

KANSAS

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Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism

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recycled paper





Diversity Is Our Strength

Thirty years ago, our wildlife fee fund would have been in dire shape after a third consecutive year of severe drought and poor pheasant populations. In those days, department revenue relied heavily on license fees paid by resident and nonresident pheasant hunters, and license sales graphs mimicked pheasant harvest graphs — lots of birds, lots of revenue — few birds, less revenue. However, the Wildlife Fee Fund is in relatively good shape right now because Kansas hunting opportunities are more diverse today. For example, when you compare 2010, a year when pheasant harvest was the highest it had been in 20 years, to 2013, a record low pheasant harvest, there is only a 15 percent reduction hunting license sales.



While upland bird hunting is still extremely important to our revenues, as well as to local economies in Western Kansas, our hunters have other options today. For example, more than 20,000 nonresidents will hunt deer every year. At \$335 for the permit and \$75 for the nonresident hunting license, nonresident deer hunters contribute significantly to our wildlife programs. These nonresident hunters still contribute to the economies of rural Kansas communities, but they don't all come at once the way pheasant hunters do. Various deer seasons run from September through December. Demand for permits has remained constant, and deer numbers don't fluctuate with weather conditions the way upland bird populations do.

In 2013, we saw a record number of turkey permits purchased — more than 73,000 spring turkey permits, tags, resident and nonresident combined. Kansas turkey hunting has grown in popularity, both with residents and nonresidents in the past five years.

Waterfowl hunting is also a draw in Kansas, and timely rains last year provided ideal conditions at several of our renowned waterfowl areas. Cheyenne bottoms drew almost 5,000 waterfowl hunters in the first six weeks of the duck season, 20 percent from out of state. Overall in 2013-2014, 32,395 Kansas Waterfowl Stamps were sold with purchasers coming from all 50

states and five foreign countries. Twenty percent of waterfowl hunters were nonresidents.

It's the same story with our state parks. Last year, low water levels at some lakes made boating more difficult. And blue-green algae warnings also impacted water-based recreation. However, today's state parks offer much more than just a camping pad and access to water. Park managers have worked to provide many alternative recreation opportunities, and those efforts help keep the Park Fee Fund stable. All parks have developed hiking and biking trails, and several have equestrian trails. Cabins at state parks have also proven very popular. Many parks have disk golf course, several have three-par golf courses, and all have a variety of special events scheduled all summer long. From the Country Stampede, the biggest special event of all, drawing more than 170,000 country music fans to Tuttle Creek State Park, to triathlons, concerts, fishing clinics, fireworks displays, you name it, our state parks host it.

Our state parks were once completely subsidized by State General Fund dollars, but that has been eliminated. State parks now rely on an appropriation from Economic Development Initiative Funds (Lottery), park permit receipts and cabin rental funds. The goal is to be completely self-supported, and we are very close. It can be a struggle because so many of the factors are beyond our control, but park staff have shown that good old-fashioned ingenuity, innovation and diversification can overcome those obstacles.

The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism is a fee-funded agency. All of our programs are funded by the people who enjoy those programs through the sale of licenses and permits. A portion of our revenue comes from excise taxes paid on hunting, fishing, boating and shooting equipment. The federal Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration program sends portions of these excise taxes back to states based, in part, on the number of licensed hunters and anglers they have. ♡

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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 . . .

BLACK SQUIRRELS

Editor:

I read with interest the article on Marysville's black squirrels. They are quite fascinating. I thought you might be interested to learn of Stockton, Missouri's black squirrels. I don't know if there is an active population there today as I have not visited the town in many years. I began my career with the U.S. Army Corps Engineers at Stockton in 1972 as a summer ranger. I saw many of their black fox squirrels and used the topic for my research paper for my mammalogy class in the fall of 1972.

On another note, I wanted to express my appreciation for your "Backlash" articles in the last two issues of your magazine. They were absolutely superb. I have reflected on the subject matter myself many times, which is why I love this place called Kansas so much.

R. Mack Carlisle
Blue Mound

OWL-BET ITS JUST LIKE HOME

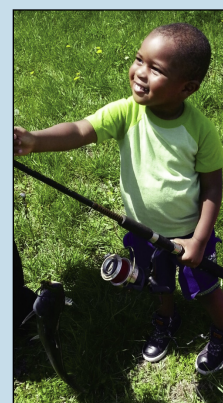


Editor:

My husband built some owl houses, and I am forwarding the results. This is a family of barred owls that took up residence. There are three owlets just discovering their new world. Thought you might be interested for your magazine.

Ken and Mary Michaels
Shawnee

SKY'S FIRST FISH



Editor:

We took m two-year-old son, Sky, fishing for the first time this spring at the Governor's Pond, and with some help he caught his first fish!

Ray Ikenberry
Douglas County

Jaumonica R. Smith
Topeka



WINDOW PICTURES

Editor:

I took these pictures from my office window. I live in Douglas County and these turkeys use my back yard for their courtship dances. Today was a Triple Whammy with three toms courting several hens. I thought the pictures might be worthy of the *Kansas Wildlife & Parks* magazine.

BIRD BRAIN

with Mike Rader

The First Migrants

July and August can actually be pretty interesting months to those of us in the birding world. Most of our resident species have tried to bring off a family of young and are busy preparing for migration in the fall. Bird identification in late summer and early fall can be a challenge, since most species have individuals that are in worn adult feathers, some molt into winter-type plumage, and some are in fresh, juvenile plumage, as is the case of birds hatched this summer. Some species tend their young after they fledge, protecting them, continuing to feed them and coaxing them on to fly. Other species pretty much kick their young to the curb to fend for themselves. It's funny, but all the different strategies seem to work!

As strange as it sounds to call these months "fall," many birds consider it so and begin the journey south. If you're interested in hummingbirds and live anywhere outside the eastern half of the state, you may not have observed any since May. Get your feeders cleaned up and ready to put out at the end of July, and you may get some small, active visitors. Male ruby-throated hummingbirds are some of the first birds to initiate fall migration. They can show up in late July and into August. The females follow a little later, and the immature birds leave the state last, September and early October. We'll also see other hummingbird species that routinely migrate through Kansas in September, including rufous, broad-tailed, calliope and others. Hummingbird watching can be rewarding with all the different birds that visit, trying to tank up on enough food to get them a little farther along their migratory path. If you do put up feeders, remember to keep the nectar fresh, which in July and August means not putting out full feeders, since it can become rancid or moldy quickly in the heat. Put out a limited amount and always be sure to clean any mold or bad nectar out every couple of days. Never add artificial food coloring to homemade nectar as it can be harmful to the birds. They can figure out what's food without it. Having flowers in your yard can often help attract hummers and also provide a natural nectar source for these tiny migrants.

Migration starts for some species in July and August, including hummingbirds and shorebirds that breed to our north.

Shorebird migration begins in late July and August for those species that breed in the far north. The adult birds leave the summering grounds first, with the young hanging around for another month or so, feeding as much as they can while flight feathers develop. They then migrate in groups on their own. Amazingly, they are hard-wired to know when to go, where to go and how to get there. Migration is an extremely complicated action for all birds, with many potential pitfalls along the way. Everything from natural predation, man-made structures, weather events, drought, habitat loss along migration corridors and various other things often make me wonder how they do it and are able to come back the next year to start all over again.

We don't have any birding events scheduled for July and August that I know of in Kansas, but many of us are waiting and preparing for the next exciting season of bird migration. Keep those binoculars dusted off and practice your identification skills when the big push of songbird and waterfowl migration follows in the months to come. The fall meeting of the Kansas Ornithological Society (KOS) will be held on the campus of Kansas Wesleyan University in Salina the first weekend of October.

Paper presentations on birds and bird research, a great banquet at the Salina Country Club and exciting local destinations for field trips are all scheduled. More information on the event will be posted on the KOS web site, www.ksbirds.org.



female ruby-throated hummingbird by Judd Patterson

Boat SAFE

with Erika Brooks

Training and Preparing

Over the past year, KDWPT law enforcement officers have been training to survive the water environment. The training was broken down into several phases, each building upon previous lessons. The purpose of the training was to make the officers aware of all the dangers surrounding working around and on the water, and to prepare them in the event they end up in the water.

Training was held in the classroom and on the water, beginning with swift-water rescue and cold-water immersion. Basic skills learned in the classroom were put to use in the Kansas River the following month where officers practiced rescue techniques, learned to tie specific knots, and built a z-drag (rope and pulley system used in swift water rescues).

The next phase was swimming pool-based and was meant to give the officers an awareness of the dangers involved with entering the water without a life jacket. Officers were dressed in full uniform including ballistics vest and duty belt with 12 pounds of dive weights attached to simulate all the equipment they carry. Officers had to carry out various tasks without wearing a life jacket, including treading water and swimming long distances



while holding their sidearm on a target. The officers were also asked to perform certain tasks while wearing their life jackets, and a greater appreciation was developed for the security a life jacket provides.

The next couple of months would focus on boat stops and the proper techniques involved with low-risk and high-risk stops. Both classroom training and scenarios were used to expose the officers to some of the different types of situations they might encounter while on the job.

Close-quarters and high-speed boat operations took place on the lake in April, allowing the officers to operate various models of patrol boats. Docking, boarding, and evasive maneuvers were



some of the skills that were taught during this phase.

Utilizing the boat operation skills, the officers were taught the month before and the classroom boat stop training, the officers were then put into scenario situations on the water. Different stations were set up across the lake, and the officers conducted safety inspections and vessel stops as required by each scenario.



The final phase took place in June on the water and allowed the officers to shoot live fire from a boat at targets both on shore and in the water. Shooting from a boat has its own unique set of challenges, the most difficult being the motion of the boat. By allowing our officers the ability to train in as many situations as possible, they are able to perform their duties to the highest of standards.

It is the duty of KDWPT Law Enforcement Division officers to work toward keeping the public safe while using public waters in Kansas by checking boaters for required safety equipment, removing intoxicated operators from the water before they injure themselves or someone else, or conducting search and rescue operations when something does go wrong. It is the responsibility of each individual boater to take any and all necessary steps, including wearing a life jacket at all times while on the water, to keep themselves safe while enjoying a day of fishing, hunting, or recreational boating.



IT'S THE LAW

with Kevin Jones

OFFICER AWARDS



Each year the Law Enforcement Division recognizes officers who stand out in their efforts to conserve our natural resources and protect the public. These are this year's recipients.

The Merit Award was presented to Officer Tanner Dixon for his work in southwest Kansas. Dixon is a secondary firearm instructor, providing a vital part of the new officer training program. He is also a member of the Jet Ski Patrol Team. Dixon is a reliable officer and has overcome issues arising from a shortage of officers in his region.

The Life Saving Award was presented to Officer Jeff Clouser for rescuing an intoxicated swimmer from Perry Reservoir. Clouser tried to talk the man into coming on-board his patrol boat after the man had swam a long distance, but the man refused. Tired, the man eventually went under, so Clouser entered the water and brought the man on-board the patrol boat. The man was later examined by EMTs and released.

Lt. Keith Rather received the Life Saving Award for his part in rescuing three men in a small boat trapped in the hydraulic boil below a Neosho River low-head dam. Water was spilling over the boat's stern when Rather assisted in getting a rope to the boat, which allowed the boat and men to be pulled ashore. During the extraction, Rather positioned himself downstream, in case the vessel capsized or the victims or rescuers fell into the water.

Officer Ryan Walker also received the Life Saving Award for another low-head dam rescue. Last June, a boater went over the dam on Drum Creek in Montgomery County after his motor died. The angler was caught in the current, holding him close to the dam and was in the water for 45 minutes before Walker arrived. In a borrowed jon boat, Walker was able to get within 20 yards of the victim, throw a rescue line and drag him to safety.

Officer Landen Cleveland and Mitchell County sheriff's Deputy Steve Martin received Life Saving and Valor awards for

rescuing three men on a cold, windy February day. The three were ice fishing on Glen Elder Reservoir when the ice they were on broke free and drifted into open water. The officers launched a jon boat, and Cleveland was able to position the boat up-wind of the ice sheet and drive the bow onto the ice. The men were loaded into the boat and brought to shore just before the ice sheet broke apart.

Officers Scott Leamon and Ryan

Much of the work done by KDWPT's law enforcement officers goes unnoticed, and it's easy to resent an officer for issuing a ticket. However, officers are dedicated to keeping Kansans safe and often work long hours at night and on weekends.

Walker received the Richard Harrold Memorial Award for Investigations due to their combined work in investigating, charging and prosecuting seven individuals who killed 14 deer illegally in Labette and Cherokee counties. Charges included obstructing legal process and aggravated assault.

Officer Ben Womelsdorf received the Natural Resource Education Advancement Award for his work in natural resource education and his regular column in the *International Game Warden* magazine. Womelsdorf taught 17 hunter education classes last year. He is a dedicated educator and communicator, active in hunter education, boating education and other program efforts and news releases.

The Boating Officer of the Year Award was presented to Office AJ Meyer. In 2013, Meyer worked the Kansas City Boat Show and assisted with eight other boating safety programs, reaching 2,510 participants. Meyer conducted 77 vessel inspections and led the division with five boating under the influence (BUI) arrests. He also contributed significantly to the 12 BUI arrests made by the BUI Interdiction

Team. In addition, Meyer assisted with a fatality boat accident at Kanopolis Reservoir and a drowning at Wilson Reservoir.

