KANSAS Wildlife & Parks

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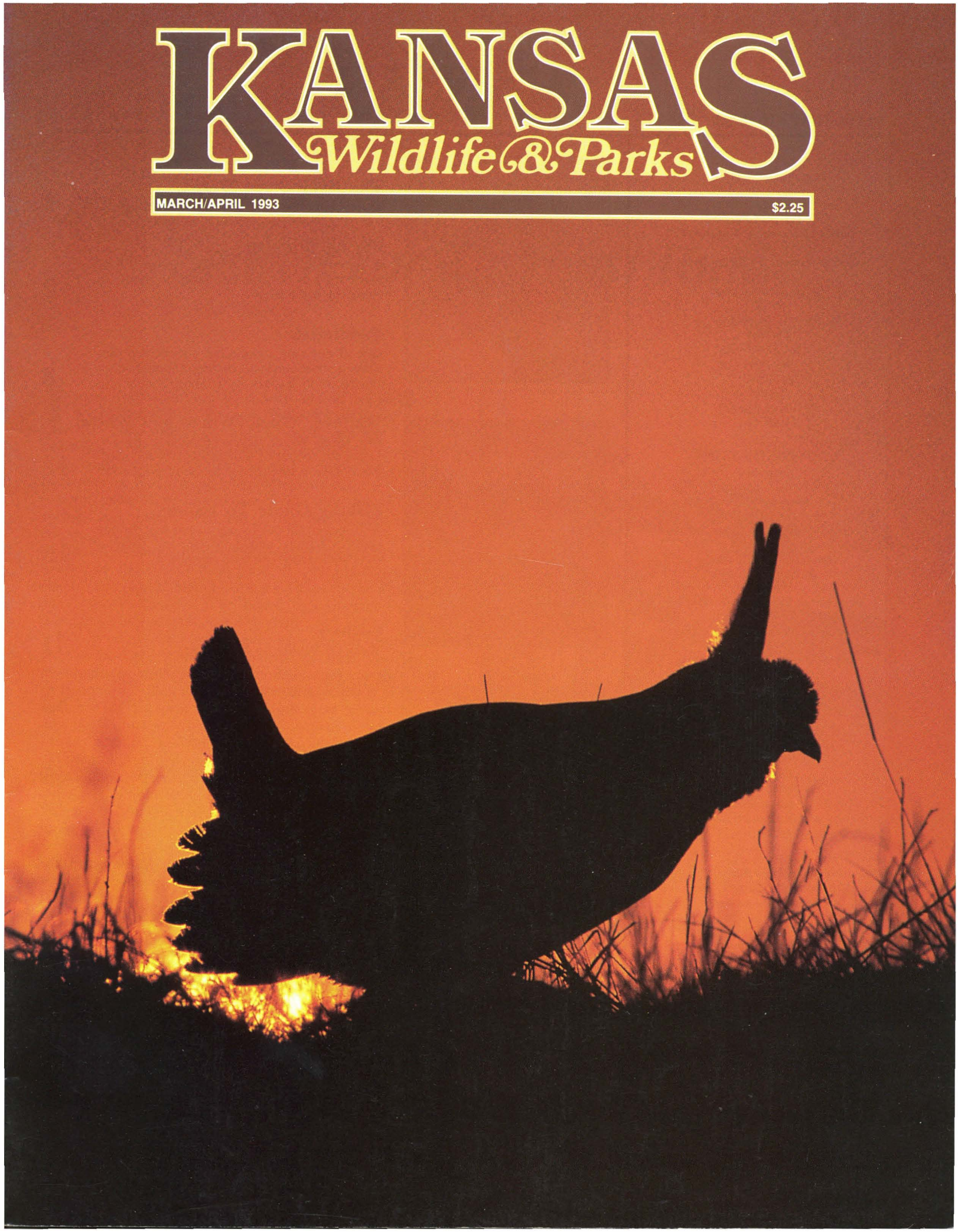

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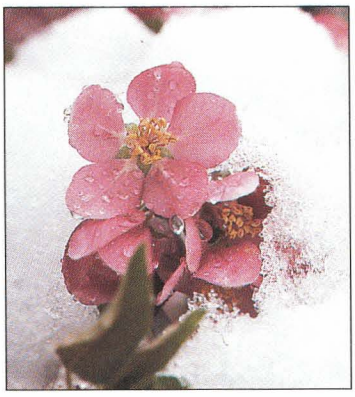

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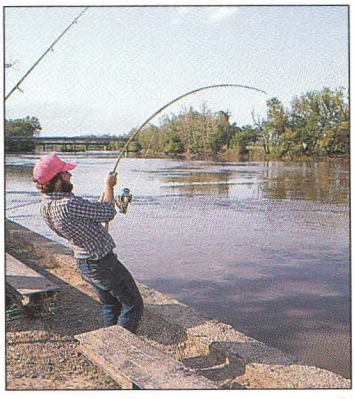

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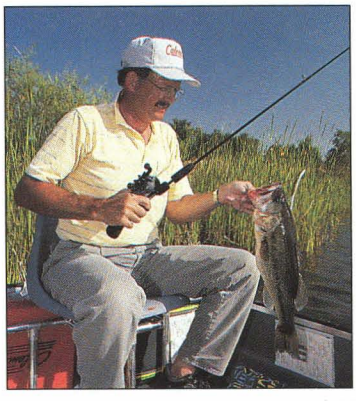

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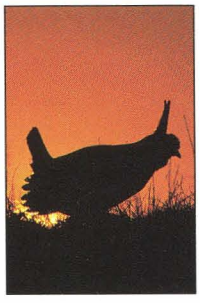

About the Covers
Front: A lesser prairie chicken greets the morning with a booming call to attract a mate. Mike Blair filmed the action with a 600mm lens, f/4 @ 1/125. **Back:** Nothing hooks kids on the outdoors like a successful fishing trip. Photographer Mike Blair shares a moment of happiness with a 24mm lens, f/4 @ 1/125.

