIRS						
WOLF CREEK	24.02	8.82	0.98	2.09	E	21.64
GLEN ELDER	18.45	4.81	0.53	4.01	G	19.40
WILSON	12.02	2.56	0.00	1.53	G	15.57
MELVERN	8.50	3.32	0.37	2.19	G	5.79
EL DORADO	3.53	1.76	0.00	1.54	F	4.23
CLINTON	2.31	0.84	0.00	1.96	P	1.27
BIG HILL	1.35	0.00	0.00	0.99	F	2.32
LAKES						
JEFFREY EC - AUX. MAKEUP LAKE	20.85	6.35	0.00	1.78	E	12.60
POTAWATOMIE SFL #2	8.44	3.07	1.54	3.71	G	6.48
ESKRIDGE-LAKE WABAUNSEE	8.08	0.90	0.00	1.49	G	6.11
JEFFREY EC - MAKE UP LAKE	5.34	0.89	0.00	2.40	F	4.23
BOURBON CO. LAKE	4.92	4.92	2.19	2.41	G	5.48
CRITZER LAKE	4.90	0.00	0.00	1.02	G	3.02
HOLTON - BANNER CREEK LAKE	1.26	1.26	0.84	3.88	F	0.72
YATES CENTER CITY LAKE-NEW	0.74	0.74	0.00	1.54	P	0.74
SHAWNEE CO.-LAKE SHAWNEE	0.59	0.00	0.00	0.80	F	1.75
DOUGLAS CO.-LONESTAR LAKE	0.00	0.00	0.00	NA	P	0.44



WIPER

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>12")	Preferred Rating (>15")	Lunker Rating (>20")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	3-Year Average (>12")
RESERVOIRS						
MILFORD	13.40	9.80	2.20	7.35	G	11.05
SEBELIUS (NORTON)	11.60	10.60	1.00	5.20	G	10.05
MARION	8.07	4.80	0.33	3.75	E	7.38
CHENEY	5.95	2.60	0.20	4.08	G	5.20
CLINTON	5.94	5.94	2.13	4.86	F	4.06
KANOPOLIS	4.00	1.00	0.08	4.16	F	5.96
POMONA	3.50	1.92	0.33	5.06	G	3.50
KIRWIN	3.17	2.00	0.17	7.06	G	2.79
EL DORADO	3.13	1.44	0.75	5.29	G	2.34
LACYGNE	2.42	0.83	0.25	5.44	F	2.13
WEBSTER	2.25	2.25	0.58	10.97	G	2.71
GLEN ELDER	2.14	2.14	0.45	5.41	F	2.46
COUNCIL GROVE	1.50	0.50	0.00	3.75	G	1.83
LOVEWELL	1.33	0.47	0.13	4.10	F	1.33
CEDAR BLUFF	1.09	1.00	0.36	5.20	F	1.45
LAKES						
COLDWATER LAKE	24.00	23.50	0.00	2.50	G	24.00
HERINGTON CITY LAKE-NEW	19.38	16.25	0.88	4.77	G	16.44
WELLINGTON CITY LAKE	12.88	8.50	0.50	5.82	E	12.63
YATES CENTER CITY LAKE-NEW	6.33	1.50	0.33	5.47	F	3.25
JETMORE CITY LAKE	5.50	2.00	0.00	3.26	F	4.88
MARION CO. LAKE	4.67	1.17	0.67	4.74	G	3.17
WINFIELD CITY LAKE	4.50	3.70	0.00	3.40	G	4.50
OLATHE-LAKE OLATHE	4.50	4.50	0.33	4.91	F	4.00
SHAWNEE CO.-LAKE SHAWNEE	4.13	4.13	0.75	9.24	G	3.94
GARNETT CITY LAKE-NORTH	3.67	1.00	0.33	3.45	G	2.33
SABETHA - PONY CREEK LAKE	3.33	2.83	0.83	10.69	F	2.75
JEFFREY EC - MAKE UP LAKE	3.00	3.00	0.67	4.85	F	7.42
SHERIDAN SFL	3.00	1.67	0.00	2.09	G	3.88
WOODSON SFL	2.40	1.00	0.00	2.20	P	1.37
PRATT CO. LAKE	2.00	0.50	0.00	3.27	G	1.25
KIOWA SFL	2.00	0.00	0.00	1.03	F	1.88
OSAGE SFL	2.00	0.33	0.17	4.22	P	1.08
PAOLA CITY LAKE	1.67	0.67	0.17	3.18	F	2.00
LEAVENWORTH SFL	1.67	0.83	0.17	3.74	F	2.00
OTTAWA SFL	1.50	1.50	0.00	2.82	F	3.17
PLEASANTON - EAST LAKE	1.33	1.17	0.17	4.87	G	2.00
DOUGLAS CO.-LONESTAR LAKE	1.00	1.00	0.00	1.53	P	3.00
GRAHAM CO.-ANTELOPE LAKE	1.00	0.67	0.33	4.67	F	6.75
PONDS						
ATCHISON CITY LAKE #7	2.00	0.00	0.00	1.07	F	2.00

STRIPER

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>20")	Preferred Rating (>30")	Lunker Rating (>35")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	3-Year Average (>20")
RESERVOIRS						
WILSON	3.65	0.00	0.00	7.76	G	3.28
GLEN ELDER	0.05	0.00	0.00	9.66	P	0.05