The Director's Award was awarded to 13 officers; 10 from the Law Enforcement Division, two from the Parks Division and one from the Geary County Sheriff's office. On December 24, officers responded to a call at Milford Lake concerning a duck hunter stranded on the ice 200-300 yards from shore. Initial rescue attempts were unsuccessful and the hunter fell through the ice and drowned as rescuers watched. Weather conditions and unsafe ice prevented recovery efforts until Dec. 28. The team of officers searched for eight days, facing long hours, incredibly severe weather, and dangerous ice conditions, before the body was recovered in 39 feet of water. The team's effort brought some closure to this tragic event for family members. Recipients of the Director's Award include, from Law Enforcement Division, officer Lance Hockett, who coordinated the mission, Lt. Rick Campbell, Lt. Jason Sawyers, Officer Jeff Goeckler, Officer Jesse Gehrt, Officer Ryan Smidt, Officer Ben Jedlicka, Officer Eric Deneault, Officer Darren Brown, and Officer Scott Stoughton; from Parks Division, regional supervisor Tony Reitz and Milford State Park manager Justin Wren; and Captain Eric Coffman of the Geary County Sheriff's Office.

The Law Enforcement Division Officer of the Year Award was presented to Officer Jake Brooke, who covered his area as well as adjoining areas due to one officer being promoted and another taking extended sick leave. At one point Brooke covered seven counties, including four major reservoirs. During this time he investigated and filed charges on four trophy deer poaching cases, a case involving eight suspects over-bagging on doves, and five individuals taking over limits of crappie. He contributed to selective enforcement projects, made 760 license and permit checks, nearly 700 sportsmen and landowner contacts, worked 237 night patrol hours and conducted educational classes and wrote news releases. He is an important member of the K-9 Unit, and is a trainer in the New Officer Training Program. In July, he requested to work all the weekends, and for the second straight year, requested to work every weekend in November and December.

NEW In Law Enforcement

The Law Enforcement Division is proud to announce the addition of officers Owen Johnson, Mitch Falls, and Austin Jackson. Below is a brief peek into the lives of each man, as well as first-hand accounts of their experience with KDWPT's new post-academy training program.

The three-month program, designed to familiarize new hires with the "ins and outs" of the Law Enforcement Division, focuses on tasks relating to law enforcement authority, search and seizure, powers of arrest, communications equipment, courthouse relations, assisting other agencies, and more.

Officer: Owen Johnson

Hometown: Kearney, NE

Stationed: Wakeeney

Work Area: West half of Ellis, Trego, and Gove counties.

Degree: Wildlife Biology; currently working on Master's in Biology.

Favorite Outdoor Activities: Hunting upland birds and deer, trapping.

Interesting Fact: Johnson's father was a game warden in NE for 40 years. He's the reason Johnson wanted to become a game warden.

"Post-academy training has been a great learning experience. I had the opportunity to work in many different areas with many different officers, all from whom I've learned a lot. The agency has done a good job of training us in many areas of our career."



Officer: Mitch Falls

Hometown: Kansas City, MO

Stationed: Colby

Work Area: Logan, Thomas, and Rawlins counties.

Degree: Criminal Justice, and Wildlife and Natural Resources

Favorite Outdoor Activities: Hunting waterfowl and turkeys, and fishing for crappie.

Interesting Fact: Falls previously worked for the Missouri Department of Conservation and with USDA Wildlife Services.

"Most non-KDWPT law enforcement officers do not enforce wildlife and boating statutes, so we learned about an entirely different set of rules and regulations at the Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center, making post-academy training for Kansas game wardens very necessary. Through post-academy training, I worked with game wardens across Region 1, learning about wildlife- and boating-related laws, as well enforcement."



Officer: Austin Jackson

Hometown: Tahlequah, OK

Stationed: Pleasanton

Work Area: Linn County

Degree: Natural Resource Ecology and Management

Favorite Outdoor Activities: Hunting raccoons with his hounds, and hunting for turkeys.

Interesting Fact: Jackson studied at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks for one year during part of his studies.

"The training program is great. I started the training program when I was in Elkhart, and picked it back up when I transferred to the east without a problem. Everyone I've worked with has been nothing less than helpful. I've learned a lot from the guys and continue to learn more everyday."



HUNTING HERITAGE with Kent Barrett

Ammo

In an earlier issue I wrote about the ammunition shortage and how we have seen it manifested with .22 Long Rifle shells. When ammunition supplies can't keep up with demand, shooters often look for new ammunition sources, as well as alternative ammunition. Many are familiar with the interchangeability of some ammunition types in certain firearms. Revolver shooters are very comfortable firing .38 Special ammunition in their .357 Magnum handguns or .44 Special ammunition in their .44 Magnum handguns. There are specific reasons why these are safe alternatives.

Other calibers don't have safe alternatives. One such interchange receiving a lot of attention lately is the .223/5.56. Let's look at the differences between the two and whether it's safe to interchange these.

Many shooters generally consider these two rounds the same thing and totally interchangeable. They are very similar, and externally they appear to be the same. But, in fact, they are not. There are subtle but important differences that make interchanging these rounds potentially dangerous. First, a little background: In 1957, the 5.56 x 45mm cartridge surfaced as an experimental round being designed for use in the AR-15 rifle. In 1962, Remington submitted to SAAMI (Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers Institute) a sporting version of the cartridge called the .223 Remington that was intended as a bench rest and varmint round. Some confusion has swirled around these two since.

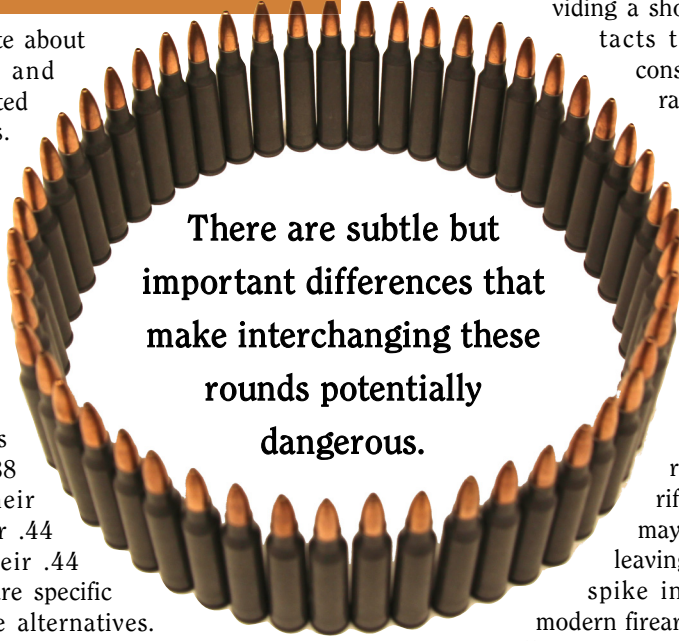
So where is the rub? Without getting bogged down in technical data, our problem is pressure. The 5.56 round is a military round and is loaded to a higher pressure. The 5.56 chamber is slightly larger with a longer throat or leade, allowing more space before the bullet contacts the rifling and which allows more gunk to accumulate there before performance is degraded. Think more reliable in combat situations.

The .223 round is a civilian, sporting round that is loaded to lower pressures. The .223 chamber is slightly smaller providing a shorter space before the bullet contacts the rifling, allowing for more consistent velocities and better accuracy. Think benchrest and varmint shooting, accuracy. Because the physical dimensions are so similar, most guns, whatever their chamber designation, will load both rounds. Failure to load is not the problem, the problem is pressure.

The short distance between the bullet and the rifling becomes the crux of the problem. If the bullet of a 5.56 round is almost touching the rifling when the gun is fired, there may be some resistance to the bullet leaving the case, causing a dangerous spike in pressure. Even though most modern firearms are "over-built," this situation is still considered to be dangerous. Bottom line: shooting .223 ammunition in a gun chambered for 5.56 is safe and is universally accepted, but shooting 5.56 ammunition in a gun chambered for .223 can result in bad things.

How do you always know the difference between the ammunition types? They look identical so one cannot accurately tell with a superficial glance or by gauging overall length. The best way is to look at the box the ammunition is packaged in. The package will identify the correct chambering of the ammunition along with the manufacturer, size of the bullet, type of bullet and lot number of production. If the package is not available, one needs to look at the headstamp on the base of the cartridge. If the headstamp says .223 Remington or .223 Rem then that is what you have. But if it is stamped 5.56 x 45 or, more typically, has 2-3 letters and 2-3 numbers (like LC 13) and has a circle or plus sign inside it, that ammunition is 5.56 mm.

In summary, .223 ammunition can be shot safely in either a .223 Remington or 5.56mm chamber. But shooting 5.56 ammunition in a rifle chamber in .223 Remington can be dangerous. Choose the proper ammunition for your gun and have fun out there at the practice range.



There are subtle but important differences that make interchanging these rounds potentially dangerous.



Fish Squeezer *Retired but not yet fired*

with Tommie Berger

FARM POND REMEDY

So far, the 2014 weather has certainly been topsy-turvy. We had a cold winter that wouldn't go away, a cold spring that hung around too long, and drought conditions that had us all wondering if anything would be growing by summer. Then rains came in late May and early June. A few of our reservoirs filled up almost overnight but others have a long way to go. Mother Nature continues to show us that she is the boss.

The rain has refilled farm ponds in some areas, too, so I'll focus on farm pond stocking and management. Kansas farm ponds are a great fishing resource. There are thousands of ponds scattered across the countryside, most of them constructed to water livestock. But ponds provide valuable habitat for wildlife such as turtles, frogs, fish, muskrats, mink, raccoons, and beavers. Some provide nesting and brood rearing habitat for Canada geese, ducks, shorebirds, and other birds. During drought, farm ponds provide a valuable water source for deer, coyotes, turkeys, and a host of other critters.

A number of ponds in northcentral Kansas dried up during the drought, and some farmers took advantage of the conditions to clean out silt, rebuild dams, repair washouts, and replace overflow tubes. Renovation costs money, but they can extend the life of the pond. Another improvement that can extend the life of a pond is fencing out livestock. A small portion of the pond can be made accessible to cattle or a tank can be placed below the pond for watering, but keeping livestock out of a pond provides valuable water quality benefits.

If your pond has refilled, it may be time to think about restocking fish. To find the nearest source of fish, go to the Kansas Aquaculture Association website, kansasaquaculture.org, for a list of commercial operators in the state.



Kansas farm ponds should be stocked with 100 bass, 100 catfish, 500 to 1,000 bluegill, and several pounds of fathead minnows per acre. These are fingerling stocking rates, but you could stock larger fish for more immediate fishing. Of course, the cost goes up with the size of the fish. Generally, stock the catfish, minnows, and bluegill first to get a good forage base established, then stock the bass a year later. Crappie or other game fish are not recommended for Kansas ponds unless you have a good management plan established. Grass carp are also an option if excessive vegetation is a problem.

If your pond did not dry up completely, it may still have fish in it. If you are not sure, you may need to check it out with a fishing pole to see for sure. My favorite watershed pond in Lincoln County got really low last summer. As it receded, the smartweed, sunflowers, and other weeds grew up on the exposed shoreline – a lush crop 3 to 6 feet tall. Then the immediate area got a 2- to 3-inch rain and the pond filled up overnight. The fishing was fantastic for a few days until the vegetation began to decompose under the water. When I arrived at the pond

early one morning about a week later, I noticed the normally clear water was dark black in color and I got a whiff of sewer smell coming from the pond. Decaying vegetation uses up oxygen in the water, and I was afraid this might kill the fish. Luckily, my pond survived with no apparent fish kill, but it came close. Some ponds owners were not that lucky.

In another situation, a landowner contacted me about some strange fish showing up in his pond. Somehow bullheads and green sunfish suddenly appeared in his pond after it filled up. He wondered if they came in on birds' feet. I assured him that was not likely. When fish show up in a pond unexpectedly, it's usually because some well-intentioned angler stocked them, they washed in from an upstream pond with the runoff, or they swam over or around the dam when the water flowed out. I have personally stood in the rain watching fish swim out of a creek and up into a pond more than a half-mile away. Fish eggs can't live very long on ducks' or herons' feet as they fly from pond to pond.

So, if you are not sure about the fish situation in your pond, you may need to contact your local fisheries biologist and ask for technical assistance. Spending a little time fishing a pond can tell you a lot. If you have a minnow seine or even a long handled, fine meshed dip net, you can sample a small area of the pond near some aquatic vegetation and be able to tell if there are any small fish swimming around. If the pond is clear, you might even be able to see fish swimming around the shoreline, see spawning beds of bluegill, or watch for small bass jumping after dragonflies. You might even find a retired fisheries biologist who will provide management advice in return for fishing permission.

Most outdoor experiences are pleasant and memorable for all the right reasons. However, on occasion, an adventure might be remembered for something bad. Fate has a funny way of turning around and biting you in the backside sometimes, too.

The perfect example happened recently when I got a text message photo from my 16-year-old nephew, Dylan. He'd been sending photos of big bass, crappie and bluegill he was catching from a pond, so I fully expected more fish pictures. But instead, I saw a picture of a lure dangling from his finger, the hook embedded in flesh past the barb.