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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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THE BUCK STOPS HERE

Search For The Lost Run

I need Indiana Jones, or at least one of his assistants who loves to fish. You see, I'm not looking for a lost Ark, but a different kind of treasure, one that I found years ago. I haven't found it since, even though I've made many arduous journeys. This year, I'm more determined than ever to find the perfect white bass run.

Oh I know there are those of you who found it last spring, and maybe even the spring before. You're the chosen fishermen. I don't have a white bass stream in my backyard, so I rely on word of mouth and good timing, neither of which have been good. It's the old fisherman's cliche "You should have been here Thursday (or whatever day I wasn't there)." I've heard it a thousand times throughout my search, but I persist.

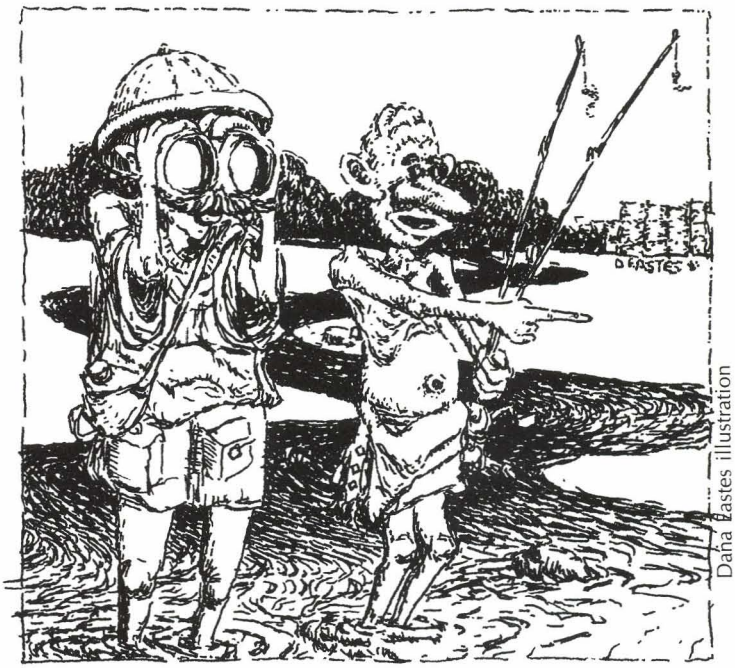
For those of you who've never experienced the run, it may be hard to understand this hopeless addiction. Nothing compares to the ecstacy you feel when you find that river pool; no other fishermen in sight; your jig plops in just short of the bank in the dark-green water; just as the lure begins to sink with the current, wham!; a white bass smacks your jig and the battle is on. AHHHHH!

When everything is right, this scene will repeat itself many times, often from the same pool. When those fish quit, you simply walk along the river to another pool. The sights, sounds and fishing are unbeatable. If only I could predict when and where the white bass will run.

Most of our reservoirs have decent populations of whites; some have excellent populations. The white bass want to cooperate. After all, they spawn only once a year. It's the weather and the water that fouls up the run. Some of our western and northcentral streams have reduced flows. Couple that with silt deposits in the upper ends of some of the reservoirs, and you've got a problem. Some reservoirs actually have water so shallow that it prevents the whites from swimming upstream. Others simply don't have enough flow in the streams to allow a run.

Weather can also foul my quest. When there's good water flowing and good reports from the local bait shop, a cold front always seems poised. I get to the river bank only to find the temperature 20 degrees cooler and the water a foot higher and muddy. Still I persist.

There's nothing like a good white bass run. I'm talking about those rare occasions when large concentrations of big whites (2-3 pounders) are in the river. If you're quiet and cast your jig accurately, you'll catch a bunch of fish. Whites are hard fighters, and if they've got a little current to work with, they'll really bend your pole. When the whites run (usually in early April), spring is popping out everywhere, with buds and flowers and green. Turkeys gobble along the stream's timber, birds sing and it's a pleasant time to be out.