WHITE BASS

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>9")	Preferred Rating (>12")	Lunker Rating (>15")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	3-Year Average (>9")
RESERVOIRS						
CLINTON	23.50	18.81	4.63	2.03	G	17.66
CEDAR BLUFF	21.09	13.64	4.73	2.09	E	16.15
PERRY	16.35	6.60	1.05	2.31	G	13.23
LOVEWELL	11.53	6.87	0.53	1.84	G	9.23
KANOPOLIS	10.75	7.67	0.58	2.38	E	20.38
EL DORADO	9.56	5.56	0.31	1.96	G	7.56
GLEN ELDER	7.64	7.23	0.73	2.60	G	8.80
POMONA	6.17	4.58	0.25	1.90	G	6.17
KIRWIN	6.17	3.50	0.67	3.11	G	5.75
BIG HILL	6.10	5.10	0.60	2.01	E	6.00
TUTTLE CREEK	5.60	2.65	0.95	4.03	F	4.33
WOLF CREEK	5.47	5.13	0.07	1.70	G	5.47
MELVERN	4.81	3.00	0.75	2.10	F	5.03
MILFORD	4.35	3.40	0.90	2.03	F	4.40
LACYGNE	4.33	3.92	0.08	1.60	G	2.96
HILLSDALE	4.08	2.50	0.08	1.51	F	6.58
COUNCIL GROVE	2.50	0.83	0.00	1.37	G	3.75
FALL RIVER	2.50	1.63	0.50	2.65	F	3.17
WILSON	1.85	1.60	1.10	2.33	F	3.25
WEBSTER	1.75	1.75	0.25	1.70	F	10.04
MARION	1.13	0.60	0.13	1.70	G	2.85
CHENEY	1.05	0.35	0.00	1.59	P	1.75
TORONTO	0.25	0.06	0.06	3.09	F	0.29
LAKES						
CLARK SFL	25.50	6.50	0.00	1.34	G	19.19
JEFFREY EC - MAKE UP LAKE	14.67	0.33	0.00	1.45	G	7.58
HERINGTON CITY LAKE-OLD	12.88	11.25	0.38	1.91	G	7.88
CARBONDALE CITY LAKE - EAST	11.67	4.50	1.17	2.43	G	11.67
HERINGTON CITY LAKE-NEW	11.50	7.88	0.13	1.61	F	9.88
SHAWNEE CO.-LAKE SHAWNEE	9.63	3.88	0.00	1.50	G	6.25
MIAMI SFL	4.00	0.00	0.00	0.63	F	2.08
CHASE SFL	2.83	1.17	0.00	0.84	F	3.50
MELVERN RIVER POND	2.67	1.83	0.00	1.51	F	5.08
COWLEY SFL	2.33	2.33	0.67	1.90	P	2.67
SABETHA - PONY CREEK LAKE	2.17	1.67	1.50	2.19	F	1.83
HARVEY CO. LAKE - EAST	2.17	2.00	0.00	1.59	G	2.18
WINFIELD CITY LAKE	1.90	1.40	0.20	2.20	F	1.90
MARION CO. LAKE	1.83	1.50	0.00	1.06	G	1.42
GEARY SFL	1.50	0.00	0.00	0.69	P	0.75
DOUGLAS CO.-LONESTAR LAKE	0.83	0.67	0.67	2.29	P	0.50
SEDAN - NEW (SOUTH) CITY LAKE	0.75	0.00	0.00	0.53	P	1.50
GARDNER CITY LAKE	0.67	0.50	0.17	1.67	F	0.92
MIDDLE CREEK SFL	0.67	0.67	0.00	1.15	F	0.75
OSAGE CITY LAKE	0.50	0.25	0.25	2.64	P	0.35
WILSON SFL	0.50	0.50	0.50	1.96	F	0.83
PONDS						
SEVERY CITY LAKE	0.33	0.33	0.00	1.26	P	0.33





WALLEYE

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>15")	Preferred Rating (>20")	Lunker Rating (>25")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	3-Year Average (>15")
RESERVOIRS						
WEBSTER	6.08	1.08	0.08	8.76	G	3.75
KIRWIN	5.75	4.50	0.33	8.75	G	3.67
GLEN ELDER	4.95	0.23	0.00	4.04	G	4.26
MILFORD	4.55	0.75	0.20	6.82	G	3.40
CEDAR BLUFF	2.73	0.73	0.00	4.96	G	2.21
CHENEY	1.85	0.25	0.00	3.90	F	2.83
LOVEWELL	1.73	0.87	0.07	5.62	G	1.60
WILSON	1.60	0.25	0.00	3.22	G	3.18
MARION	1.13	0.00	0.00	2.49	G	1.04
HILLSDALE	1.08	0.17	0.00	2.83	G	1.58
EL DORADO	0.94	0.44	0.00	6.00	F	2.36
KANOPOLIS	0.58	0.00	0.00	2.16	F	0.38
POMONA	0.42	0.25	0.08	6.56	F	0.42
MELVERN	0.31	0.06	0.00	5.31	F	0.41
CLINTON	0.31	0.25	0.00	4.49	F	0.34
LAKES						
PRATT CO. LAKE	11.50	2.00	0.50	6.33	G	6.13
HOLTON - BANNER CREEK LAKE	5.38	3.38	0.75	7.80	G	5.56
BARBER SFL-LOWER	3.00	1.00	0.00	3.37	F	2.13
HERINGTON CITY LAKE-NEW	2.75	0.13	0.00	3.21	G	2.13
JEFFREY EC - MAKE UP LAKE	2.00	0.33	0.00	3.07	F	1.17
YATES CENTER CITY LAKE-NEW	2.00	0.33	0.00	2.60	F	1.42
CRITZER LAKE	1.83	0.17	0.00	4.08	G	2.08
WINFIELD CITY LAKE	1.70	0.80	0.20	7.41	G	1.70
SABETHA - PONY CREEK LAKE	1.33	0.67	0.17	6.40	F	0.92
LEAVENWORTH SFL	1.33	0.00	0.00	2.29	F	1.00
GARNETT CITY LAKE-NORTH	1.33	0.33	0.00	3.04	G	0.79
SHAWNEE CO.-LAKE SHAWNEE	1.25	0.63	0.25	5.16	F	1.25
JEWELL SFL	1.25	0.00	0.00	1.38	F	0.75
CLARK SFL	1.00	0.50	0.00	4.15	G	0.88
BUTLER SFL	0.75	0.25	0.00	4.76	P	0.75
BROWN SFL	0.50	0.50	0.00	4.20	F	0.75
ATCHISON SFL	0.50	0.25	0.00	3.26	F	0.38
SCOTT STATE LAKE	0.50	0.33	0.33	6.62	F	1.33
HORSETHIEF	0.33	0.00	0.00	0.97	P	0.17
BOURBON SFL	0.33	0.00	0.00	2.20	P	0.54
POTTAWATOMIE SFL #2	0.25	0.00	0.00	2.05	P	0.25
WOODSON SFL	0.20	0.20	0.00	3.97	P	0.18
PLEASANTON - EAST LAKE	0.17	0.00	0.00	1.35	P	0.33
SHAWNEE SFL	0.17	0.00	0.00	1.21	P	0.25
BONE CREEK LAKE	0.13	0.13	0.00	3.54	P	0.31
CENTRALIA CITY LAKE	0.13	0.13	0.13	6.83	P	0.13

SAUGER

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>11")	Preferred Rating (>14")	Lunker Rating (>17")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	3-Year Average (>11")
RESERVOIRS						
PERRY	3.10	1.25	0.65	2.85	G	1.80
CLINTON	1.19	0.75	0.31	2.43	F	0.78
MELVERN	0.13	0.13	0.06	1.86	P	0.09
LAKES						
HOLTON - BANNER CREEK LAKE	0.38	0.25	0.00	0.86	P	0.31