It seems the first bass of the evening flopped at the wrong time and the lure lodged in Dylan's finger. He knew he couldn't get it out on his own so he called his mom, my sister, Chari, on the way home. She got queasy just thinking about trying to get the hook out and even more-so when she Googled "How to remove a fish hook" on YouTube and watched several clips.

Dylan didn't even flinch when his mom, peaked and woozy, snatched the hook out using the monofilament string trick (See page 14 of the May/June 2014 issue). He admits it wasn't buried too bad, didn't bleed much and really didn't hurt. That wasn't too comforting to Chari as she nearly threw up during the process.

Dylan called me that night to give me the scoop. I told him that in nearly five decades of fishing fresh and



saltwater and handling literally tens of thousands of hooks, I'd never buried one in any body part. Remember fate?

It was less than a week later when a buddy, Jim, and I were walleye fishing. We were catching lots of walleye and the occasional "other" species as well. It was one of the latter, a 12-inch channel catfish, that loaded that day in my memory bank.

I caught the cat on a spinner rig with two No. 6 Gamakatsu Octopus hooks, the top hook buried in his lip. Using pliers I attempted to free the hook, which proved stubborn. Getting impatient, I snatched the hook out with an emphatic yank, not accounting for the second hook dangling below. It buried in the beefy part of my index finger with enough force to break the 12-pound-test line.

Realizing I'd screwed up, I attempted to push it back out and it wouldn't budge. And it was buried too far to even think about pushing it on through so I could clip off the barb. Contemplating what to do next, I got a bite on

another rod and managed to land a nice walleye, despite my new finger piercing. And to make matters more comical, I wanted to document my mistake on film and proceeded to take pictures of my finger from various angles around my boat.

Jim cut a section of monofilament, and I explained the process I'd never personally witnessed.

Silently, I hoped it worked as described. Jim held down the eye of the hook and I grabbed the string and quickly snatched it backwards. It made a bit of a "pop" sound when the hook went flying.

The resulting hole wasn't large, but was now bleeding pretty good. We laughed about how well the string trick worked. However, we both agreed we'd rather not have to do it again anytime soon. A little rinse with a water bottle and a tight bandaid, and I was back in fishing business.

It was ironic that only a week earlier I'd opened my mouth about the fact it had never happened to me. I couldn't wait to tell my sister and laugh, knowing she would object to any in-depth details of the event over the phone. That's okay, I just sent her a picture of it via e-mail.





WIPER ON, WIPER OFF

I never knew what it meant to “catch fish left and right,” until a few weeks ago when my multi-tasking abilities were tested at the Olympic-level during a fishing trip at Marion Reservoir. My set-up was pretty simple – two rods, two bottom-bouncers, and two worms – but with hungry wiper in the water, and my incessant back-and-forth between poles, you would’ve thought I was training to be a professional plate spinner.

As we trolled the water, I tried to find a nice balance between watching my lines, sneaking in a peanut butter cracker here and there, and enjoying the scenery. I had just got into the groove of things when I caught my first fish of the morning – a 17.5-inch walleye, and like a green light marks “go,” the fishing took off from there.

Like flashes of lightning, white bass and wiper came in one after another. I would no sooner hook a worm on one pole, when my other pole would start dancing.

I had never found a wiper on the end of my line before this trip, but after a couple hours of them striking my rigs like a rogue baseball hitting a fan in the bleachers, I began to recognize their M.O. pretty quickly. It was a fast and furious kind of fishing that meant no more peanut butter crackers and no more sitting down.

I tried to keep up, but with all the commotion going on, my thought processes became as murky as the water I was catching these fish in. And just as soon as they were on, they were off, too. One would lose interest before I could set the hook, another would get a “to go” meal of my too-long-of a worm, and then there were the majority that were lost due to plain ol’ operator error.

Being the domestic-huntress that I am, I thought of the dinner plates that would remain empty if I didn’t catch these fish. “What kind of huntress goes home meatless?” I thought to myself. And that was it – no more fish were getting by me. I talked myself through each catch, chanting the essentials “hold your rod tip up, keep the pole bent, let the rod do the work...” and just as I had hoped, the live-well hotel began filling up with guests.

I would be lying if I said I thought fishing was more fun than hunting, but you certainly can’t wrestle a

turkey onto a boat. Wiper put up quite the fight, and it was nothing short of exhilarating landing these fish.

If you find yourself in a wiper frenzy this summer, try my recipe for Caribbean-jerk wiper with grilled pineapple and dirty rice. Until next time, wipe ‘r on!

CARIBBEAN-JERK WIPER WITH GRILLED PINEAPPLE AND DIRTY RICE



You’ll need:

| | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| 4-6 wiper fillets | 1/2 Cup brown sugar |
| 1/2 Cup olive oil | 1/2 Tablespoon garlic |
| 1/2 Cup orange juice | ¼ teaspoon salt |
| 1/4 Cup pineapple juice | ¼ teaspoon pepper |
| 1/4 Cup soy sauce | 1 can sliced pineapple |
| 1 Tablespoon lemon juice | 1 box Dirty rice mix |
| 2 Tablespoons jerk seasoning | |

In a large bowl, mix brown sugar, jerk seasoning, and salt and pepper. Add olive oil, orange juice, pineapple juice, soy sauce, lemon juice, and chopped garlic. Pour mixture over fillets and marinate for 2 to 4 hours in a covered dish.

Cook rice according to the box. While you are waiting, heat up your grill. Set aside the cooked rice. Place the pineapple rings directly on the grates. Cook the pineapple until the grill lines have caramelized. Place the fillets on the grill and cook until the fish has turned opaque, approximately 4-5 minutes, turning them over halfway through. Plate rice, pineapple rings, and fillets on top. Sprinkle additional jerk seasoning over the dish just prior to serving.

CAPITAL CAMPOUT

Kansas hosted the first Capital Campout of 2014 on May 30 and 31 at MacLennan Park, which surrounds the Governor's mansion in Topeka. Following his remarks, Governor Brownback signed the proclamation naming June as Great Outdoors Month in Kansas while surrounded by some of the 60 kids who camped out overnight on his "front lawn." The Coleman Company, a national sponsor of the event, provided more than \$31,000 worth of tents, chairs, campstools, sleeping pads and lanterns that now become the basis of KDWPT's revised Rent-A-Camp program. Each participant received a backpack and sleeping bag to keep, also courtesy of Coleman. CFS Engineers of Topeka provided



and cooked the evening meal of hot dogs and all the fixin's. Russell Stover Candies provided S'Mores cooked over campfires. Capitol Federal Bank sponsored breakfast for participants and staff. Representatives from Coleman Company, KDWPT, the National Park Service, Corps of Engineers, Shawnee County Parks, Kansas Highway Patrol, Capitol Police and Topeka Police Department were on hand to assist with

the event and keep everyone safe. These representatives, plus volunteers, AmeriCorps members, and Boy and Girl Scouts presented programs ranging from campfire cooking to stargazing and night hikes. Other states will be holding their events over the summer, encouraging all of us to "Get Outdoors!"

National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC)

They rolled into Perry State Park in March, with clothes and projects enough for eight weeks. They were a National Civilian Community



Corps (NCCC) team from Denver, Colo., prepared to do service projects within the Kansas state parks system. AmeriCorps NCCC is a full-time, team-based residential program for men and women age 18-24. Members receive training, housing, and a small living stipend in exchange for their service. Upon successful completion of the 10- to 12-month service, members are eligible for the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award.

While at Perry, the team trimmed and marked equestrian trails throughout the park, stained cabin siding, reworked the guttering on cabins, and built and marked a handicapped accessible trail from a parking area to the beach. They also cleaned up the shoreline; installed containers for disposing of old fishing line; rebuilt the steps on one cabin; built ladders for three of the cabins; and built free-standing shelf units for two bath houses. Staff housed the members in four of the park's cabins, where they cooked the majority of their meals. The members receive a minimal meal stipend per day. They usually combine the stipend for the entire group, shop locally and cook family-style meals as a group, although staff and volunteers did treat them to some special meals during their stay.

On the weekends, the diverse crew, hailing from all over the country, took time to explore Kansas and the sights around Topeka. They also participated in recruitment out-reach programs by visiting a couple of local schools and doing volunteer work outside the park.

Kansas Outdoor AmeriCorps Action Team (KOAAT)

The Department administers a state parks based AmeriCorps program called the Kansas Outdoor AmeriCorps Action Team (KOAAT). A diverse corps of members serves terms ranging from 300 to 1,700 hours per 11-month period. Service ranges from disaster response to environmental, trail and construction work, similar to what the NCCC team did at Perry State Park. However, KOAAT efforts can also include naturalist programs. Members were integral to the success of the recent Capital Campout at the Kansas Governor's mansion (see above). Members this year also responded to the tornado disaster in Baxter Springs, helping with the initial cleanup. In past years, KOAAT teams have assisted in tornado disaster response to Greensburg, Joplin, Missouri and Moore, Okla., in addition to shorter-term service at Herington and other smaller towns. Members also devote considerable time to removing hazardous and downed tree limbs that are the result of wind and ice damage and picking up debris left on shorelines by floods. Members have built or rehabilitated many miles of trails in our state parks.

In exchange for the service, members receive training, a living stipend, health insurance if needed, and the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award upon successful completion of the term. A member older than 55 at the time of enrollment may transfer the education award to a child, foster child or grandchild. A number of our current KDWPT employees began

their association with the department through AmeriCorps. Terms begin September 1. Persons interested in the program should apply at the state park office where they are interested in serving.



Go With The Flow

with Mark VanScoyoc

Chickadee Checkoff is Alive and Well

Donations to this 34-year-old program have benefitted many species not always in the spotlight.

The last thing anyone wants to talk or read about is taxes, but if taxes are dark clouds, Chickadee Checkoff is the silver lining. Since 1980, Kansas residents have had the opportunity to contribute to the state's wildlife programs through a line on their Kansas Individual Income tax form.

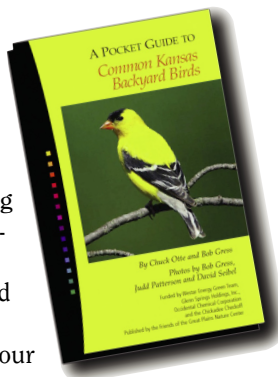
Contributions to the Chickadee Checkoff program benefit wildlife not normally hunted, or nongame species. Projects have helped animals such as eagles, songbirds, turtles, lizards, butterflies, as well as threatened and endangered species. Throughout the history of the program, the average number of contributors annually has been a little more than 16,000, who contribute anywhere from \$5 to \$12 per donation. Annual totals average \$143,590, and even though that represents a small portion of the agency's budget, the program has made a significant difference at many levels.

In addition to supplementing traditional scientific research projects through universities and professionals, Chickadee Checkoff has helped underwrite or support less known programs such as: the Nursing Home Bird Feeder Program, the Backyard Habitat Improvement Program, Kansas Winter Bird Feeder Survey, The Outdoor Wildlife Learning Sites Program (OWLS), as well as providing funds to publish and distribute various Kansas animal, wildflower, and plant life pocket guides.

Here are a few examples of what your contributions have made possible.

Wildlife Viewing Blind

This mobile blind has been used mostly to provide viewing opportunities of spring prairie chicken courtship rituals. For the 2014 prairie chicken lek tour season (April 1-30), the Kansas Wetland Education Center near Great Bend advertised 10 designated dates for lek tours. Groups were scheduled for seven of those 10 days, with 22 participants enjoying the show. Due to the interest in these types of viewing activities, there has been discussion to possibly have more of these blinds constructed and distributed statewide.



Hillcrest Elementary School – Lawrence: Purple Martin Colony Project

The Hillcrest Purple Martin Colony Project is designed to attract and protect native wildlife and provide educational opportunities within our school and community. Goals include: **1.** Establish an active purple martin colony. **2.** Provide



Hillcrest students a wildlife-based educational opportunity that will include both classroom and hands-on field learning. **3.** Enhance wildlife conservation and preservation through local on-site colony management and through submission of data and statistics to the Purple Martin Conservation Association (PMCA).

Kansas Lepidoptera Survey

The Kansas Lepidoptera Survey is an effort to inventory the Lepidoptera fauna, moths and butterflies of Kansas by means of statewide collecting, surveys of current museum collections, examination of the literature, and information provided by informed individuals. The ultimate goal is to develop an "atlas" of the occurrence, distribution and relative abundance of butterflies and moths reported from the state.

Red Hills Prescribed Burning

Acquire fire equipment to assist Red Hills ranchers and landowners in Barber and Comanche counties with prescribed burning practices on native prairie. The goal is to use prescribed burning to control invasive woody plants and increase flora and fauna diversity on native prairie ecosystems. Invasive woody and herbaceous species are having a negative impact on the flora and fauna of the mixed prairie and sand prairie habitats.



For more information regarding the Chickadee Checkoff program, visit www.ksoutdoors.com



Camping Prep and Pack

It's camping time. The kids' baseball and softball seasons are winding down, and we're ready for some relaxing evenings around a campfire. Packing for a trip often takes a lot of planning, but it's easier with a few tips and tricks I've picked up over the years.

Pack two coolers, one for food and one for dry goods. The food one is obvious, but the other maybe not so much. Use the second one for trash bags, baggies, paper plates, paper towels, drink cups, chips and buns, keeping lighter items from blowing around in common Kansas winds and protecting delicate food items from getting crunched or flattened. And the extra cooler will come in handy for extra seating, too.