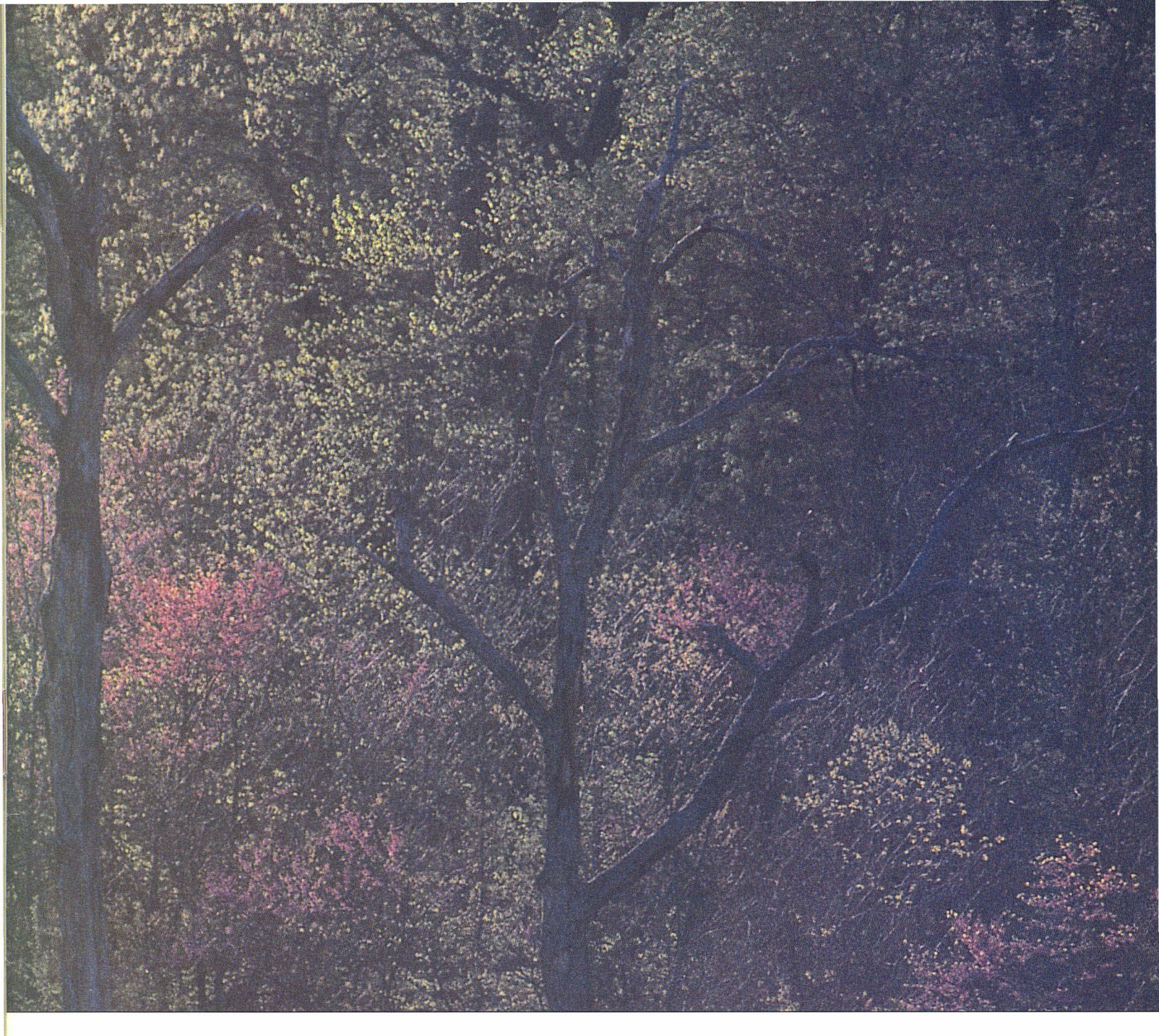
Dana Eastes illustration

Those are the thoughts that keep me in quest of the perfect run. I'll keep making long drives and longer walks down sandy river bottoms . . . in search of that flash of white in the water and that electrifying tap when a white hits my jig.