SAUGEYE

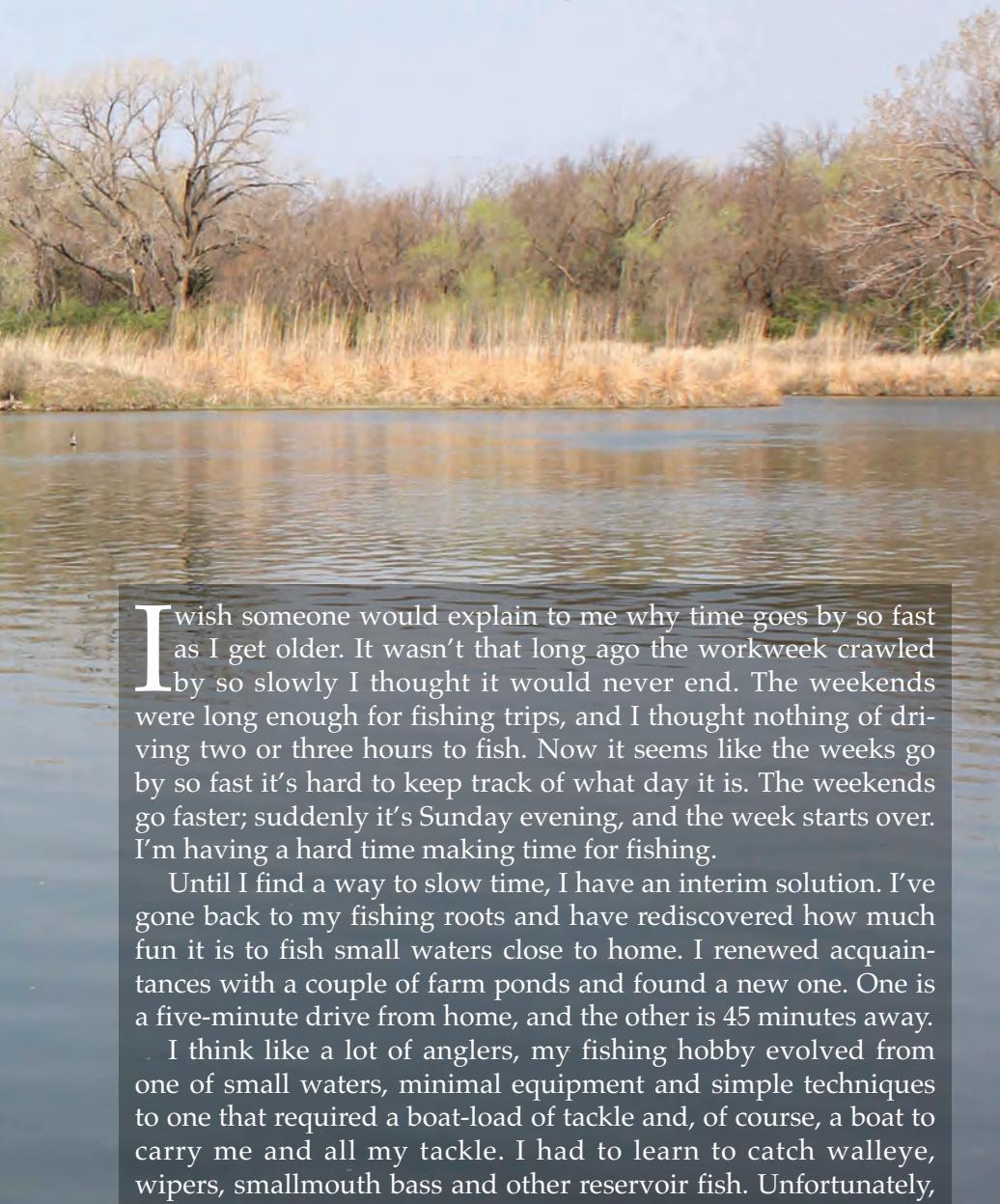
IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>14")	Preferred Rating (>18")	Lunker Rating (>22")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	3-Year Average (>14")
RESERVOIRS						
KANOPOLIS	12.33	0.08	0.00	2.44	E	9.67
SEBELIUS (NORTON)	10.40	1.90	0.30	7.36	G	7.00
COUNCIL GROVE	3.33	1.17	0.33	4.54	F	2.00
LAKES						
ATWOOD-LAKE ATWOOD-MAIN	17.33	0.00	0.00	1.68	F	8.67
GRAHAM CO.-ANTELOPE LAKE	6.00	1.00	0.33	5.38	G	8.63
OTTAWA SFL	5.83	2.33	1.33	4.74	G	5.92
WELLINGTON CITY LAKE	5.13	1.88	0.13	5.07	E	4.56
SHERIDAN SFL	4.67	0.67	0.00	3.04	G	3.46
HARVEY CO. LAKE - EAST	4.17	0.50	0.17	3.95	F	2.53
WELLINGTON-HARGIS CREEK LAKE	3.75	2.75	0.00	3.68	G	2.88
OLATHE-LAKE OLATHE	3.67	0.50	0.17	3.80	F	2.50
GEARY SFL	2.50	1.00	0.75	4.63	F	2.00
OLATHE-CEDAR LAKE	2.25	1.25	0.00	3.75	F	1.38
SEDAN - NEW (SOUTH) CITY LAKE	1.50	0.00	0.00	1.28	P	0.75
SEDWICK CO.-LAKE AFTON	1.33	1.33	0.33	4.76	F	1.33
CENTRALIA CITY LAKE	1.25	1.00	0.25	5.86	F	1.06
GARDNER CITY LAKE	1.17	0.67	0.17	3.59	F	1.75
POTTAWATOMIE SFL #2	1.00	1.00	1.00	5.78	P	0.88
ESKRIDGE-LAKE WABAUNSEE	0.83	0.67	0.33	5.45	P	0.83
SCOTT STATE LAKE	0.83	0.00	0.00	0.99	F	0.83
PAOLA CITY LAKE	0.83	0.00	0.00	1.71	F	0.75
OLPE CITY LAKE	0.75	0.50	0.50	6.17	P	0.63
JEWELL SFL	0.75	0.00	0.00	1.39	F	0.50
MCPHERSON SFL	0.67	0.00	0.00	1.19	P	0.67
MADISON CITY LAKE	0.67	0.67	0.50	5.07	P	0.67
LYON SFL	0.67	0.67	0.33	5.07	P	0.92
CHASE SFL	0.67	0.33	0.00	2.14	F	0.58
MARION CO. LAKE	0.67	0.33	0.00	2.62	F	1.08
HOWARD-POLK DANIELS LAKE	0.50	0.00	0.00	1.05	P	0.45



text and photos by Mike Miller
editor, Pratt

The author found time for fishing on ponds close to home and in the process went back to basics and rediscovered his love for fishing small waters.

SMALL-WATER ANGLING



I wish someone would explain to me why time goes by so fast as I get older. It wasn't that long ago the workweek crawled by so slowly I thought it would never end. The weekends were long enough for fishing trips, and I thought nothing of driving two or three hours to fish. Now it seems like the weeks go by so fast it's hard to keep track of what day it is. The weekends go faster; suddenly it's Sunday evening, and the week starts over. I'm having a hard time making time for fishing.

Until I find a way to slow time, I have an interim solution. I've gone back to my fishing roots and have rediscovered how much fun it is to fish small waters close to home. I renewed acquaintances with a couple of farm ponds and found a new one. One is a five-minute drive from home, and the other is 45 minutes away.

I think like a lot of anglers, my fishing hobby evolved from one of small waters, minimal equipment and simple techniques to one that required a boat-load of tackle and, of course, a boat to carry me and all my tackle. I had to learn to catch walleye, wipers, smallmouth bass and other reservoir fish. Unfortunately, from where I live, it's an hour drive to the nearest reservoir, and most are at 2 hours away. So weekend fishing trips require

planning, faith in the weather forecast and gas money. But that was when time crept by slowly and it seemed like there were more hours in the day. Bottom line is that these days I'm not getting as much fishing done, and that's unhealthy as far as I'm concerned.