Freeze water in plastic milk jugs for cheap cooler ice and doesn't make food soggy. Ice for drinks can be kept clean in a sealed container. As the ice melts in the jugs, it can be used as drinking water. I also freeze a couple jugs with ice tea already mixed.

If you have to have your morning coffee but don't have a percolator or available electricity, put coffee grounds in a triple layer of filters and tie in a ball using dental floss. Just drop the ball in a pot of boiling water for a few minutes.

One last packing trick that is probably my favorite is breaking eggs into a plastic bottle with a screw-on lid. You can put two dozen eggs together and unless you vigorously shake them, the yolks won't break. When you are ready to use them, pour them out one at a time into your skillet.

NEVER pack bananas with the rest of your food. They look innocent enough

but unless you like hamburgers that taste like bananas, keep them separate or save them for snacks when you get back home.

For fun while camping, make bread in a tin can. Prepare dough at home and wrap in plastic wrap. Drop the dough ball in the can and let rise. Then pull a few coals away from the main fire to do your baking. A word of caution, most tin cans used today contain coatings on the inside, which can become harmful when heated. Make sure you are using a non-lined can or one you lined with aluminum foil.

Lastly, did you forget the can opener? You can rub the top-side edge of an unopened can on a chunk of flat concrete until you can squeeze the sides and pop the lid off.

Preparing for a camping trip often involves more than meets the eye, and the better you plan and pack, the more fun your family will have.



FISHIN' with Mike Miller

SUMMER GO-TOS

It's summertime and the livin' is easy, right? Well, maybe not if you like to fish. Here in Kansas it's hot, the reservoirs can be buzzing with jetskiers and boaters, and sometimes the July wind feels like a blast furnace. However, we can still enjoy some relaxing fishing if we adjust our time schedule, find a secluded farm pond and keep a selection of the right lures on hand.

Of course, early in the morning and late in the evening are the best times to fish. Some will even fish after dark, and that can be exciting. Largemouth bass are my favorite summer quarry, and I've developed a short list of go-to summer bass lures.

In the hour or two before sunset, I like a black or purple plastic worm. I'm old-school and usually rig it Texas style with a bullet slip weight – not too heavy because you don't want it to sink into the weeds. I fish it slow around any deep structure or weed line. I also always have a jig-n-trailer combo, usually in black and green or black and blue. Fish it the same way – slow and deep around structure. I hop both lures along the bottom, and if I feel the “tap” of a bass taking the bait, I quickly drop the rod tip, reel in slack and set the hook. And my hookset isn't for the faint of heart. Both lures

are rigged weedless and the hookset must drive hook point through the worm or past the jig's weedguard.

After the sun settles below the horizon, I often switch up; not because the worm and jig won't continue to catch fish, but because my other choices are more exciting to fish with and cover more water. First choice will be a black spinner-bait with a large Colorado blade. This is a great lure because it can be fished slowly in deeper water, fast in shallow weeds, and even pulled just under the surface, “bulging” a little wake. Strikes will get your attention. The thumping vibration of the large blade allows bass to zero in on it even in pitch dark.

Next is a topwater, such as buzz bait, which works best if the wind dies completely. I like a buzz bait, because it works fast and covers water and any topwater strike is exciting. However, I'm partial to my all-time favorite topwater – the black Jitterbug. I got my first Jitterbug when I was 10 years old, and I still love to hear the rhythmic “blooping” sound the big metal lip makes as it's slowly retrieved. I tie on the Jitterbug right before dark. My trick with the Jitterbug is to cast it shallow, aiming for some kind of edge – a weed bed, submerged brush, cattail edge or shoreline. When it splashes down, I let it sit for several seconds, and strikes often happen before the reel handle is turned. If not, I wait for the ripples to fade before starting a slow retrieve, pausing near other edges or structure. Anticipation is thick and the fun of seeing the water blow up around the bait when a big bass hits is worth the price of admission. Even if I only get a couple of topwater strikes, the outing is a success.

Todd Workman

The Way I See It

BROTHERLY LOVE



Between brothers there is a deep-seated instinct to inflict pain. It's not that we don't love each other, but there is an involuntary predisposition to establish a pecking order. Much like turkeys, my older brother pecked away on me and I, in turn, pecked away at my younger brother. As we got older, my younger brother got a lot bigger than me and my older brother, which sort of inverted the pecking order. I'm still mad at him for that because that meant my older brother still pecked at me and then my younger brother pecked at me. I learned early on that life is not fair. All out fighting between brothers was not condoned in our family, and the punishment was wielded by the Enforcer (Dad). Breaking the fighting rule was considered carefully against the consequences. Our skirmishes often occurred underground, or we waited for openings to inflict pain or shame upon each other without repercussions. In other words, we practiced brotherly love.

When I was about 10, I became interested in being invisible for several reasons. For one, it got me out of extra chores, which were often dealt out on a first-see, first-do basis. My younger brother had the loudest voice and was easiest to locate. Being quieter and invisible kept me playing outside longer. It also kept me off of Dad's mind. Being on Dad's mind was usually not good. Being spotted loitering in the yard usually led to an interrogation by the Enforcer, which usually led to a discovery. My constitution was weak during interrogations. A discovery usually led to a disciplinary correction. Disciplinary corrections were not fun, so I wished to be invisible. To learn the best ways to go unnoticed, I studied wild animals that were equipped to blend in.

I noticed that deer avoided detection by holding still, so I tried to blend in by going motionless. However, that experiment didn't work. When Mom or Dad called me in for supper or a bath, I would simply freeze. As it turns out, parents have very keen eyesight, and a child standing still next to a swing set doesn't blend in.

"I called that little idiot in and now he is looking like some deranged statue in the back yard," observed Dad from a kitchen window.

"Obviously," giggled Mom, "he doesn't think we can see him."

"You didn't drop him on his head when he was little did you?" inquired Dad as he headed out the backdoor, not waiting for an answer. He let me know that I was quite visible and that I was exhibiting direct defiance. Hello corrective action.

My most successful camouflage experiment was also the most painful experience (in more ways than one). I had an epiphany as I observed men going into the field across the road to hunt doves wearing the standard green camouflage and brown work coats. The camouflage didn't match their

surroundings. "Doves must be dumb," I thought as I raked leaves into a pile in the back yard. Then I spied my younger brother coming my way. I slid under the leaf pile and waited like a puma. As he passed by, I screamed and lunged at his leg causing him to let out a blood-curdling howl so convincing that I thought something horrible had a grip on his other leg. He tinkled a teaspoon (I might have too. He has a scary scream.) and ran inside to tell on me for frightening him. I crawled from under the leaves, still startled by his adverse reaction. I failed to see Dad rounding the corner at full speed until he was on me. Turned out, it was time for more corrective action.

Nevertheless, it was as if a light bulb had gone off. Natural camouflage was the key. When I unveiled my camouflage idea to my older brother, he was more than happy to show his brotherly love by being my accomplice. Now, I figure he knew super glue would tear the hide off someone. We spent most of the morning gleefully supergluing leaves to my body and my clothing, covering me with oak and walnut leaves.

By noon, I was resting comfortably in the back yard, mimicking a pile of leaves. Several times my mom would come outside and look around, not paying any attention to the small pile of leaves barely shaking next to the fence. It was hard to contain my mirth over my success, and my body shook and the leaves shimmered in the sun. It was a great day.

I hadn't intended to stay in the yard all day, but the fall sun made me sleepy and I dozed off. When I woke up, the Enforcer was home and scanning the back yard. I started to shake just a little which caused me to rustle. This small disturbance caused Dad's attention to train on my location.

"Well," he said, "he forgot to pick up one little pile of leaves I see. I always have to finish what these kids start."

With an audible sigh he headed for in my direction. If he tried to pick me up and bag me, he was going to have a full-grown cow. Just as I was going to reveal myself, he bent down with a lighter. Now I was going to have a cow.

"Wait!" I yelled. Not wanting to get set on fire, I reared up toward my dad and struck the lighter from his hand, momentarily saving my life.

"AIEEEH!" he screamed and fell backwards on his back clutching his heart.

"It's just me Dad. I'm camouflaged," I proclaimed. I stood up, a living, breathing leaf pile.

"So you are," he said picking himself up and trying to control his shaking. He looked at me with a wet squinty look in his eye, "That was a good one."

For the next few minutes there was a whirlwind of debris as leaves were turned to mulch. What I saw as a successful camouflage experiment, the Enforcer saw as a need for corrective action.

HANDFISHING SEASON GOING ON NOW

You won't find any hotdogs or chicken livers with a "noodler," but that doesn't mean these anglers are fishing without bait. Using their hands as the bait and hook, handfishermen will find a suspected catfish hole, barricade possible exits the fish might escape through, stick their arm inside, and lurk around for a catfish mouth to grab. Although somewhat simple in theory, handfishing is an angling technique not for the faint of heart.

Adding to the challenge of handfishing, regulations do not allow man-made objects that attract fish, such as a barrel, box, or bathtub to be used. Handfishing anglers are also prohibited from using snorkel or scuba gear. A stringer may be used, but not until the catfish is caught by hand and is at or above the water's surface.

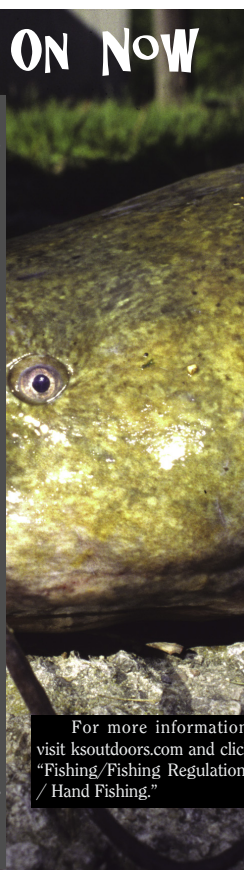
Luckily, Kansas is one of a handful of states that offer this special season. With a special permit, anglers can handfish for flathead catfish in select waters from sunrise to sunset June 15-Aug. 31.

Kansas waters open to handfishing include:

- the entire length of the Arkansas River,
- all federal reservoirs from beyond 150 yards of the dam to the upstream end of the federal property, and
- the Kansas River from its origin, downstream to its confluence with the Missouri River.

Handfishing permits can be obtained for \$27.50 at license vendors or online. Hand fishermen need to have a handfishing permit in addition to a regular fishing license.

- KDWPT News



For more information, visit ksoutdoors.com and click "Fishing/Fishing Regulations / Hand Fishing."



Attention Young Photographers

Whether it's a snapshot of a peaceful moment fishing on the lake, the fiery colors of a Kansas sunset, or the image of a white-tailed fawn at rest, *Kansas Wildlife & Parks* magazine staff want to see Kansas outdoors through the lens of your camera. Photo submissions for the 2nd annual "Wild About Kansas" junior photo contest are being accepted now through Oct. 24, 2014. Participants can submit photos in three categories: wildlife, outdoor recreation or landscapes. There is no fee to enter, and the contest is open to both residents and nonresidents, age 18 or younger.

"Kansas is a state filled with a plethora of diverse and awe-inspiring natural resources, and this contest is just one more way we can enjoy and share those resources with others," said *Kansas Wildlife & Parks* magazine associate editor, Nadia Marji.

Budding photographers can submit up to three photos and multiple entries may be submitted in the same category.

Photos must be taken within the state of Kansas and must be the entrant's original work. Each photo will be judged on creativity, composition, subject matter, lighting, and the overall sharpness. First, 2nd, and 3rd place prizes will be awarded in each category, as well as one honorable mention per category. Winners will be featured in the *Kansas Wildlife & Parks* January/February 2015 photo issue.

Entries must be received no later than 5 p.m. on Oct. 24, 2014. An entry form must be submitted for each participant. Photo format should be JPEG and a file size should be not less than 1mb and not more than 5mb.

For more information and entry forms, visit ksoutdoors.com/services, or contact Nadia Marji at nadia.marji@ksoutdoors.com.

CLAYTHORNE DRAWS SHOOTERS

Claythorne Lodge, in southeast Kansas near Columbus, hosted the largest U.S. Open Sporting Clays Championship in history this summer, attracting nearly 1,200 competitors from across the nation and numerous countries. Shooters saw more than 1 million targets thrown while vying for thousands of dollars in prize money in a dozen events.

Tourism officials in Crawford and Labette counties said the event had a tremendous economic impact on the area, and likely in southwest Missouri and northeast Oklahoma as competitors and spectators spread out to find lodging and dining opportunities during the week-long event.

Taking home top honors was Richard Faulds, a shooter from England, followed closely by David Radulovich from Ohio and Diego Duarte from Texas.

In the U.S. Open Ladies, Desirae Edmunds of Texas took top honors followed closely by Jenni Clark of Texas and Carolyn Smith of New Jersey.

FITASC winners were Bill McGuire of Tennessee and Gebben Miles of Arizona. Five-stand winners were Cory Kruse of Texas and Zachary Kienbaum of Texas.

It was the third time the U.S. Open was held at Claythorne Lodge, opened in 1992 by Sam and Frieda Lancaster.

The NSCA has awarded the bid to Claythorne for the Northcentral Region U.S. Open sporting clays event next year, to be held the first week of June.

- Andra Stefanoni



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 age 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.ksoutdoors.com or by calling 620-672-5911.