Mike Miller

Spring Promise

text and photos by Mike Blair

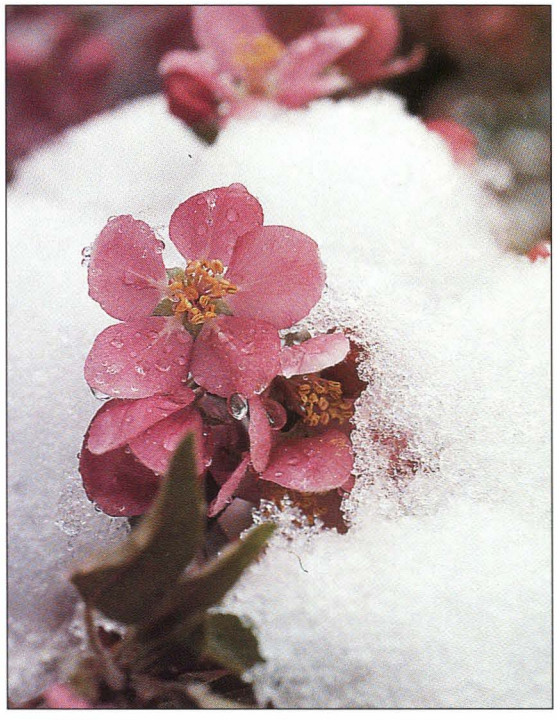


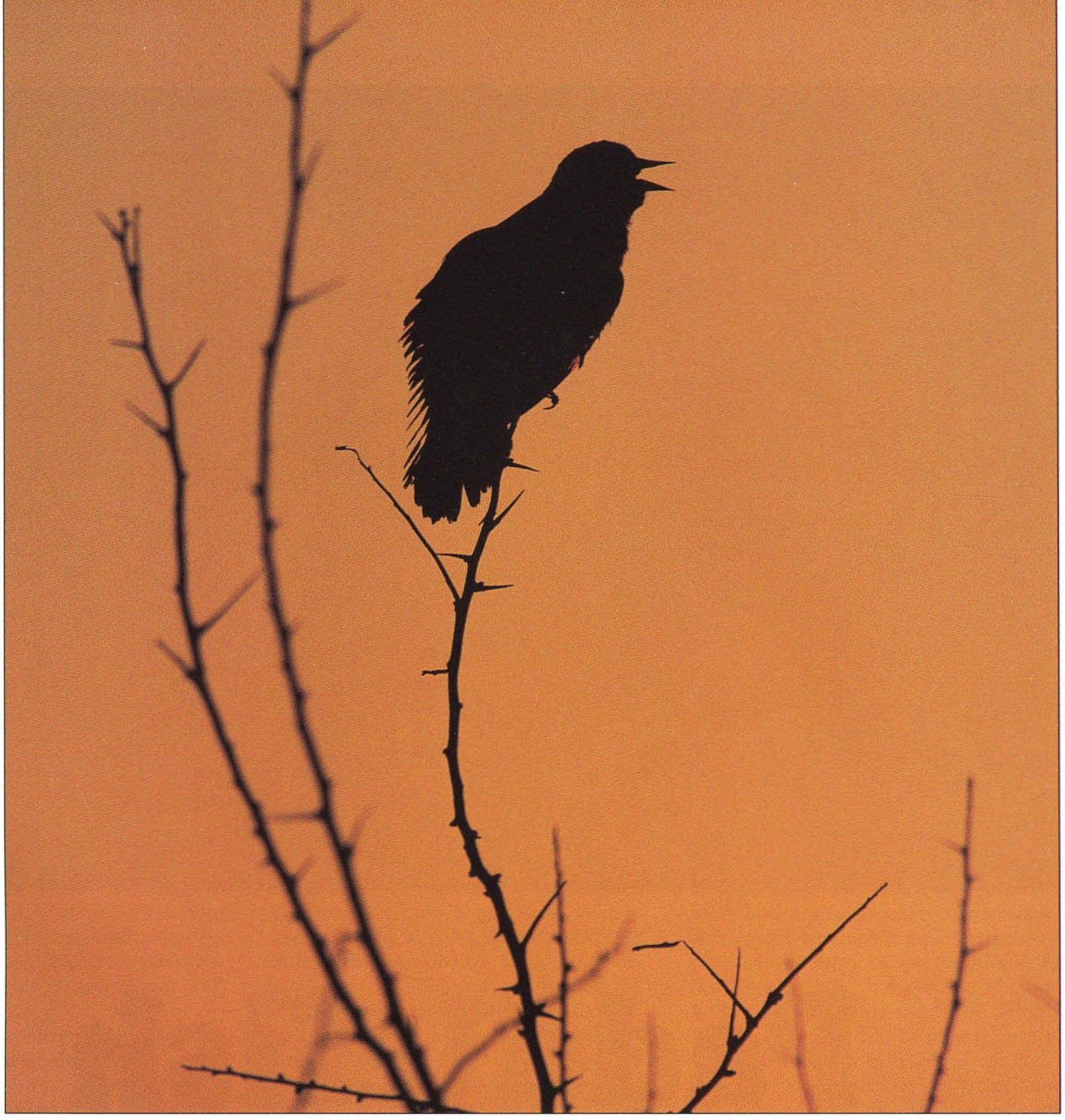
Spring calls early, politely asking to visit. Wild geese are its couriers, posing the question in primal tones impossible to refuse. But just to be sure, the gentle season sends flowers, promising a generous reunion with the land. It is welcomed with open arms.
Winter protests, not wishing to yield. And spring is patient; standing aside as the cold season bullies its way into March, the suitor waits for winter's strength to fail. Spring gradually and graciously accepts its eminent role.

Renewal is everywhere, proclaimed with bursting bud and singing bird. Gone is the hunger moon, the burden of cold. Behind lie the broken shells of dormancy and hibernation. Days of warmth and surplus lie ahead.Life takes on new color, from pink pastels of infant leaves, to richly-hued blossoms decorating the prairie. And the greens! Not the monotonous hues of tired summer foliage, but virginal pigments from absinthe to shamrock that energize the foundations of the food chain. The greens of spring are its greatest trademark. Spring's pulse is heard on the wind. From the gobbler's voice in some forest clearing, to the ominous rumble of a towering thunderhead, the sounds of the season confirm the opening hours of a new life clock.