Once I rediscovered these small waters, I went back to my minimalist ways, carrying a small fanny pack tackle box and a couple of rods while fishing from the bank. Dad and I could get in a couple of hours fishing after work or on Saturday morning without killing the whole day. Time slowed down, at least while we were fishing, and that's a good thing.

And we caught fish. It was fun relearning to fish small waters, but it took some time to figure out how to pare my tackle list down. I was used to taking everything, just in case, including a tackle box I can barely lift and five or six rods for different types of fishing. I had to make some decisions.

On small waters, I carry two rods – a casting rod for bass and a light spinning rod for panfish. I usually spool 14-pound test monofilament on the casting reel, and I like a 6 ½-foot, medium-heavy rod. This combination will cast spinnerbaits and topwater plugs, but it's heavy enough to fish jigs and plastic worms in cover. For panfish, I like a 6 ½-foot medium-light spinning rod and spool the reel with a 6-pound super line like Fireline. I like the flame green-colored line because I can see it while I'm fishing, especially in low light or shadows. The super line has a small diameter and lets me fish jigs as small as one-sixteenth ounce, but it's stronger and more sensitive than monofilament. However, I usually tie on a 6- or 8-foot leader of 6-pound-test mono. I don't know if fish actually see the super line, but the mono leader gives me confidence in clear water, and it provides just enough stretch to save a really big fish that makes a sudden run right the boat.

I put together a jig box that included a variety of one-eighth and

one-sixteenth-ounce painted jig heads along with a good selection of 2- and 3-inch plastic grubs. The ponds have good water quality, so I have plenty of white, chartreuse and yellow grubs. I also threw in a couple of floats to use when the crappie move up in the shallow brush.

For bass, I love spinnerbaits, so I throw in four or five quarter- and half-ounce spinnerbaits; a couple with big Colorado blades and a couple with willow blades – all silver. I prefer, white, white and chartreuse and white and blue spinnerbait skirts, but because a good friend throws nothing but black and always catches fish, I include at least one with a black skirt. I always attach a plastic trailer. The spinnerbait is an ideal small-water bait because it's so versatile. You can fish it fast and close to the surface in weedy ponds, or you can slow roll it in deeper water, bumping stumps or logs. Other bass tackle include a buzz bait and topwater plugs, such as a Zara Spook or Jitterbug, for those calm evenings just before sundown. And finally, I have several black and chartreuse, quarter-ounce



Big bass live in small ponds. There's nothing quite like the fun and solitude of fishing a farm pond tucked away in the Kansas prairies.

bass jigs and some black and purple plastic worms for fishing deep water slowly.



Small waters can be fished from the shore, and with minimal gear to prepare, a short evening fishing trip can happen at the spur of the moment. Somehow, time slows down when you emerge yourself in small-water fishing.

That's all you need, and it will fit in a small shoulder-strap or fanny pack tackle box, which Dad and I carried when we started out fishing from the bank. However, I spent too many years enjoying the freedom of fishing from a boat, and one of the ponds is a sandpit with steep brushy banks that are difficult to fish from. So Dad and I invested \$600 in a small bass scamp-type boat, trolling motor and battery. Our catch rates went up immediately because we could fish the best cover without snagging up or spooking the shallow fish. I hooked up an old sonar flasher that was gathering dust in the garage, and we learned more about the water depth and structure. Even though my gear list has grown beyond my minimalist beginning, it's still easy to manage. We can be fishing in less than 30 minutes from when the urge strikes us.

Another adjustment I had to make was relearning the seasons on farm ponds. On reservoirs, we're

chasing spawning crappie in late April and early May during most years. However, they'll move shallow earlier on farm ponds. Depending on weather, you better be checking on the shallows for crappie in late March on farm ponds. The water temperature warms quickly in small waters, so the fishing can really take off with a few days of warm sunshine. In fact, fishing in a farm pond can turn on in late winter with a few days of sun. Start out fishing small lures and light tackle and focus on shallow water where springs or creeks run in and especially near brush or standing timber. Bass and crappie will often both be there and provide great fishing.

A great technique for early-spring pond fishing is to rig a small white or chartreuse jig about three feet below a small float. Cast the rig right up next to shallow brush, then let it sit quietly for several seconds. The float will not only keep the jig from sinking into and snagging in the brush, but it will hold the lure in the strike zone. Early-spring fish are still cold and sluggish and may not chase a fast-sinking lure. The float holds it tantalizingly in front of the fish. Watch for the bobber to move subtly or go under, then set the



Nearly every farm pond in Kansas has been stocked with channel catfish, and a 3-pound channel is a nice surprise while fishing for crappie with light tackle.

hook. No matter how long you've fished, you never get tired of the thrill you get from watching your bobber go under when a fish takes the lure.

If you don't get bites in the shallow water, remove the float and try fishing the jig vertically in deeper water, and always try to fish around some kind of brush or structure. Fishing vertically around brush in water that's 10-15 feet deep is effective for just about any fish that swim in the pond, and don't be surprised if you catch channel catfish with this method.

A belly boat can be a great alternative, if you don't want to invest in a small boat and trolling motor. For about a third of the cost of the scamp and motor, a belly boat, waders, and flip-flops will put you right in the middle of the best fishing areas. And fishing silently out of a

belly boat is great fun.

There are more than 100,000 farm ponds across Kansas, and many hold fantastic fishing. Most were originally stocked with largemouth bass, bluegill, crappie and channel catfish. Find one tucked away in some isolated pasture, and you'll likely have a fishing hotspot. Get landowner permission before fishing or check out the 2012 Fishing Atlas. In it, you'll find maps that show all the public waters, including hundreds of smaller state fishing and community lakes, as well as private ponds and streams KDWPT leases and opens to fishing. Great fishing can be found for those willing to do a little legwork and fish scouting.

If you're having trouble finding time for all-day fishing trips and are in danger of forgetting where you stored your fishing tackle, try going back to basics and back to small waters. You'll find you've forgotten how much fun it can be, and you might be surprised how good the fishing can be. 



Marc Murrell photo

Bobbers aren't just for kids. Use a float 2-3 feet above a crappie jig, and you'll catch crappie in the thickest brush.



Finding Ferret

by Dan Mulhern
wildlife biologist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Manhattan

photos by Bob Gress
director, Great Plains Nature Center, Wichita

The black-footed ferret, once thought to be extinct, is the rarest mammal in North America and was extirpated from Kansas. However, animals from a captive breeding program were reintroduced in 2007. Wonder how they're doing?

7:30 p.m. It's early evening, and the western horizon is rapidly changing from yellow to pink to maroon as the day's light gives way to darkness. A sizable crew has gathered in the ranch yard to sort out equipment and get last minute instructions for the upcoming night's work. We're in Logan County, Kansas, preparing for a night of spotlighting in prairie dog colonies to locate black-footed ferrets. These critically endangered animals are part of a reintroduction project that first started here in December 2007, when 24 captive-bred animals were released onto private property.

Each spring and fall, a group of folks carve out a few nights from their busy schedules to assist the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service with surveys. People here are from federal and state agencies, universities, zoos, and conservation organizations. They represent scientists, students, nature lovers, and those simply curious to see one of the rarest mammals in North America.