Resident multi-year licenses are perfect for:

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





The 17th Annual Fun Fish Clinic

text and photos by Mike Miller
editor, Pratt

It started as a way to teach some local kids how much fun fishing is, but the event has become an annual community gathering.

The common goal is still to teach youngsters about fishing, but the Fun Fish Clinic is much more than that.



I finally met Dean Wolfe this past May when I attended the 17th Annual Fun Fish Clinic near Sedan. He and I had talked on the phone many times over the past several years, and I had provided some magazine subscriptions as prizes for participating youth. Each time we talked, Dean invited me to the fishing event. The more I learned about the clinic, the more I wanted to see it first-hand.

The idea for the Fun Fish Clinic was spawned 18 years ago when Dean, his son Damon, father Larry, and friend John Swinehart were fishing at the Yates Center City Lake. When they bought their city permit, the lady who sold it to them invited them back the next weekend for a kids' fishing derby. Dean was intrigued but knew his son had other commitments, so he volunteered to help. The seed had been planted, and Dean wanted to see how Yates Center conducted a kids' fishing event. After helping for the day, Dean was convinced they could do something similar for Sedan-area youth. With some thoughts about how the event could be even better, he proposed the fishing clinic idea to Sedan resident John Doty, who along with his wife Pauline had always promoted the Kansas outdoors. The Dotys immediately came onboard and offered access to a large watershed near their house in Chautauqua County.

John and Pauline had many contacts in the outdoor industry, and they sent out requests for assistance. Dean's experience helping in the other clinic made him determined to make their event just for fun – no competition. Lots of helpers were recruited from family and local residents, and community businesses stepped in to help, as well. They had 80 kids that first year, which is amazing, but it has only grown and evolved since.

As often happens with these kinds of events, the sense of success and positive energy are contagious, and the event has taken on a life of its own, becoming an annual project. Several who were involved in the beginning have been lost along the way; Dean's father Larry, John's wife Pauline, and Loren "Smitty" Smith. But those losses only strengthened the resolve of organizers to keep the event alive, giving it an additional purpose of honoring the dedication of those no longer with us. What started as a simple event to let local youth have an afternoon of fun fishing has morphed into a community-driven event that's much more than a fishing clinic. From the start, event t-shirts have been given to each youngster who registers, and today, in addition to the Fun Fish Clinic logo on the front, t-shirts include a small note commemorating those



Volunteers work to get everything ready, including t-shirts and rod and reel outfits to be handed out to the young anglers. Rick Koerner, at left, and John Doty, at center have been involved with the event from the beginning.

three on the right sleeve.

As I bounced down the gravel road southeast of Sedan looking for the watershed lake Dean described over the phone, I wondered if the day's high winds would keep young anglers away. Dean assured me they would have more than 100 kids, but even in the hills of Chautauqua County, the wind this day was relentless. Rounding a slow bend, I spotted a hand-printed sign directing me through a pasture gate, and I could see trucks and a horse trailer parked on the hill a quarter-mile from the road. As I rolled along the two-rut path, I noticed a long straight line of the watershed dam. I couldn't see water, but if the size of the dam was any indication, it would be a sizeable pond.

Registration didn't start for 30 minutes but I noticed several families waiting in cars parked along the lane. I was looking for Dean and trying to imagine what he looked like from the sound of his voice on the phone. Most everyone was working furiously around the open end of the horse trailer. I approached an older man

in bib overalls, introduced myself and said I was looking for Dean Wolfe. When the man tilted his head, looked over the top of his glasses and said "hello," I knew him. I had met John Doty 20 years before and hadn't seen him in



Dean Wolfe, pictured with grandson Haze, came up with idea for the fishing clinic after helping with one in Yates Center.

more than 15, but his expression and voice were unmistakable. After a few words, he pointed Dean out and walked me over to introduce us. We talked briefly before Dean began introducing me to anyone he could slow down long enough to shake my hand. Everyone had a job and they were intent on getting things ready before the kids arrived.

When you meet Dean Wolfe, one thing about him will become evident immediately: he appreciates people. Dean, a life-long Chautauqua County resident and rancher, is a family man, which is a good thing; he has a big family, and it extends beyond blood relatives.

I met Dean's daughter Melanie, two of his sons-in-law, Corey Reding and Andy Croslin, several of his grandchildren, as well as local volunteers. I met Tamra Higbee, who designs, prints and provides several hundred t-shirts at cost to give away to the kids and helpers. Not only did she provide the t-shirts, she helped with the event the entire day. I met Dean's twin daughters Michelle and Shelly, his wife Sandy and more grandkids. I shook hands with Dr. James McDermott, a long-time supporter who brought his young granddaughter to fish. Each time Dean introduced me to someone new, he explained they were the reason this event was successful. While he wanted me to know this fishing clinic wouldn't happen without the hard work and contributions of his family and the community, what I learned was how much all these people meant to him. There was never a simple introduction. In each, Dean explained who I was, where I was from and why I was there, then he gave a brief background of the person I was meeting, always explaining how important that person was to the fishing event.

After meeting a dozen or so

people, I watched as the registration process began. A line had formed, and it still wasn't 1 p.m. Each registered youngster received a bag with some basic tackle, sunscreen and other goodies. Each angler was also handed a container of night crawlers, provided by Tom Wright/Peru Truck Stop. Those who didn't have a rod and reel, received a new outfit, rigged with hook, weight and bobber. And each time a new outfit was handed over, Dean politely explained that they could keep the rod and reel, but they wouldn't be drawn for a rod and reel prize after supper later that evening.

Once tackle, goodie bags, and t-shirts were acquired, kids and adults began walking the 100 or so yards to the pond dam. An ATV-wagon shuttle was also making regular trips for those who wanted to ride. I decided I needed to see the fishing action.

Watching the steady line at the registration table and the constant stream of young anglers and adults walking through the gate leading to the lake, I expected a crowd of anglers. However, when I crested the dam, I was surprised. The long dam and most of the pond's south shore were lined with people. It was a sizeable pond, owned by Bob and Connie Rogers, and it appeared to be full of fish. Above the roar of the 30 mph wind, I could hear happy conversations, hollering and shrieks of joy as bobbers went under and fish were reeled in. Each angler fighting a fish received plenty of instruction from nearby adults and fellow youth anglers. There were at least 60 kids fishing, and

it was only 2 p.m. When I looked back from where I had come, the stream of anglers hadn't let up.

I also noticed people without rods and reels wandering among the young anglers. Each of them wore a very visible orange hat with the Pass It On logo, and they carried a pair of pliers. Dean has recruited helpers who spend the day unhooking fish, untangling lines, re-tying hooks and teaching youngsters how to cast. While there were plenty of adults accompanying the youngsters, the orange-hats provided excellent assistance. Everyone's goal was to ensure the kids had a safe and fun experience.

I was snapping a photo of a proud young girl and her fish when I looked up to see Tamra walking the shore with a bucket in hand. She took any fish kids had on stringers so they could be carried to the fish cleaning crew back up the hill. She made many trips throughout the afternoon. There were lots of bluegill and small bass cleaned for an evening fish fry. Three volunteers filleted fish all afternoon, including John

Swinehart's son. (Dean had learned only recently that another longtime supporter, John Swinehart, had died. However, his son, John, and family attended and carried on their tradition.)

Filletts were delivered to a barn in a farmyard just across the road where Dean's brother Melvin, his son Damon, cousin Less and members of the Peru Volunteer Fire Department were busy through the afternoon frying fish, hushpuppies and grilling hamburgers. Tables were set up in the shade and side dishes were set out and covered, waiting for the anglers. The setting was perfect for a family picnic and was made possible by owners Marilyn Lentz and Steve Nutter, who graciously opened their home and yard to the event.

At about 5 p.m., anglers and helpers started making their way to the farmhouse yard where the smell of frying fish wafted on the wind. Total registered anglers had topped 130. Even though the registration was supposed to close at 3 p.m., a few young anglers were still arriving, and none were



Young anglers and adults patiently wait to register. Each youngster received a bag of fishing goodies and a rigged rod and reel if they didn't have their own.



Ryder Reding, another of Dean's grandchildren, holds up his first catch of the day as his father Corey proudly watches. Young anglers landed many bluegill this day.

turned away. All were allowed to fish and invited to supper.

On this warm May day, the shade of the farmyard trees felt good, and people were sitting and visiting, anxious for the start of supper. I'm not sure how they

do it with a hundred or so folks from all over the area, but the atmosphere was that of a family picnic – comfortable, unassuming and relaxed.

Finally, Dean got everyone's attention and asked a local pastor

to say grace. Then everyone lined up and began filling plates. It was the perfect feast after a tough afternoon of fishing, and smiles brightened sun- and wind-burned faces. The prayer was about the only formality allowed. Everyone sat in the shade, enjoyed the breeze and good company – some long-time friends, others who had just met that afternoon.

When everyone was about finished eating, Dean thought he was going to begin giving away fishing poles. Every year, youngsters who didn't pick up new rod and reel outfits at registration hear their names called after supper to pick up their prizes. However, Dean's twin daughters had a surprise presentation to make first. Dean and John were both presented with large hand-sewn quilts made from t-shirts produced from the last 16 clinics. The unique and heartfelt gesture capped off a perfect picnic supper and was genuinely appreciated.

After some photos, the show went on. Names were announced, and kids marched up to the porch to accept their prizes. It was nearly 6 p.m. and I had a three-hour drive back to Pratt, but I lingered, soaking in the scene. After handshakes and goodbyes, I walked to the car. It felt good to have spent the day at such a positive event and around such a generous and happy bunch of people. Their mood was contagious, and I understood why the event lives on. As I drove home, I remembered one of Dean's last statements to me, "I don't care about getting any credit for what we do here, but maybe someone will read this article and think, 'I'll bet we can do the same thing in our community.'" After spending the afternoon with him, I not only believed him, I agreed with him. ♡



Dean's twin daughters, Shelly and Michelle, presented their father and co-founder John Doty with unique quilts made up of T-shirts showing each year of the clinic.



CRAWFORD STATE PARK BUILT BY HAND

text and photos by Andra Stefanoni

Seventy-five years ago, 200 young men toiled for four years digging a 150-acre lake in southeast Kansas. In doing so, they transformed an area in Crawford County once occupied as a 19th Century military outpost into a recreation destination that today attracts tens of thousands of visitors annually.

After completion in 1939, the state assumed operations and began further transformations.

Then, some 20 years ago, a volunteer group of individuals began adding amenities.

Today, the park is like no other in the state: It is rooted in history, is home to 80 residents, and is cared for in part by the Friends of Crawford State Park.

Crawford State Park offers peaceful campsites nestled in the timbered hills surrounding the lake.





In the beginning

It was June 6, 1935, when the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Company 788 arrived at Farlington, 11 miles north of Girard and 19 miles south of Ft. Scott.

They brought with them the desire to earn money — \$30 per month, \$25 to send home to their families, and \$5 they could spend on incidentals — as part of the Roosevelt Administration's program to create jobs.

By May 1936, construction was well underway on the project in what was known then as Crawford State Park No. 2.

"It is indeed a pleasing sight to stand upon the brow of the hill and watch the activity on the project as the trucks and teams move in and out from the borrow pits," reads an article in the 788th Company newspaper dated May 28, 1936.

"One is impressed with the orderliness and smooth functioning of all the parts of the huge whole, and the manner in which the supervising personnel handle the large project . . . The moral of the men is fine . . . the spirit with which the men enter into the work is commendable, everyone being willing to do his part."

Keeping the men fed and supplied was a boon to the area economy: The nearby towns of Arma, Girard and Farlington sold products to the camp, and area families earned extra income by providing the men with services — everything from mending clothes to shoe repair.

The 788th finished the lake project in 1939, creating what would become Crawford State Park.

In the decades that followed, primitive campsites were added to the shoreline, shaded by mature cottonwoods, oaks and redbuds. A federal fish hatchery opened below the dam (now the Farlington Hatchery operated by KDWPT). Hikers and bikers began coming to the park to use the trails. Anglers began visiting the docks, casting for channel catfish, crappie and bass. Boaters and

tubers and water skiers took to the lake itself.

And individuals and families began building homes around its perimeter thanks to Nels Smith, reportedly Crawford County's first millionaire, who owned the property and amended the deed so that permanent residents could live there.

In the early 1990s, the Friends of Crawford State



Although Crawford is a state fishing lake, recreational boating is allowed and is popular with lake visitors on the 150-acre lake.



Friends of Crawford State Park routinely set out 104 state and American flags along the lake dam for holidays and special requests. The flags are put out at sunrise and taken down at sunset.

About the park:

The 500-acre park features six campgrounds and several cabins available for rent. The park also includes two boat ramps, three bathhouses, courtesy docks, a laundromat, a dump station, four hiking and biking trails, a swimming beach, and horseshoe pits.

Park formed and began working with a commendable spirit of their own, everyone willing to do his or her part.

Their projects have been many and varied: a handicapped dock, remodeled marina, playgrounds and equipment, a registered helicopter pad and a disk golf course.

They've planted flowers throughout the park, including a butterfly garden on the south side of the lake, and have hung bird feeders and built trails. They've raised funds for memorials for longtime residents, for those who played a role in the development of the park, and for CCC Company 788.

Another recent addition was the installation of a storm siren — a cooperative effort by the Friends, who raised \$2,500 for it; the nearby town of Farlington, which provided a matching grant; and the state, which supplies the electricity.