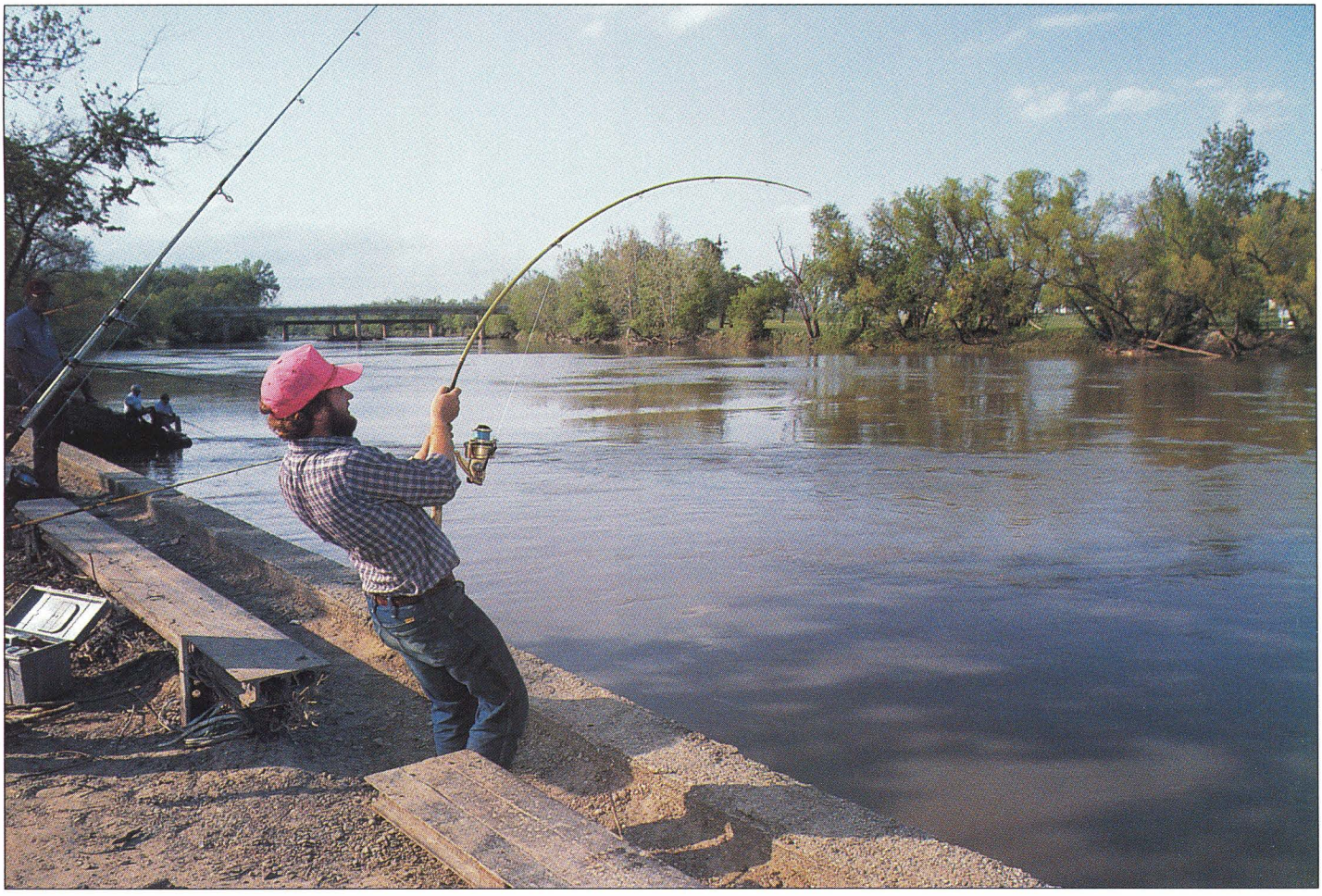
Haste and exhilaration are universal. Frogs chorus in a rain pool, while teal court in the shallows. Songbirds flash brightly from limb to limb, shopping for nesting sites. Butterflies bustle, seeking food for their next generation.

Winter's dead foliage gives way to new life. Mushrooms and ferns push out of the humus, followed by violets and wake-robins. Maple seeds spin down like copters, providing resurrection of dormant twigs. Brittle canes of rose and berry stand aside permitting the advance of virescent young sisters. And among dead grasses, fragile spears launch themselves toward heaven's blue.





Redwing blackbirds call out territories, and fawns lie hidden in meadows.
Young birds tremble at the heights of their platforms, innocent of the gift they'll one day possess.
The air is warm and filled with odors of rain and earth and flowers and vitality. The whole life is rebounding in a season fresh and new.
And once again, spring has kept its vernal promise.



Paddlefish

by J. Mark Shoup
associate editor
Pratt

photos by Mike Blair

Mysterious. Odd. Prehistoric. Huge. All these words describe the unique paddlefish, which makes annual spawning runs in two Kansas rivers.

The river is swollen and black. A nearly imperceptible dip in the surface stretches from bank to bank—a surrealistic reaction to the hidden wall of concrete below, that when exposed, often marks an 8- or 10-foot drop in the river's surface. There is no one on the riverbank upstream from this mysterious line, but below it, crowds of people line the banks. There is a commotion on one side as fishermen drop their rods and peel away from the bank like carefully stacked dominos.

All but one, that is. This fisherman struggles along the bank, bent backwards against a huge rod doubled in the opposite direction of his effort.

Sixty feet from the bank, the water roils, revealing the object of this adventure. A huge back appears; a tail swirls the surface; and an odd creature slides sideways across the water for a moment then pulls back, exposing a bizarre, oar-shaped snout two feet long. Briefly, the fisherman has had his way. Now it's the creature's turn. It disappears beneath the surface to the sharp whine of line stripping from the reel.

It's called a duck-billed cat, shovelbilled cat, spoon-billed cat, oarfish, spadefish, spatula fish. The paddlefish goes by many names (including its Latin, *Polyodon spathula*), but its story can be told from two perspectives—the angler's, of course, and the scientist's.

From the scientific perspective, this strange and ancient fish is something of a mystery. Although it has been scrutinized for more than a century now, science knew nothing of its reproductive habits until 1960. However, a growing body of knowledge has been recorded, and there is much about this prehistoric giant that has been explained.

The paddlefish evolved some 50 million years before the first dinosaurs. Today it can be found only in 22 states, but its range is mostly confined to the Mississippi River basin, from as far west as the Missouri River in western Montana. Some paddlefish also inhabit eastern rivers entering the Gulf of Mexico. In Kansas, paddlefish are indigenous to the lower reaches of the Arkansas, Kansas, Marais des Cygnes, Neosho and Verdigris rivers.