Each crew needs a high-clearance vehicle, one or more spotlights, GPS unit, communication radio, area map, ferret live traps and markers, and sufficient quantities of caffeine and junk food to get them through the night. Once everyone gets their equipment allocation and has a specific pasture assignment, the group disperses into the gathering darkness. A quick radio check confirms that everyone is able to communicate, and the survey begins.

I set out with two others I've never met before, who we'll refer to as Ike and Tina. The expectation in the air is palpable.

10:15 p.m. Things started off pretty exciting earlier in the evening, with several sets of eyes glowing in the bright beam of the spotlights. But a closer inspection indicated we were observing part of the landowner's cattle herd on a distant hillside. Like every other denizen of the prairie dog colony, even a cow's eyes glow with reflected light from our spotlights. And Ike has taken some convincing to believe that the pink glow from rabbit eyes should not be confused with the emerald green of a ferret. As we encounter our 25th jackrabbit of the night, he's starting to come around.

Suddenly, the radio crackles to life. Another crew has just put out a ferret trap, and the first trap of the night is always cause for some radio smack-talking about who will make the first capture. I'm not too worried yet; there's plenty of night ahead of us. Tina mutters something under her breath about maybe choosing the wrong crew, and I give my "it's not a competition" speech. Then I become more determined to prove to everyone who the professional is in this group.

12:45 a.m. Despite a bit of a chill in the air, there is no wind to speak of, and the pastures are very dry from a lack of recent rainfall. Driving around with

spotlights held outside open truck windows, this combination gives us the double bonus of allowing the cab to simultaneously fill with dust and small moths that are attracted to our lights. Each wayward breeze sends a cloud of them into my face where I inhale large numbers at once. Moths don't taste any better than they look like they would, and I would simply breathe through my nose if my nostrils hadn't packed full of dead moths an hour ago. At least they don't smell bad. I take another sip from my dusty Gatorade bottle and press on.

My companions, neither of whom have ever done this before, are convinced I've trapped them in some mammalogical version of a snipe hunt. Several reports of other teams encountering ferrets, and even a couple of captures, haven't

convinced them everyone else isn't in on the hoax. I give them my "this is unpredictable field work" speech, but I can just picture dubious eyes on me in the darkness of the cab. The 73rd jackrabbit of the night runs across our path.

1:23 a.m. Still no ferrets observed by our group although the total night's capture, as evidenced by radio chatter, is up to five animals. At least the folks in the vet trailer are having a good night, vaccinating and marking ferrets. I give Ike and Tina my "zeroes are valuable data points" speech to bolster their enthusiasm, but I'm starting to feel the pressure to produce some results. We've seen a badger, several swift foxes, and approximately 125 jackrabbits but still need a ferret.



Before the reintroduction in 2007, a wild black-footed ferret hadn't been seen in Kansas since 1957. In fact, the species was considered extinct until a wild population was found in Wyoming in 1985. From those wild ferrets, a captive breeding program was started, producing ferrets for introduction to their native range.

2 :50 a.m. We have just had a marvelous discovery. We followed a pair of glowing eyes that kept eluding us through the yucca, and finally got a brief glimpse of the animal as it disappeared over a distant hilltop. None of us is completely certain, but all agree that it was most likely a chupacabra. We share a hushed moment of exhilaration and introspection, and then discuss the fact we've all been up for over 20 hours at this point. I pass around energy shots and double-stuff Oreos, and we continue our quest.

Driving for hours in a prairie dog colony in the dark, you have a lot of time to think and ponder important questions in life. "Why don't all-night classic rock stations play more Allman Brothers?" "Why didn't I bring more Oreos and jerky?" There's plenty of dust-flavored Gatorade left, so I know we'll get through the night. If you tune into the AM side of the radio dial, you can also learn some fascinating information in the middle of the night when the real news is discussed. Did you know our government is involved in a massive cover-up to keep us from finding out that extraterrestrials live among us? I, for one, won't be duped any longer. But I still can't seem to find a ferret.

3 :38 a.m. Tina is in the passenger seat up front running the big roof-mounted spotlight while I drive. She's still doing a good job of sweeping the pasture with a back and forth motion although I'm wondering whether she's doing it in her sleep or not; there's been no word out of her for half an hour. No need to wonder about Ike in the back seat behind me; his light is pointing unmoving at the ground about 10 feet from the cab, and I can hear him snoring. Suddenly, I spot two bright spots of green about 75 yards off to our left in the passing beam of Tina's light. I slam on the brakes (we're going about 7 mph) and ask her to move the beam of light back a bit. Even Ike's light now comes up and



Each year, the prairie dog towns where the ferrets were released are surveyed to document survival, health and reproduction. Spotlights help surveyors locate nocturnal ferrets.

starts searching, so I know we're all on high alert.

There! There they are again, and I'm convinced. I turn the truck toward the tiny but intense pinpricks of emerald fire and we race at a breakneck 15 mph over the rough terrain toward the darting target. When we get a bit closer, the eyes stop at a prairie dog mound and begin to "telescope" up and down, a classic ferret behavior. Before I stop the truck 15 yards short of the burrow mound, we can clearly see the masked face and elongated body of the ferret as it tries to figure out what we are. Ferrets are often very

curious of us and sometimes show little if any alarm at our approach. But they're wild animals, so when we get out of the truck to walk toward the mound, the animal disappears underground. A quick look with a flashlight shows a pair of green eyes framed within a black mask looking back up at us from a depth of about 2 feet.

We set our first trap of the night, an elongated rectangular wire tube stuck into the prairie dog burrow with a trap door at one end. We mark the location on the GPS, set out a reflector stake to aid in relocating the spot, and drive off more awake than we've been all night. Now it's just a matter of checking periodically to see if we are successful.



While elusive, ferrets can be curious when the vehicles and spotlights arrive. Ferrets have distinct green eyeglow.

5 :25 a.m. We're on our way to check our trap for the third time. The enthusiasm and adrenaline rush we experienced when setting the trap has worn off, and I'm feeling like we're going through the motions, but it's time to check it again. Ike jumps out of the truck as I stop beside the trap, shines his flashlight into the trap, and immediately comes to life. He turns toward the cab with eyes as big as saucers and excitedly blurts out something unintelligible, which is a common way of informing your crew you've just caught a ferret. Tina

bails out of the cab in a rush to get her first up-close look at one of these elusive animals. Having done this “a million times,” I am more nonchalant about my exit, right up to the moment my boot lands in a fresh cow pie. Field biology isn’t for the squeamish.

We quickly enter the site information on our data sheet, Ike holds the trap on his lap in the back seat, and Tina gets on the radio to inform the vet crew we’re on our way with our capture. From her description you’d think we were the single most experienced ferret survey crew ever assembled. The 15-minute drive back to the processing center is the most jubilant 15 minutes of our collective lives. No trio of prehistoric hunters bringing supper back to their clan was ever any prouder than we were to bring our ferret to the veterinarian crew for processing.