And each holiday, as well as by special request for family reunions, the group sets out 104 state and American flags along the dam at sunrise and takes them down again at sunset.

"We have a lot of pride and ownership in this place," said Bob Forrest, a longtime member of the Friends group who, with his wife

Lila, has lived at the park for eight years and owned property there since 1990.

To join the Friends group, however, one need not be a resident of the park.

"You just have to care about it," Forrest said.

Kevin Smith, a resident and past president, said contributions from the Pritchett Trust based in nearby Pittsburg, has helped the group financially with some projects at the park, and veterans have contributed to the flag collection.



Crawford State Lake is a popular recreation destination for southeast Kansas, providing fishing, boating and swimming opportunities.



The CCC built the Crawford Lake dam by hand, moving 284,000 cubic yards of earth with scrapers like the one above, using mules and wagons. The dam is 1,350 feet long and 65 feet high, creating a lake covering 150 surface acres.

Longtime park resident Aggie Keesling, whose father, Bill Rhodes, drove a dump truck during the construction of the lake when she was a child, said she believes initial efforts by the CCC, then by the state, and then by the Friends group, have combined over the years to provide a welcoming place for residents and visitors alike.

"The jobs back when the CCC was here helped a lot of local people," she said, "The park has continued to grow and change and get more beautiful with each passing year. Back then, there were a few primitive cabins and some outhouses, and no docks. Now, the trees are beautiful, there are lovely cabins and homes, lots of amenities and it's just a wonderful place to live and visit."

"I hope the visitors here feel like it's a welcoming place to be," she said. "We love to see them come in, seeing them enjoy themselves."

Pittsburg outdoor enthusiast Becky Gray, who spends time at the park frequently, is one. She said she appreciates how the park has been developed and cared for because "it has something for everyone, and is so well maintained."

"You can camp next to a playground and amphitheater, or enjoy primitive camping, and the south end of the lake offers a peaceful place to kayak and watch wildlife," she said.

Keesling said she thinks CCC Company 788 would be amazed at what Crawford State Park has become.

"I believe they couldn't believe their eyes. It's a beautiful park. I just love it. It's home and has been for quite awhile," she said. "I think the boys would be so proud — so very, very proud." 🐾



The memorial commemorates the CCC and its impact, not only on the lake and park, but also on the surrounding communities.

For more information on Crawford State Park or to reserve a campsite, go to www.ksoutdoors.com.

Andra Stefanoni is an awarding winning journalist and outdoorswoman who lives in southeast Kansas and enjoys spending time outdoors with her family.

Sailing Right Along 50 Years later

text and photos by Marc Murrell
manager, Great Plains Nature Center, Wichita





The Ninnescah Sailing Association has about 175 family memberships and slips for 160 sailboats. Members often come out to spend time on their boats on the weekends and nice evenings during the week.

If there's one thing in Kansas that is virtually guaranteed, it's the wind and its near-constant presence. While some outdoor enthusiasts may not enjoy this aspect of the weather, others relish in it. Sailors need it, in moderation of course, and enjoy it. And five decades after its creation, the Ninnescah Sailing Association (NSA) is proof that Kansas waters are a great place to recreate if you enjoy sailing.

On June 14, 1965, eight people founded the Ninnescah Yacht Club, which was later renamed the Ninnescah Sailing Association (www.ninnescah.org). It sits along the beautiful shores of Cheney State Park on Cheney Reservoir just west of Wichita. It is a non-profit organization led by a board of governors, consisting of eight elected officers.

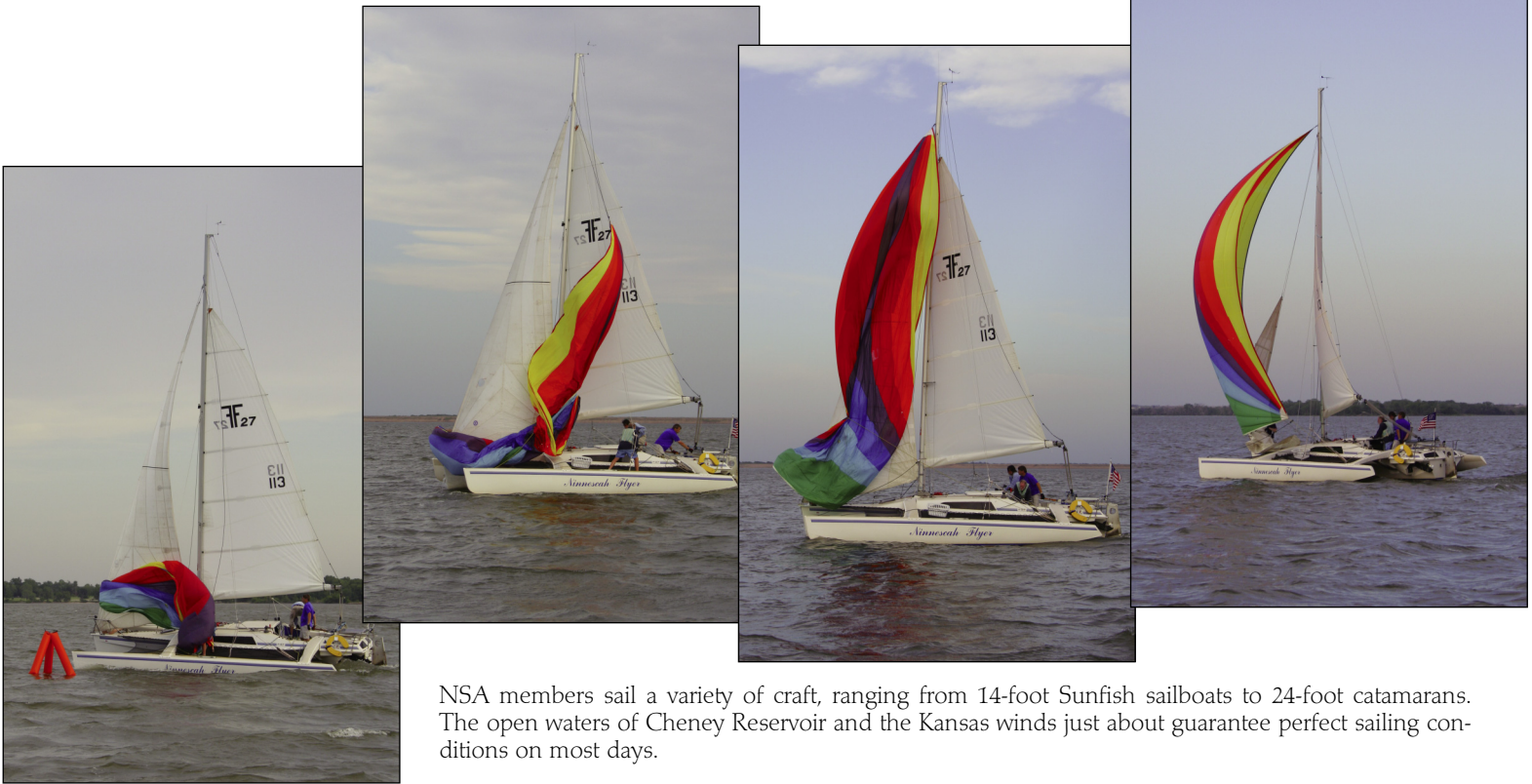
The mission of the NSA, currently with 175 family memberships, is

to promote the art of sailing, sportsmanship and water safety in Kansas. It's got something for the casual sailor, appeals to those with a competitive nature with races every Wednesday night during

the summer, as well as scheduled regattas throughout the year. The NSA has hosted many regional and national sailing regattas, attracting Olympic medalists and other prominent sailors from

Sailing is popular in Kansas, and boats like this one at Cheney Reservoir often take advantage of the Kansas wind. Cheney State Park is home to the Ninnescah Sailing Association which will celebrate its 50th anniversary next year. The NSA has members from all over southcentral Kansas who enjoy sailing and a family-friendly atmosphere.





NSA members sail a variety of craft, ranging from 14-foot Sunfish sailboats to 24-foot catamarans. The open waters of Cheney Reservoir and the Kansas winds just about guarantee perfect sailing conditions on most days.

around the world. The NSA will celebrate its 50th anniversary next summer.

As ideal as Cheney is for sailing, the severe drought Kansas experienced the last two years hurt the club, as it did for all water-based recreation. Water levels at Cheney dropped drastically and as a result, the NSA lost members. "We probably lost 20 percent of our members during that time," said Gregg Greenwood, NSA Commodore Elect.

But the rains last summer brought the water level of Cheney Reservoir back to conservation pool. Spring rains this year also helped the situation, and opportunities for boaters of all kinds have returned. So, too, have the members of the NSA.

"Our membership is returning now," Greenwood said.

The NSA is open to membership for anyone. It's an organization that encourages questions about membership or sailing and members are interested in helping anyone get started sailing or fueling the fires of those already with a strong sailing background. They're in a perfect place to do it, too.

"Cheney Reservoir is one of the best bodies of

water to sail in the Midwest," Greenwood said. "It's fairly flat, doesn't have any obstacles like trees in the water and it's a great place to sail."

Greenwood, an avid sailor and recently retired, enjoys the solitude of sailing and proximity of the NSA's showcase facility at Cheney State Park to his home in Wichita.

"You can come out in the evenings or for the weekend or whatever you want," Greenwood said. "It's a wonderful facility."

Greenwood gives plenty of credit concerning the upkeep of the NSA to Patrick Adams who has been the on-site property manager for the last 25 years.

"We're really lucky to have him," Greenwood said.





Commonly used as a skier down flag, the orange flag is used in sailing to signify the start boat. Transversely a blue flag indicates the finish boat.

The Ninnescah Sailing Association at Cheney State Park has sailboat races every Wednesday night during the summer, weather permitting. Rains that came the end of last summer have reservoir back to normal pool and boaters are enjoying fishing, sailing and skiing once again.

Andy Woodward agrees and loves spending time at the NSA and on his boat. He recently celebrated his 67th birthday aboard Greenwood's boat with a few others and was right at home on the water.

"I love it out here," Woodward said.

Woodward has been a member of the NSA

nearly since its inception. He started sailing at Cheney Reservoir in 1968 and remembers the early years as membership grew.

"You used to have to swim out to your boat because we didn't have any walkways or many small row boats to get you out there to where it was anchored,"

Woodward said. "It's a lot better today."

It's much better, actually. Elaborate docks and walkways now allow members access to their boats ranging in size from 15 feet to more than 30 feet in length. Boats from 25-30 feet seem to be the norm and there are 160 slips in a protected cove available for

members to use.

In 1999, the NSA completed one of the coolest clubhouses of sorts. The Afterdeck Activity Center is a beautiful structure used as headquarters for NSA events and activities.

"We got tired of meeting in the shelter-house," Woodward laughed. "So we got donations to build it, and it was built with volunteer member labor, everything but the roof and the concrete work, which we contracted out."

The main level of the Afterdeck has a full kitchen, restrooms and a large, open space for a variety of functions. It's also available for rental to non-members (call (316) 729-5757 or e-mail pastcommodore@ninnescah.org) for other events like weddings, family reunions, and receptions at a nominal charge.



The Ninnescah Sailing Association built the Afterdeck primarily (the roof and concrete work were contracted) with volunteer member labor. It was completed in 1999 and is used for various events throughout the year. It's also available for other events such as weddings, receptions, family reunions, etc., by reservation with a fee.



Woodward spends plenty of time sailing and even heads south in the winter to extend his season. He goes to the British Virgin Islands at least once every November for three weeks, and he's been there 30 times in the last 20 years. He'll coordinate the trip for a couple different groups and they'll rent boats and sail for several hours a day.

"I really enjoy it," Woodward said.

Sailing is a passion for many like Woodward and Greenwood. People like this are completely hooked on sailing and speak of their boats as fondly as they would of their own children. It's a way of life and one that Woodward would like to see passed on to a younger generation.

"It doesn't seem like there are as many young people getting into sailing these days," Woodward said. "I don't really know why and wonder if everyone is just too busy on the Internet to get outside much anymore."

There's likely some truth to that as competing interests of other activities have been one reason often listed for declines in participation rates of fishing and hunting and other outdoor activities. It's a trend that natural resource agencies, and people like Woodward, would like to see reversed for the good of all outdoor sports.

One way the NSA hopes to boost interest in sailing and ultimately their organization is through its junior sailing program. The program is open to anyone between the ages of 8 and 18 who desire to learn water safety, sailboat handling, sailboat racing and sportsmanship. It's designed to provide education, competition and small boat sailing and is one of the largest and best developed programs in the Midwest.

Jaime Kissinger, Vice Commodore for the NSA, speaks highly of the junior sailing program.

"It's a great program and seems to get better



While sail boats moored at the NSA represent a wide range of types and lengths of craft, most are probably 25-30 feet long. Larger boats may be equipped with modern technology that may make sailing safer and more efficient.



each year," Kissinger said. "We now have two camps, and the kids that come have a great time."

Kissinger not only speaks the lingo of promoting sailing and a family lifestyle, she's lived it.

"I grew up out here," said Kissinger. "And my kids grew up out here, too, and they're now teaching sailing."

"Boating in itself is a fantastic family sport," Woodward said. "Since I started coming out here 40-some years ago, I've watched a lot of kids grow up out here. These are kids that don't get in trouble and go on to do good things in life and become fine citizens and individuals, and I think spending time outdoors with their family has something to do with that."