This young paddlefish, while darker in color than an adult, exhibits all the unusual features of this unique species. Above the large, gaping mouth is the paddlelike characteristic which may grow to nearly 2 feet in length on an adult fish.

Individual paddlefish apparently are not isolated in limited ranges. In fact, modern studies show that paddlefish movements of 100 miles are common, and much greater distances are travelled in river systems that are still open. According to a research summary by Thomas R. Russell of the Missouri Department of Conservation, several paddlefish tagged below the Gavin's Point Dam in South Dakota—which is the lowermost dam on the Missouri River—moved 400 miles downstream, and one fish swam 1,200 miles downstream. From this information, scientists surmise that such movements must have been common throughout the Mississippi River basin before dams were constructed.

Ironically, such construction has had some benefit to paddlefish. While dams on rivers impede spawning migrations, reservoirs provide rich feeding grounds for paddlefish, which are primarily plankton eaters. They prefer deep, standing or slow-moving water most of the year. However, it is unlikely that the benefits of reservoirs offset the damage done to paddlefish spawning migrations by channelization and damming of most of the rivers in its range.

Paddlefish range was perhaps the easiest mystery to unravel, but anatomical questions have puzzled anglers and scientists alike for decades. The most dramatic and intriguing physical attribute of the paddlefish is its long snout, called a rostrum, which is about one-third the length of the entire body. Theories have it that the rostrum is used to stir food from the river bottom or to act as a plane to counter the downward pull of the fish's large open mouth as it cruises the water for food. Neither of these theories has been proven. In fact, paddlefish have been known to lose their rostrums to injury and survive to be healthy adults. It is known that the rostrum and portions of the head are covered with taste buds, which likely help locate food.

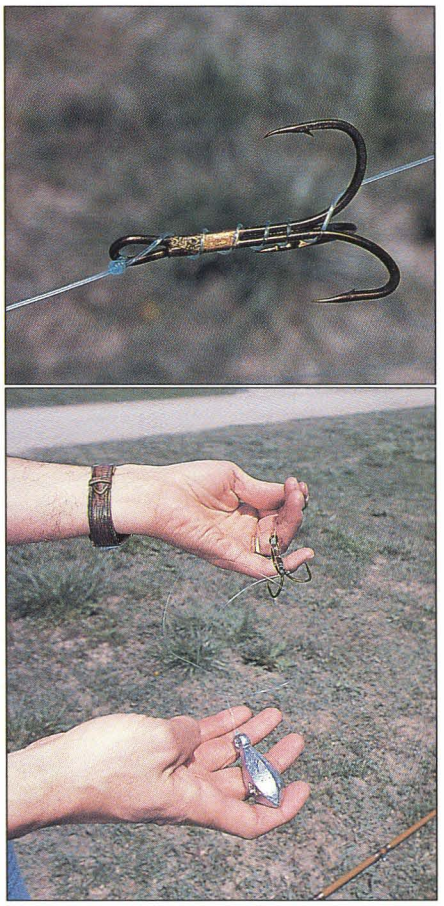
Another intriguing feature of the paddlefish is its skeleton, which is mostly cartilage. The jaw is the only bony part, and this separates bizarrely from the head when the fish feeds. The paddlefish swims with its mouth wide open, and specially adapted gill rakers—knobby toothlike structures on the front of the gill arches—strain zooplankton and aquatic insect larvae from the water.

The most illusive information about paddlefish has to do with behavior, namely reproduction. Although scientists have searched for such information since the turn of the century, it wasn't until 1960 that Charles Purkett of the Missouri Department of Conservation discovered the first paddlefish spawning site, on shoals of the Osage River in Missouri. To date, no other sites have been found, but this seminal discovery has revealed much about paddlefish reproductive habits.

We now know that paddlefish migrate from late March to late June to find suitable spawning areas in water flowing over gravel beds. Photoperiod (day length), water temperature and water flow control this migration, but the trigger is the rise in river flows in spring. When males and females reach the spawning ground, there is a rush of spawning activity that leaves the water thick with the adhesive eggs, which stick to the gravel or anything else they touch. The eggs hatch in about one week, and by one month the young paddlefish have fully-developed rostrums and are easily recognized as the prehistoric paddlefish.

Males are sexually mature in 8-10 years, females in 10-12 years. At this time, males weigh 15-20 pounds, and females weigh at least 30 pounds. (Adult females larger than 50 pounds are common. Because paddlefish live as long as 30 years, they can get huge. The Kansas state record is 81 pounds, but the world record is 142 pounds, caught on the Missouri River in Montana.) One of the most interesting reproductive findings is that female paddlefish do not spawn every year. When they do, however, each female lays between 200,000 and one million eggs.

All this information-gathering is more than a matter of curiosity. Habitat destruction, pollution and exploitation have caused many states to halt all fishing. With the reduction of overseas sources for caviar roe (primarily from sturgeon), paddlefish have become prime targets for commercial fishermen and poachers. Because 60-pound female paddlefish may produce eight pounds of roe valued as high as $80 a pound, a significant black market for the fish exists.



The necessary rig starts with a 7/0 treble hook, the line twisted around the shank then half-hitched to the belly of each hook. A 4-ounce weight is then tied 36 inches below the hook.