A small door on one end of the trap was lined up with the open end of a 4-inch tube of PVC hooked up to a vaporizer that dispensed a dose of isoflurane gas into the tube once it was sealed shut. This home-made gas chamber was used for anesthetizing the animal for handling. A few minutes in the tube and the ferret was as limp as a tube sock filled with powdered sugar. Ferrets are lightning quick, with needle sharp canine teeth; you don’t want to handle one when it’s fully awake. The ferret was then transferred to a face mask that maintains the flow of gas to keep it sedated.

A quick exam shows that our ferret is a first-year male in good condition. Since it was born onsite, it is unmarked, so a transponder chip is implanted under the skin between the shoulder blades. Using a transponder reader, that chip will identify an individual number for as long as the ferret lives. Our ferret is also given a canine distemper vaccination, a penicillin shot to counteract the other holes poked in it, dusted with flea powder, weighed, and dye-marked on its throat. The marking will allow us to identify this ferret



As the truck approaches, the ferret dove down a burrow, then looked back.

for the duration of this multi-night survey effort, making sure we don’t spend time trying to capture it again.

After no more than 10 minutes the ferret is removed from the gas and placed into a portable pet carrier so it can recover. Within another 10-15 minutes, the ferret is groggy, but its head is up and it’s looking

around. Our ferret has an “I’ve been abducted by aliens” look on its face. Once it can stand on its feet and looks pretty alert, we take it back to the same hole from which it was trapped. It may not be “home” burrow, but it’s the last place the ferret remembers being, and probably minimizes trauma and disorientation. Our ferret is a bit reluctant at first to exit the open door of the carrier with three humans standing around wanting to photograph every move. Eventually it peeks its head out to verify the surroundings. Once it gets a look at the open burrow literally right under its nose, the ferret makes a quick slide down the hole and is gone.

The eastern sky is pearly pink, indicating it’s time for nocturnal ferrets and biologists to think about sleep. There’s a lot of chatter on the radio from crews packing it up and preparing to leave the ranch. A total



When a ferret is located in a burrow, tube traps are set, GPS coordinates are taken, and a reflector is posted to enable the surveyors to locate the area a short time later.

of seven ferrets were captured this night, with four females and three males. Each crew at least saw ferrets even if all didn't make a successful capture. Some are already making plans for when they need to be on-site tonight to increase their chances of finding the one that got away. As I drop Ike and Tina off where their cars are parked, I hear them quietly talking about whether the same crews will have to work together tonight or not. I give myself the "I don't care whether anyone wants to work with me or not" speech, then turn the morning farm report up louder on the radio to keep me awake on the drive to the motel.

Since the first black-footed ferret reintroduction in December 2007, there were supplemental releases in fall 2008 and 2010. The first reproduction was documented fall 2008, with four litters confirmed after the first breeding season, and successful reproduction has been observed each year since. The population reached an all-time high last winter, with approximately 100 animals at Christmas 2010. Populations are usually lowest in spring, after the long winter, and highest in fall with lots of weaned kits added to the adult numbers. This year proved an exception to that rule, however.

After the high of winter 2010, we were able to observe 43 ferrets in



Captures were taken back the processing center where the animals were anesthetized and examined. Each ferret was aged, vaccinated, marked and implanted with a chip.

spring 2011 preparing for the upcoming breeding season. Forty percent over-winter survival is pretty good, so things looked to be on track. However, the fall 2011 survey could only confirm 38 animals total, representing the first time the Kansas site has experienced a decline following a breeding season. While the specific causes for this are not known for certain, there are a few things we can point to.

For a number of reasons, the prairie dog numbers in this area declined fairly significantly over the last year, with up to 50 percent reduction in spring pup production reported from some sites. Additionally, coyote populations, which had been depressed for several years due to sarcoptic mange, have rebounded dramatically since last winter. So the things that ferrets eat are reduced, while the things that eat ferrets are increased. Using the knowledge I gained from my wildlife degree from a fancy university, I conclude this could be impacting the ferret numbers. (See, Mom and Dad, that tuition came in handy after all.) Like any other wildlife population, there are probably at least 10,000 other factors affecting the status and trends, but

these are two obvious ones.

Nonetheless, we still found reproduction, and the numbers are still okay for a site this size, so it's far too early to panic about the project. We have one more year of surveys, and then a five-year assessment will be conducted to determine where we're at. The project could be discontinued if it appears the ferrets are not doing as well as expected, or it may be continued if things look promising. While there's another year to observe, and this last year showed a downward blip, all other indications are that the site is doing well and producing self-sustaining ferrets. This is a testament to the hard work of many people and organizations, not the least of which are the landowners on whose property this is based.

So maybe you're thinking you'd like to participate in one of our survey efforts. If you do, you'll meet some interesting people, see some amazing countryside and wildlife at night, and be participating in one of the most unique wildlife restoration activities in Kansas. I can promise you'll get very tired, dusty and probably cold, but I can't promise you'll see a ferret. Remember, zeroes are important data points, too. ↗



After the anesthesia wore off, the ferrets were released back to the burrow where they were captured.



HOW DOES A BASS SEE?

And why should fishermen care?

by Jonathan Manteuffel
Huntsville, Alabama

Have you ever wondered if a bass can see things the way we do? Do they see the same colors, the same shapes, with the same clarity? Do they have depth perception like we do? What does a lure in the water look like to the fish? Humans tend to anthropomorphize. We attribute human characteristics and experiences to animals, expecting them to perceive things and react to situations like we might. The trouble is, they usually don't.

So just how much alike is the way

a bass sees to the way humans see? As a fisherman on a quest to capture his finny foe, knowing how a bass sees and how its visual system is tuned is equivalent to reviewing game tapes to learn your opponent's strengths and weaknesses. Once you know that, you can design your game plan to take advantage of his soft points and defend against his strengths.

At the Berkley Fish Research Center in Spirit Lake, Iowa, Dr. Keith Jones and his team are studying how a bass plays the game. Jones wrote a

book called *Knowing Bass: The Scientific Approach to Catching More Fish*, published in 2002. In that book, he describes how bass see, hear, taste, smell, and sense vibrations. He tells us in easy-to-comprehend language how a bass can process and use the information it gains from its senses. Then he gets to the meat of the book, which is how we as fishermen can take advantage of the knowledge of how a bass perceives its environment so that we can catch more bass, more often.

The book serves as a principal source for this examination of bass vision. By no means can this short article tell you everything contained in the 298-page work, but it should be useful and likely to whet your appetite for more of what Dr. Jones serves up.

While the book provides a scientific basis for understanding and making use of how a bass sees, professional tournament bass angler and Lake Quivira, Kan., resident Brent Chapman also provides some practical insights. He is a seasoned professional angler and competed in his 11th world championship of bass fishing, the Bassmaster Classic, in late February. He qualified for the event on the merit of his high achievement on the 2011 Bassmaster Elite Series tournament trail. After the Classic he will hit the road again, fishing the 2012 Elites, competing against arguably the best bass fishermen on the planet.



The author poses with one of his prize catches, hooked when the color, motion and vibration of his lure fooled the fish into striking.



The tank used for lure action experiments at the Berkley Fish Research Center in Spirit Lake, Iowa. (courtesy photo)

Water Color World

As light travels through water, the energy is absorbed. The farther it goes, the more of it is lost. Thus, bass have much less light to see by than we do. And they have different colors available, generally depending on depth. We have full-spectrum light, or all the colors of the rainbow that make up white light — red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. These colors are absorbed by clear water in that order, with red disappearing at the shallowest depth, and blue penetrating the deepest.