In addition to the youth programs, the NSA provides community sailing days for Boy and Girl Scouts, Big





NINNESCAH SAILING ASSOCIATION JUNIOR SAILING CAMP

The camp is open to any kids between the ages of 8 and 18. There are two sessions and kids can attend one or both. The first session is July 7-11 and the second one is July 21-25. The camp runs from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day and one session costs \$125. Kids will learn about sailing through games and other fun activities. Boats are provided and the camp is open to the public.

For more information about the camp contact Texie Randle at (316) 729-6358, or e-mail at brandle1@cox.net.



The Ninnescah Sailing Association promotes sailing to youngsters each summer during a series of camps geared towards kids 8-18 years old. The camps are popular and have been going on for the last 25 years.



Brother/Big Sisters, YMCA Sail Camp, school groups and church groups. They also host afternoon and evening sails for professional and business

groups such as the Young Professionals Association. The American Red Cross provides instructional courses that are hosted by the NSA.

Greenwood, Woodward and Kissinger all agree that the NSA is just like a big family. Members consist of people from different backgrounds and occupations but the one common denominator is they love being on the water and sailing.

"It's just a great place to be and I enjoy the peace and serenity," Woodward said. "Sailing doesn't take a lot of fuel and doesn't make a lot of noise."

"I can be out here and in only an hour feel like I've been on vacation for a week," Woodward concluded. "I've made a lot of lifelong friends out here." 🦋

While not required for adult boat occupants, wearing a life jacket is strongly advised. A readily accessible life jacket must be onboard for each occupant.





Pictured here is Bella, a 2.5 year-old Chocolate Labrador Retriever, as she marks her next bird. Although e-collars can be a great training tool, they are not permitted during an actual test.

BEYOND THE BIRD

by Nadia Marji, associate editor, Pratt

Hunting seasons come and go, but for owners and dogs preparing for American Kennel Club Retriever Hunting Tests, there is no “off season.” They understand the art of retrieving is a lifelong learning process shared by owner and canine that goes beyond the bird. Dedication, loyalty, and above all, trust, are musts in this partnership. It’s all or nothing – it’s the world of hunt test retrievers.

BEAR

3-years-old

Chesapeake Bay Retriever

Prepping for: Master Hunter title

Owner/Handler: Dennis Cox, 3-D Retrievers



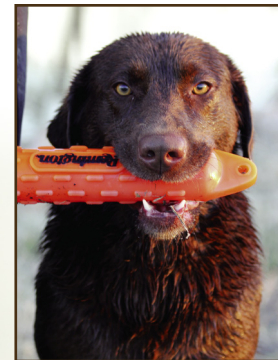
BELLA

2.5-years-old

Chocolate Labrador Retriever

Prepping for: Senior Hunter title

Owner/Handler: Jon Reimer



KOTA

4-months-old

Black Labrador Retriever

Prepping for: Junior Hunter title

Owner/Handler: Nadia Marji



Meet the Retrievers



AKC HUNT TEST CATEGORIES



Junior Hunting Tests consist of single marked retrieves on land and water where dogs are allowed to be lightly restrained at the line.



Senior Hunting Tests consist of double marked retrieves, and relatively simple blind retrieves on land and water, as well as honoring the retrieve of another competitor.



Master Hunting Tests consist of multiple marked retrieves on land, water, and land and water combined. Honoring is also required as well as a walkup situation, where the dog walks at heel, as the first bird is thrown in a marking situation.

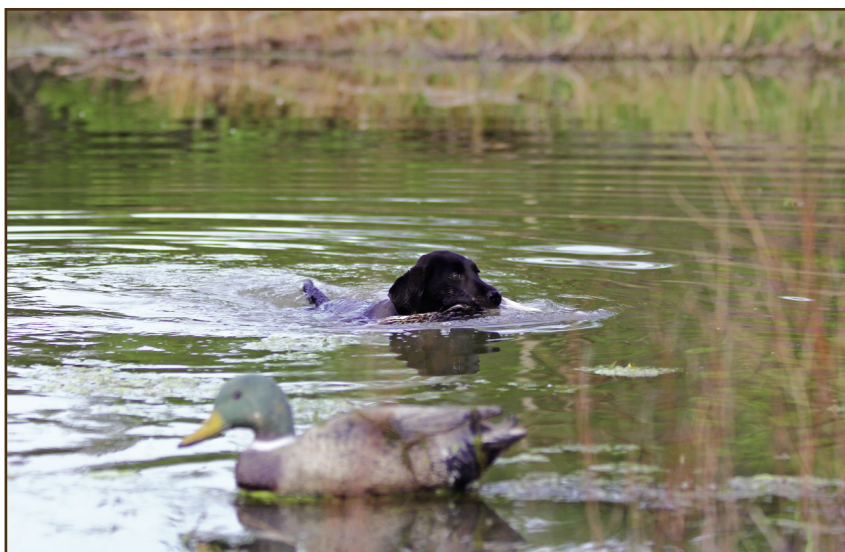
(Source: www.AKC.org, "History of Retriever Hunting Tests.")



Hunting retrievers must discern what's fake and what's the "real deal." The use of decoys during training prepares dogs for actual hunting situations.



Judges watch closely to ensure birds are brought-to-hand. Force-fetching a retriever is an effective way to prevent birds being dropped prematurely.



Retrievers like Kota will pursue ducks of all kinds during a test. Exposing a pup to a variety of waterfowl during training can be highly beneficial.



Bella shows off qualifying ribbons awarded during her Junior Hunting test.



Water retrievers are a must even at the Junior level. Starting a young retriever off in a shallow pond is a great way to get a head start.



"Marking," or focusing on a downed bird's location, is crucial for hunt test retrievers.



Bear is currently working on his Master Hunter title. At this stage, speed, accuracy, and attention-to-detail are a must.



Land retrieves can include short grass, tall grass, and open fields as pictured above.



Some say a retrieve is just a bird shot and a bird brought back, but for hunt test competitors, it's a partnership that goes beyond the bird.



Get Your Nature On

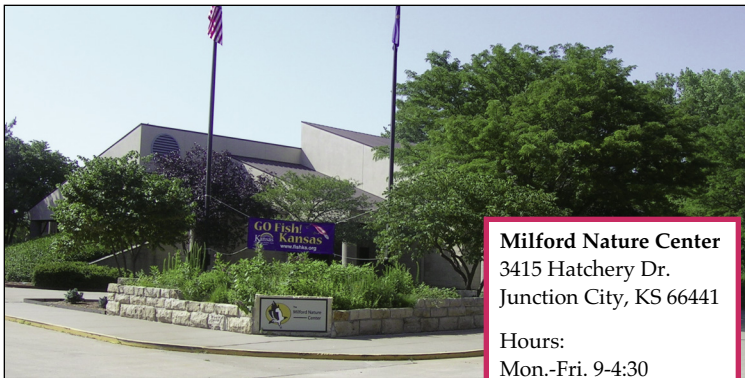
by Nadia Marji
associate editor, Pratt

To see all the wildlife and habitat that the state of Kansas has to offer would take quite a bit of time, effort and travel, but thanks to the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism, outdoor enthusiasts can enjoy all things wild just by visiting a nature center.

Whether you are interested in the marshy-world of the wetlands featured at the Kansas Wetlands Education Center, or have been waiting to explore the enchanting world of butterflies at the Milford Nature Center, you're sure to find something out of the ordinary at any of the following centers.

Here is a list of four must-see nature centers this summer. Grab a map, family and friends, and buckle up, because things are about to get wild!

Milford Nature Center



Milford Nature Center
3415 Hatchery Dr.
Junction City, KS 66441

Hours:
Mon.-Fri. 9-4:30
Sat./Sun. 1-5
(April - Sept.)

Contact: Pat Silovsky
(785) 238-LEAF

If you're a hands-on learner, then have your ten digits make their way to the Milford Nature Center in Junction City. The center's many and varied hands-on exhibits allow visitors to touch and feel all things wild, including animal furs, skulls, and feathers. Visitors can even take things one step further and print their very own actual-size animal tracks to take home, but the fun doesn't end there.

The center's large dioramas showcase the underwater habitats of Kansas' streams, reservoirs and ponds, and the terrestrial habitats of its prairies, marshes and woodlands.

The fun continues outside at the center's playground and adjacent picnic shelter where visitors can sit in a life-size eagle's nest, slide through the innards of a snake, climb on a spider's web, and even go through a duck-wing maze just to name a few. In addition to the wild slides and mazes, visitors can walk through the Milford Nature Center's newly-built living willow tunnel.

Other musts at Milford include the center's many special events held throughout the year. Annual events include Eagle Days in January, a Kids Fishing Clinic in June, and Monster Myths by Moonlight in October. When special events aren't being held, the center provides unique programs on a variety of topics. One program in particular is the "Birds of Prey" program, complete with live birds, including five species of owls, three species of hawks, two species of falcons, two species of eagles, and a turkey vulture.

And don't forget to check out the center's seasonal butterfly house. Several species of butterflies are visible in the house from Mother's Day until Labor Day or later, but don't limit your visit to that timeframe, the center welcomes visitors for fun all year-round.

Did you know?

The Milford Nature Center is also one of only a handful of certified wildlife rehabilitation facilities in the region with federally-certified staff.

Did you also know?

In 2013, the Milford Nature Center presented 446 programs to 18,555 attendees.

Kansas Wetland Education Center

Wetland habitats in Kansas are incredibly unique ecosystems and the Kansas Wetlands Education Center (KWEC) was built to showcase them. Located on Cheyenne Bottoms, the largest wetland in the interior of the U.S., and a wetland of international importance, the KWEC is your one-stop-shop for all things wetland-related.

The KWEC offers visitors up-close views of wildlife such as the black-tailed prairie dog, eastern screech owl, grasshopper mouse, thirteen-lined ground squirrel, and several species of snakes. The center's live collection also features all representative turtles of Cheyenne Bottoms, as well as frogs and toads.

Annual events offered throughout the year include a Summer Kids Program Series, a Winter Family Program Series, a Butterfly Festival with monarch tagging, star gazing, a Nature Craft Workshop Series, Greater Prairie Chicken Lek Tours, Wings N Wetlands Birding Festival, The Great Migration Rally, and the Wild Goose Chase Fun Run. The KWEC also offers programs to groups, such as Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, city recreation programs, assisted living/senior centers, and libraries.

Did you know?

The center is operated as a branch of Fort Hays State University's (FHSU) Sternberg Museum of Natural



Kansas Wetland Education Center
592 NE K-156 Hwy,
Great Bend, KS 67530

Hours:
Mon.-Sat., 9- 5
Sun. 1- 5
(Closed Mondays
Nov.1 - March 31)

Contact: Curtis Wolf
(877) 243-9268

History. The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism has an educator and biologist stationed at the center.

Did you also know?

The KWEC offers four graduate assistantships to FHSU graduate students in Biology. The students work at the center part-time assisting with programs, meeting with visitors, and giving tours, and have the opportunity to do their graduate research at a lab facility in the KWEC.

Pratt Education Center



It's no surprise the Pratt Education Center is a outdoor-lover's haven. The center is surrounded by the Pratt Fish Hatchery, two fishing ponds, the Ninnescah River, and nearby hiking trails. Although the surroundings of the Pratt Education Center are a must-see, nothing is as impressive as what's inside the center's doors.

Featuring numerous live animal displays, the Pratt

Pratt Education Center

512 SE 25th Ave.
Pratt, KS 67124

Hours: Mon.-Fri. 8-4:30

Contact: Chris Shrack
(620) 672-0751

Education Center is home to several species of native Kansas wildlife including snakes, lizards, turtles, fish, insects and more. In fact, the center also serves as the home site for a working beehive, the inside of which visitors can view through glass.

Hawks and owls are just a few of the winged-friends visitors will see in dioramas, alongside migratory waterfowl, shore birds and a whooping crane found in the Bird Room. Continuing on through the center, visitors will notice mounts of animals found primarily on prairie landscape, including a bobcat, coyote, badger, black-footed ferret, prairie dog, and a great-horned owl.

The center also features five large aquariums where the state's largest common snapping turtle and largest alligator snapping turtle are on display. Other aquatic friends, such as gar, catfish, bass and more fill the surrounding tanks, so plan a visit today to see who else you can find.

Did you Know?

The Pratt Education Center has a rare display including 128 species of bird eggs. The donated eggs were collected in the 1890s and early 1900s.

Did You Also Know?

The center building was built in 1913 and was originally the school of Fish Culture of Kansas University.

Southeast Kansas Nature Center



Sitting atop a hill in the picturesque Kansas Ozarks next to Shoal Creek in Schermerhorn Park is one of the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism's newest facilities, the Southeast Kansas (SEKS) Nature Center. Offering visitors a unique look into the Ozark region of Kansas and all that inhabits it, the SEKS Nature Center offers visitors diverse natural history displays and exhibits. Collections include live animals such as reptiles, amphibians, invertebrates, and fish; museum

SE Kansas Nature Center

3511 South Main St.
Galena, KS 66739

Hours: Tues.-Sat. 10-4
Sun. 1-4

Contact: Jennifer Rader
(620) 783-5207

mounts; a large collection of local arrowheads; a live indoor beehive; and many exploration drawers for hands-on learning.

Two spiders were recently added to the live animal collection, a southern black widow and a northern black widow. If you get the heebie-jeebies from these eight-legged creatures, you can focus on the center's educational videos that play throughout the day.