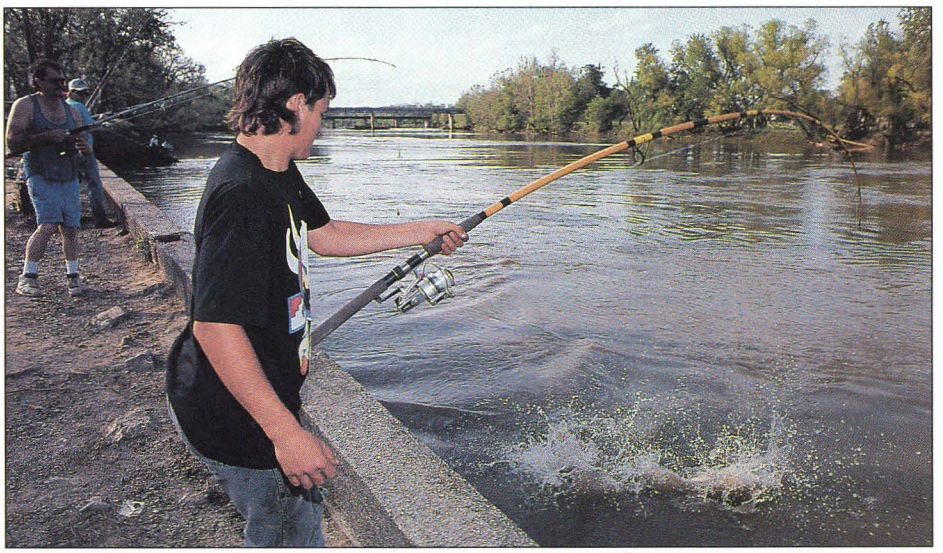
Close population monitoring gives fisheries managers the information to set and/or limit seasons.

A project by the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service should help expand the current paddlefish range. In May 1992, spoonbills were stocked in Tuttle Creek Reservoir and in Kaw Reservoir in northcentral Oklahoma, which is filled by the Arkansas River. In July 1992, Wildlife and Parks again stocked more than 12,000 paddlefish 10 to 14 inches long in Kaw Reservoir, from eggs obtained from the Missouri Department of Conservation and hatched and raised at the Milford Fish Hatchery. These long-term efforts will help ensure the stability of paddlefish populations in the central United States.

That's a cerebral look at paddlefish. Now for an emotional look at spoonbills—an angler's perspective.

In Kansas, there are only two places to snag paddlefish—a short stretch of the Neosho River below the Chetopa Dam and the Marais des Cygnes River below the Osawatomie Dam. The season runs sometime between March 15 and May 15, depending on water flows. The fishing is strictly monitored with a daily creel limit of two and a possession limit of six. Each paddlefish caught must be kept, tagged and checked at a check-in station. Once the daily limit of paddlefish has been reached, the fisherman must stop snagging.

The rig for spoonbill fishing is like no other in Kansas. You need the largest spinning reel the local sport-



Heavy tackle such as an 8-foot rod and a large spinning reel filled with plenty of 40-pound test line is a must. A typical mature paddlefish will weigh 35-50 pounds, and fish weighing more than 70 pounds are sometimes caught!

ing goods store carries, capable of holding an ample amount of 30- to 40-pound test line, and a stout but flexible surf rod, 7 or 8 feet long. Run about 36 inches of line through the eye of a 7/0 treble hook and wrap the line around the shank several times. Then tie a half-hitch on each of the three hooks. This centers the treble hook outward on the line as you pull it through the water. At the end of the line, tie a 4- or 5-ounce teardrop sinker.

Plenty of extra line, sinkers and hooks are a must. Plan to lose some.

You're now ready for an unusual angling experience. Only the wait remains, and it goes something like this:

When spring rains fall, fishermen begin to watch the Marais des Cygnes and Neosho rivers closely. Season opening doesn't mean much. A river rise does. You keep in touch with other anglers and wait for the right moment.

For several days, a few anxious or bored fishermen appear and try their luck until a fish is caught. Then a few more fishermen appear and, if it's a good year, more and more fish are caught each day, and the word gets out to you—the spoonbills are staging below the dam.

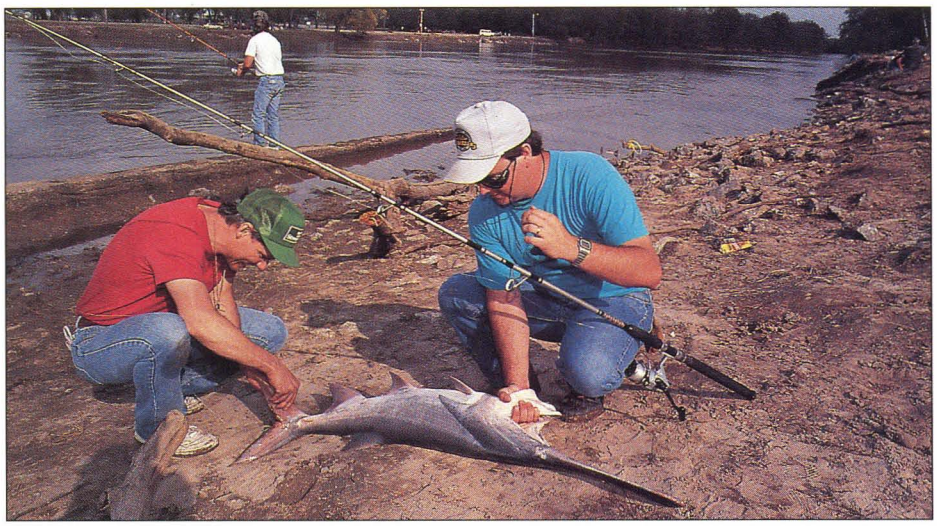
When the run begins, there is a social atmosphere below the dam. Both banks are lined with fishermen casting their big rigs side by side. Many anglers know others on the opposite bank 100 yards away, and the banter is continuous.