However, a slight algae bloom will move the peak color penetration toward green-yellow (the lime green color we call chartreuse), and muddy water will tend to allow reds and oranges to go the deepest although this is not very deep (just a few feet). Red lures appear red only very near the surface and with strong lighting conditions. But a blue back over chartreuse crankbait, for example, appears true to color a good bit deeper.

Fluorescent colors are the exception because they soak up high-energy (ultraviolet) light and re-emit it in the visible spectrum. Because UV light penetrates deeper than even visible blue light, this has the effect of extending the depth at which warmer colors (moving from blue toward red) are visible.

Think about what your lures might look like with only blue light shining on them. Everything except blue will look gray — lighter and darker shades of gray, providing contrast, but still just gray. You can simulate this effect by looking at your lure collection through different colors of gel film or shining a light through the film onto the lure. Maybe just a few feet down, a black and gray vibrating crankbait would work as well as a Texas Red one.

"Do bass really even care about lure colors?" Jones asks. His answer is "a definite yes, and an equally definite no." Experiments at the Berkley labs indicate varying strike

Bass Vision: The Same, But Not the Same

To get back to the opening question, "Do bass see like we do?", the answer is both "yes" and "no." While all vertebrate eyes function similarly, and the bass has a visual range of perception (color range) that closely parallels our own, it would be a mistake to assume that what a snorkeler sees through his mask underwater is the same as what a bass sees.

"The ability to discern detail and decipher motion, the shape of the optical fields, colors perceived, relative sensitivity, and the significance of specific images constitute just a few of our major optical differences," explains Dr. Jones. He compares the difference between our sense of sight and that of a bass to the way the movie *Predator* depicts the difference in how the alien and the humans "see" things. There is quite a disparity, and both have advantages and disadvantages.

One big difference is that we see in air and bass see in water. Absorption and scattering of light by water reduces and changes the light available for the bass to see things. The more stain and particles present in the water, the greater the effect.

responses from bass based on different colors, but not hugely so. But in tests, a black back/silver foil side lure scores much higher than solid-color lures. One may conclude that contrast on a potential prey object evokes a stronger feeding response, regardless of the contrasting colors themselves.

Chapman's Choices

Chapman, like all lure-slinging fishermen, has his favorite colors and reasons for using them. "For a long time, when I went to a tournament site where I wasn't familiar with the fishery, I would bring everything I had, just to be sure I had the right shapes and colors and sizes of soft plastics and other lures," he said. "But I've learned from experience that there is just a handful of colors that will work just about everywhere we go, and now that's what I stick with."

"Every year, my selection gets a little smaller and more manageable," he adds. "I think colors get in our heads much more than it matters to the fish. I've been fishing in the same area as other guys who did well in the tournament, and I thought I had to have a certain color, like junebug, to make the fish bite. Then later I



photo courtesy Brent Chapman

Brent Chapman is the only 2012 Classic qualifier from Kansas, which was held on Red River in Louisiana in late February. It was his 11th appearance in the Classic.

found out they were doing as well or better on red shad or some similar shade.

"Generally it's the major color differences, not the subtle ones, that you need to pay attention to," he notes.

Here are Chapman's choices for colors that will catch bass most of the time, in most lakes:

For soft plastics like worms, creature baits, tubes and such, he carries a dark color like junebug or some variety of plum or purple; a

midrange color like green pumpkin or watermelon red; and a light color like smoke with red flake. He matches these to the water color, using darker colors for dark water and lighter colors for clear water. Most of the time, he finds himself throwing the greens and browns, what he calls "natural" colors, because most of the waters he fishes have a light stain to them.

"I think using a gaudy color in clear water doesn't look natural to the fish," he explains. "They can see it better, but it may not look as real to them. That can cause them to reject the lure. So I use more natural, subdued colors in clear water, and more translucent colors on my spinnerbait skirts."

As to why he chooses dark colors in muddy water or low light conditions, he says to look up. "If you try to see something against the bright sky, you need a dark silhouette," he observes. "A light color gets lost in the background. The fish are looking up at a lighter background at the surface, so you need a dark color lure to contrast with that."

For spinnerbaits, Chapman says a chartreuse and white-skirted bait is a mainstay, while the translucent "blue glimmer" skirts get the call in clear water. For lipless crankbaits and diving plugs, his go-to color is char-



photo courtesy Brent Chapman

Chapman poses with a selection of lures and color choices. Through experience, the angler has learned that there are certain color combinations that work everywhere.

treuse with a blue back, followed by a shad pattern. In early spring, before and during the spawn, he opts for something with red in it or a crawfish pattern, as those food items tend to emerge first and often display reddish hues in the spring.

Note that most of Chapman's lure color selections involve two contrasting colors, which aligns with Dr. Jones' observations of what tends to elicit better strike responses from bass.

Scattering

Chapman, based on years of on-the-water experience, says flash on a lure can draw fish in and trigger strikes in clear water but doesn't matter much in dingy water. This is because of an effect called "scattering." Particles in the water bounce light in all directions. Whatever color spectrum of light is available, this scattering of the light does two things to the image a bass sees.

First, less of the light reaches the eye of the bass in a direct line, resulting in a weakened image. Second, the increased scattering in water versus air means higher levels of non-directed light, which according to Jones "has the effect of masking visual targets by creating a general haze," called a "twilight haze." So the bass gets a weak image that is fuzzy and blurry especially around the edges while the haze tends to disguise the already faint sight picture.

If It Moves, Eat It

Even if an angler is using a properly-patterned and colored lure in the right water conditions, there is much more involved in triggering a bass to strike it, even when limiting the discussion to visual cues. Unlike catfish, bass rarely eat things that aren't alive or don't appear to be alive.

"Motion-based visual systems are fairly common, particularly among predators," notes Jones. "A hungry frog surrounded by motionless flies

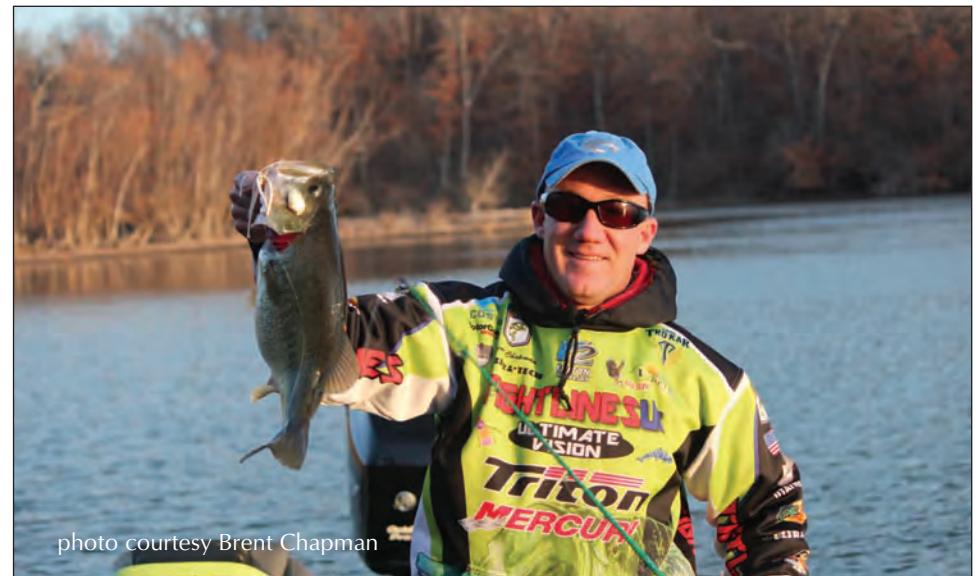


photo courtesy Brent Chapman

Chapman holds a fish he caught from La Cygne Lake in Linn County. In clear water, the professional angler knows that flash on a lure can attract fish and trigger strikes.