If the exhibits don't quench your thirst for wild knowledge, check out one of the SEKS Nature Center's diverse educational programs. Past programs have been offered on animal groups, such as birds, reptiles, mammals, and invertebrates; environmental concepts such as conservation, ecosystems, adaptations, and behavior; the solar system; recycling; and rocks and minerals. After one trip to the center, you'll quickly realize that one isn't enough. Visit the SEKS Nature Center today and find out what makes this facility unique.

Did you know?

The nature center, built in the 1920s, started out as a scout cabin.

Did you also know?

Future plans for the center include the introduction of more volunteer work for high school and college-aged students. If you're in southeast Kansas and have the wildlifer-bug, be sure to put the SEKS Nature Center at the top of your list.

2014 Sportsmen's Calendar

SPRING TURKEY:

- Youth/Persons with disabilities: April 1-14, 2015
- Archery: April 6-14, 2015
- Firearm: April 15-May 31, 2015

FALL TURKEY:

- Oct. 1-Dec. 3 AND Dec. 15-Jan. 31, 2015

DEER:

- Youth/Persons with Disabilities: Sept. 6-14
- Archery: Sept. 15-Dec. 31
- Muzzleloader: Sept. 15-Sept. 28,
- Pre-Rut Whitetail Antlerless Oct. 11-12
- Regular Firearm: Dec. 3-Dec. 14
- Firearm Extended Whitetail Antlerless Season: Jan.1-Jan. 4, 2015 (Units 6, 9, 10, 17)
- Firearm Extended Whitetail Antlerless Season: Jan.1-Jan. 11, 2015 (Units 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16)
- Special Extended Firearms Whitetail Antlerless Season: Jan. 12-Jan. 18, 2015 (Units 10A, 15, 19)
- Archery Extended Whitetail Antlerless Season (DMU 19 only): Jan. 19-Jan. 31, 2015

ELK (residents only)

Outside Fort Riley:

- Muzzleloader: Sept. 1-30
- Archery: Sept. 15-Dec. 31
- Firearm: Dec. 3-14 and Jan.1-March 15, 2015

On Fort Riley:

- Muzzleloader and archery: Sept. 1-30
- Firearm Season for Holders of Any-Elk Permits: Oct. 1-Dec. 31

Antlerless Only:

- Firearm First Segment: Oct. 1-31
- Firearm Second Segment: Nov. 1-30
- Firearm Third Segment: Dec. 1-31

ANTELOPE

- Firearm: Oct. 3-6
- Archery: Sept. 20-28 AND Oct. 11-31
- Muzzleloader: Sept. 29-Oct. 6

GEESE AND WATERFOWL SEASONS TO BE SET

EARLY TEAL

- Season: Sept. 13-28, 2014, Low Plains Zone
Sept. 20-28, 2014, High Plains Zone

DOVE

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

- Season: Sept.1-Oct. 31 and Nov. 1-9, 2014
- Daily bag limit: 15 • Possession limit: 45 (Daily bag and possession limits apply to mourning and white-winged doves, single species or in combination. No limit on Eurasian collared or ringed turtle doves)

EXOTIC DOVE

(Eurasian collared and ringed turtle doves only)

- Season: Nov. 20-Feb. 28, 2015
- Daily bag limit: No limit • Possession limit: No limit

RAIL (Sora and Virginia)

- Season: Sept. 1-Nov. 9
- Daily bag limit: 25 • Possession limit: 75

SNIPE

- Season: Sept. 1-Dec. 16, 2014
- Daily bag limit: 8 • Possession limit: 24

WOODCOCK

- Season: Oct. 11-Nov. 24, 2014
- Daily bag limit: 3
- Possession limit: 9

SANDHILL CRANE

- Season: Nov. 5, 2013-Jan. 1, 2015
- Daily bag limit: 3 • Possession limit: 9

PRAIRIE CHICKEN

- Early Season (Greater Prairie Chicken Hunting Region): Sept. 15-Oct. 15
- Regular Season (Greater Prairie Chicken Hunting Region): Nov. 15, 2014-Jan. 31, 2015
- Daily Bag Limit: 2 • Possession Limit: four times daily bag (No open season for taking prairie chickens in Southwest Unit)

PHEASANTS

- Season: Nov. 8, 2014-Jan. 31, 2015
- Youth Season: Nov. 1-2, 2014
- Daily bag limit: 4 cocks in regular season, 2 cocks in youth season

QUAIL

- Season: Nov. 8, 2014-Jan. 31, 2015
- Youth Season: Nov. 1-2, 2014
- Daily Bag Limit Quail: 8 in regular season, 4 in youth season

SQUIRREL

- Season: June 1, 2014-Feb. 28, 2015
- Daily bag limit: 5 • Possession limit: 20

RABBITS (cottontail & jackrabbit)

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

CROW

- Season: Nov. 10, 2014-March 10, 2015
- Daily bag/Possession Limit: no limit

TRAPPING/HUNTING

- Season: Nov. 12, 2014-Feb. 15, 2015
Badger, bobcat, mink, muskrat, opossum, raccoon, swift fox, red fox, gray fox, striped skunk, weasel.

BEAVER AND OTTER TRAPPING

- Season Dates:
Nov. 12, 2014-March 31, 2015
- Otter season Bag Limit: 2

BULLFROG

- July 1-Oct. 31, 2014
- Daily creel limit: 8 • Possession limit: 24

FLOATLINE FISHING

- July 15-Sept. 15, 2014
- Area open: Hillsdale, Council Grove, Tuttle Creek, Kanopolis, John Redmond, Toronto, Wilson, Elk City, Fall River, Glen Elder, Lovewell and Pomona reservoirs.

HANDFISHING (flathead catfish only)

- June 15-August 31, 2014
- 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
- Permit required

THE OUTDOOR STORE

like you've never seen it before

Check out the newly-redesigned KDWPT Outdoor Store, featuring all-new merchandise, greater selections, and easy online ordering.

The Outdoor Store has the right gift for every season, for everyone.



ADULT CLOTHING



YOUTH CLOTHING



BOOKS



HATS



ACCESSORIES



GIFTS

To view the full line of Outdoor Store merchandise, visit ksoutdoors.com and click "Services / Outdoor Store."

OUTDOOR STORE ORDER FORM

Orders may be mailed in with check or money order or called in Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

BOOKS

- | | |
|---|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Atlas and Gazetteer | \$20.45 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Birds of Kansas | \$41.45 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Birds of Cheyenne Bottoms | \$10.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Birds of Kansas Field Guide | \$13.45 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Birds of the Great Plains | \$22.45 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compact Guide to Kansas Birds | \$14.45 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Edible Wild Plants of the Prairie | \$15.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Field Guide to Common Weeds of Kansas | \$10.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Guide to Kansas Birds & Birding Hot Spots | \$20.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Guide to Kansas Mushrooms | \$20.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Illustrated Guide to T&E Species in Kansas | \$13.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Insects in Kansas | \$25.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kansas Wetlands | \$25.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medicinal Wild Plants of the Prairie | \$15.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wildflowers & Grasses of Kansas | \$20.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trees Shrubs & Wood Vines in Kansas | \$15.50 |

DVDs

- | | |
|---|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better Birdwatching in KS & NE | \$10.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Birds in Your Back Yard | \$10.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> KS Waterfowl: The Puddle Ducks | \$10.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The Shorebirds of KS | \$10.50 |

MISCELLANEOUS

- | | |
|--|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Speckled Campfire Mugs | \$8.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "Life is Better Outdoors" Koozies | \$2.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "Live Outdoors" Water Bottles | \$6.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Floating Key Chains | \$1.75 |

Total number of items purchased _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number (____) _____

*If paying by mail, make checks payable to KDWPT.

Credit card order: ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard

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Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

ADULT CLOTHING

- | | |
|---|---------|
| Women's "Live Outdoors" T-shirt | \$13.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> XL <input type="checkbox"/> XXL <input type="checkbox"/> XXXL | |
| Men's "Live Outdoors" T-Shirt | \$13.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> XL <input type="checkbox"/> XXL <input type="checkbox"/> XXX | |
| Men's Polos | \$25.00 |
| *For complete selection, visit ksoutdoors.com. | |
| Men's Oxfords | \$35.00 |
| *For complete selection, visit ksoutdoors.com. | |
| "Live Outdoors" Hoodies | |
| (Forest Green or Navy) | \$28.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> XL | |
| "Live Outdoors" Hoodies | |
| (Forest Green or Navy) | \$33.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> XXL <input type="checkbox"/> XXXL | |
| Columbia "Fish Kansas" Angler Shirt | |
| (Available in short or long-sleeve) | \$59.00 |
| *For complete selection, visit ksoutdoors.com. | |

YOUTH T-SHIRTS

- | | |
|--|---------|
| "I Track More Than Dirt" | \$10.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> XS <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> XL | |
| "Hooked On Fishing" (white shirt w/pink) | \$10.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> XS <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> XL | |
| "I Fish Like a Girl" (pink t-shirt) | \$10.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> XS <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> XL | |
| "Take Me Fishing" (blue t-shirt) | \$10.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> XS <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> XL | |
| "Official Bigfoot Tracker" | \$10.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> XS <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> XL | |

HATS

- | | |
|---|---------|
| Kansas Dept. of Wildlife, Parks & Tourism | \$10.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Camouflage <input type="checkbox"/> Blaze Orange | |
| Hunt Kansas (Pheasant) | \$13.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tan <input type="checkbox"/> Tan/Black | |
| Hunt Kansas (Deer) | \$13.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tan <input type="checkbox"/> Tan/Black | |
| Hunt Kansas (Quail) | \$13.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tan <input type="checkbox"/> Tan/Black | |
| Fish Kansas (Bass) | \$13.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tan <input type="checkbox"/> Tan/Black | |

Send orders to: KDWPT Outdoor Store
512 SE 25TH Ave
Pratt, KS 67124
Contact Information:
(620) 672-5911 Ext. 220

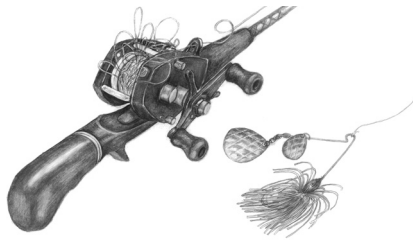
Include Shipping and Handling Fees with your payment.
Fees are as follows:

- Orders totaling \$1.75-\$25.00, add \$5.00.
- Orders totaling \$25.01-\$50.00, add \$7.50.
- Orders totaling \$50.01 or more, add \$10.00.

The Burrowing Owl

Burrowing owls are found primarily in the western half of the state, most commonly around prairie dog towns. They use the vacant mammal burrows to nest and raise young in, with clutch size ranging from 2-12 eggs. Burrowing owls are unusual among Kansas owl species since they are typically diurnal, or active during the day. Insects and sometimes small mammals, amphibians, reptiles and scorpions make up this bird's diet. Kansans can expect to see this migratory owl between late March and mid-October.





Backlash

by Mike Miller

LUCKY SONS AND DAUGHTERS

I've written on numerous occasions that I know now I was one of the lucky sons. I grew up fishing and hunting with my family, and I treasure the experiences I had with my parents, grandparents and cousins. Many of our family vacations took us to streams and lakes, and fishing was always a part of the activities. I was a kid who loved fishing from the moment I could comprehend it. One of my earliest memories is a night when Mom and Dad took me to buy my first fishing rod. I was five years old. My Uncle Gene had helped us save Wheaties box tops and we sent them in for a Johnson spincast reel, and we bought the rod at a local sporting goods store. I still have the reel.

Mom loves to tell about how I would tie a rubber fish on to the line and imagine the living room was a lake. Sitting in my boat, which also served as a couch, I would cast the fish into the "water" and practice my fighting and landing techniques. I got mad when someone carelessly walked through my "lake."

I didn't have to warm up to fishing. It didn't take several trips or catching a bunch of fish for me to know I loved it. It was love at first cast. I was one of those 10 percenters – those kids who experience fishing or hunting and instantly find something they will enjoy the rest of their lives. My good fortune was that I made that discovery early and with family. And I would get many opportunities to fish while growing up.

I'm reflecting on my lucky son revelation after attending the Fun Fishing Clinic near Sedan (Page 18). It was comforting to me to meet so many people in a community giving their time to ensure any youngster who desired could enjoy fishing. Out of the 130 or so kids who fished that day, I know that some may not have discovered a life-long passion. But they all had fun, and some of them appeared completely hooked on fishing.



Of course, from a purely practical point of view, KDWPT hopes youth fishing programs help recruit new anglers who will eventually purchase fishing

Teaching youth to hunt and fish is far more important than selling more licenses or even carrying on our outdoor traditions.

licenses. Realistically, there are kids with all different levels of fishing experience at this or any other fishing clinic. There are those who have already discovered how much they love to fish and there are those who will find it that day. The only constant is that all were given dedicated attention by adults who genuinely cared that they enjoyed their

fishing experience. Some were parents or grandparents and some they only met that day. However, the impact those adults have on the young anglers' lives may be immeasurable. It can go far beyond fishing instruction, and it will be something none of the youngsters will forget.

I've said it before and I'll, no doubt, say it again: Teaching youth to hunt and fish is far more important than selling more licenses or even carrying on our outdoor traditions. This simple act often can make the difference in a young person's life.