will starve to death. Much the same goes for bass. To a bass, motion signals life, and hence the possibility of food. To a bass, food moves. Consequently, its whole visual system is designed to pick up the slightest movements of small prey."

Hence, a motionless tube bait sitting in a bass bed doesn't get much attention, but gently shake it, and the bass goes on point. Jones believes that "bass motion detection may be the strongest predatory driver of all."

- contrast may be even more important than color because even in deep water, the fish can likely see dark and light shades of gray, and most prey objects have a darker back over a lighter belly;
- use light colors in clear water, neutral colors in stained water, and dark colors in muddy water;
- flashy lures can be effective in clear and lightly-stained water, but dirty water eliminates the effect; and
- bass expect prey to be moving, so if it moves, eat it.

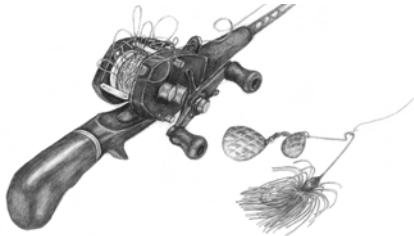
So now that you know how bass see, it's time to keep your eyes open. Pay attention light conditions — in both the air and water — match your lure selections to them, and you should find yourself hauling in more bass this year. □

Putting It All Together

What Jones and Chapman have shared can certainly improve an angler's ability to understand and take advantage of how a bass sees. Lets summarize the high points:

- bass have a visual color perception range similar to humans, so the colors we see may look about the same to the fish, given adequate light penetration into the water;
- bass look through water, and water dramatically affects how light gets to the lures;
- although bass can see colors, water diminishes the effects such that colors start fading to gray as the lure gets deeper, starting with reds disappearing first and blues last;

Jonathan Manteuffel works in the missile defense industry as a systems engineer in Huntsville, Alabama, where he lives with his wife and two sons. His love of fishing led him to begin freelance writing as a creative way to share his passion for the outdoors. He would like to know if this article has been helpful to you. If so, email mark.shoup@ksoutdoors.com, and Mark will forward your email to the author.



Backlash

by Mike Miller

Spring Turkey Perfect Starter Hunt

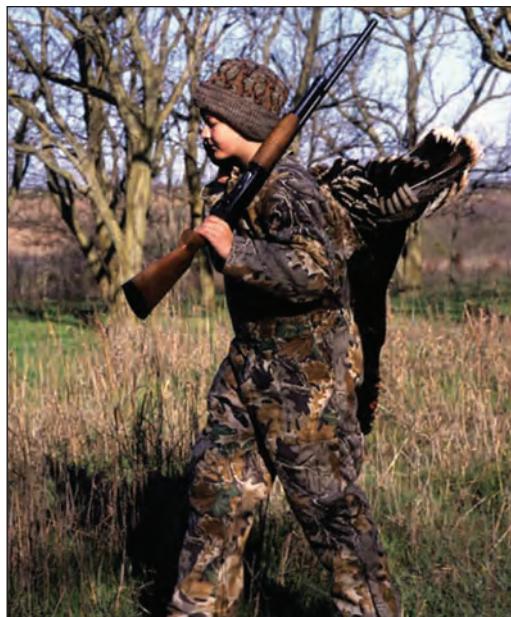
If you have a young hunter who is just starting out and hungry for experiences, don't pass up this opportunity. On April 1, the spring turkey season for youth, persons with disabilities and archers opens. This special season will run for 10 days before the regular turkey season opens on April 11. Hunting pressure is light during the special season, and spring turkey WIHAs and public hunting areas will be uncrowded. On top of that, spring turkey hunting might be the perfect starter hunt.

First and foremost, it can be the safest hunting situation for a young hunter. Other types of hunting can be frustrating for youngsters who may not have the strength or coordination required to deftly maneuver through thick cover, then quickly mount a shotgun when a pheasant flushes. Most young hunters haven't developed the muscle memory required to subconsciously click the safety off in the moments before taking a shot – nor the subconscious habit of clicking the safety back on after the shot. There can be a lot to think about during a bird hunt, especially if there are several hunters in the party.

Spring turkey hunting should be done from a stationary position or blind, and the shotgun is unloaded while walking in and out of the hunting area. The set-up with a young hunter should have the adult sitting, back against a tree and the youngster close beside or between the adult's legs. The gun can be rested on a tripod or shooting sticks. Instructions are easily whispered. A portable pop-up blind also works well for turkey hunting and allows the adult and youngster to sit side-by-side on stools, the gun again resting on shooting sticks. The blind allows the hunters to get away with more movement and can keep a young hunter warmer on cool spring mornings.

And spring turkey hunting is fun and exciting. First, an evening scouting trip is necessary. A calm evening is

best and most scouting can be done from the truck. Get within hearing distance of a likely looking roost area, shut off the vehicle and listen. If no gobbles are heard, toms can be "shocked" into sounding off with a loud noise such as the call of a barred owl, crow call or coyote howl – even honking the horn can work. It's fun and almost comical to make a call in the quiet evening woods, then listen to the gobblers respond. Hearing toms gobble from the roost will give the young hunter optimism for the morning hunt, and likely make sleep difficult that night.



An early alarm is necessary the next morning so the hunters can be in place within 100 yards of the roost site before the sun is even thinking about peeking over the horizon. Bundle youngsters up in layers so they're warm early but can peel layers once the sun comes up. The spring woods can be alive with deer, raccoons, opossums, and dozens of interesting birds. Point them out and enjoy the show. It's common for toms to gobble from the roost early, and the sound of a gobble booming through the still morning air sets the stage.

Once the sun comes up and the gobbler flies down, the real fun begins – calling back and forth. The excitement of calling to an answering bird is incredible, and tension builds as you keep track of the gobbler's position by the volume of its gobbles. Watch a youngster's eyes get big if a tom lets loose a thunderous gobble at close range. It can be enough to unnerve even an experienced hunter. Now it's coaching time, whispering about when to move and where to hold the shotgun bead, then ultimately when a safe, effective shot is presented.

Spring turkey hunts are great for youngsters because the weather can be mild and you don't have to go all day. Usually by mid-morning, things quiet down, and a nap can be in order. Don't pass up this chance to get a youngster out this turkey season, and never underestimate the power of passing it on.



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