"Hey, Rooster!" comes a voice from the opposite crowd. "What's that little perch rig you usin'?"

"Least I can lift it, Beano!"

It's an amiable scene, with people cracking jokes, old pros coaching novices and everyone ready to help the man who has a fish on the line.

Suddenly this happens to you; you holler "Fish on!" and the battle begins. This will likely be a big fish—on average from 35-50 pounds, bigger if you're lucky—no easy thing to land. You pull your rod tip up hard and dig the butt of the rod into your hip. At first, it feels as if you've snagged a log—a heavy log—but as you tip your rod forward and reel in slack, you feel a distinctive pull back. Each pull gets harder—either you're tired or the fish is fighting harder.



A typical reaction of first-time paddlefish anglers is to admire the strange-looking creature while resting battle-weary arms. This average fish weighed about 35 pounds.

As you work your way down the bank, fishermen downstream from you quickly reel in their lines and clear the way, but the banks behind you are quickly reoccupied. You pull and reel every few feet until you have the fish near shore, 10 or 15 yards down stream from you, maybe closer. By this time, you've seen the fish surface several times and have guessed its size. You're huffing and puffing when someone you've never seen before steps to the water's edge and grabs the big fish by the tail (or the bill, depending on where its hooked) with both hands and hauls it in for you.

"Some guys have all the luck," he jokes.

By the time your catch is secured and tagged, you have to wait your turn for an open spot. That's fine because you probably need a rest.

But you don't have to wait long for an opening, and sooner or later someone upstream from you yells, "Fish on!" You reel in and set your rig down. This time, the fish comes close to the bank near you. You edge onto the rocks and wait for it to surface where you can grab it safely; then you haul it in.

"You're a helluva hand, buddy," comes the angler's thanks. You've returned the favor and suddenly become part of a strange and friendly fraternity.

That day, you go home tired and satisfied. All that's left is to clean the fish and enjoy the eating.

As with other fish, you must clean and cool spoonbills as soon as possible. First, cut around the tail—not clear through—and pull out the long, cartilaginous "spine." The rest is pretty straightforward: make sure all fat and fatty red meat are removed, and you have some of the finest fish fillets around. Pure white meat that will melt in your mouth, whether fried, deep fried, baked or broiled.

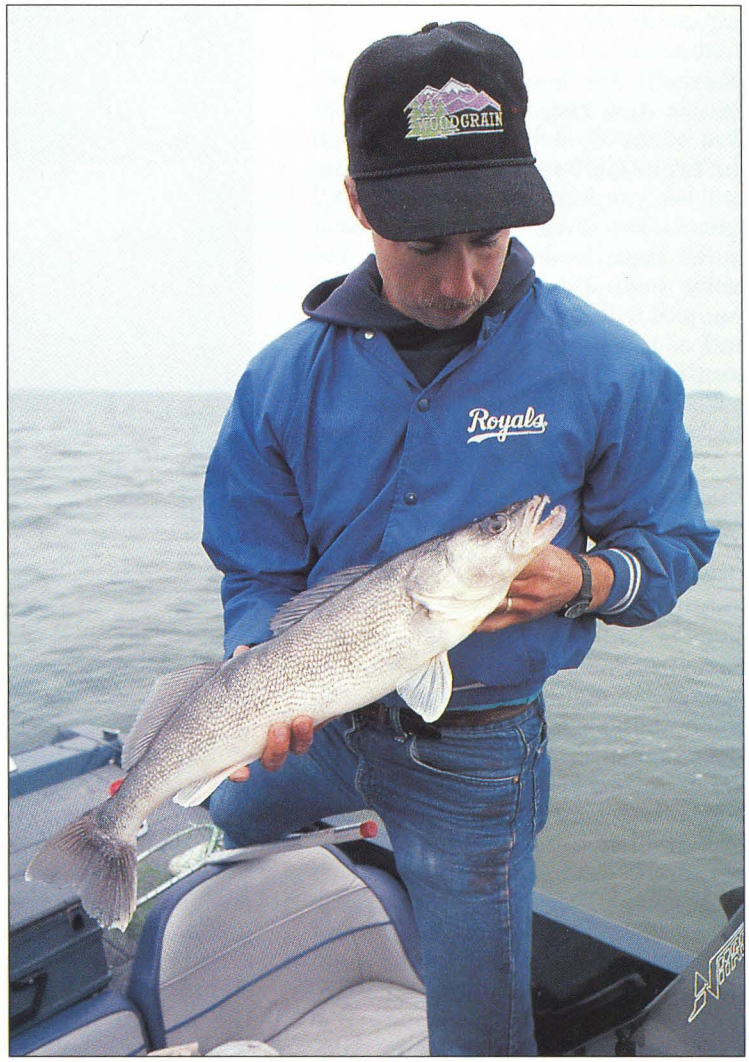
Because paddlefish numbers have dwindled in some states in recent years, the Fish and Wildlife Service is keeping close watch on its status. Last September, a petition to place it on the List of Endangered and Threatened Species was rejected because the species is still stable in much of its range. However, fishing seasons are being closely regulated.

Regulated sport fishing, of course, poses no threat to the paddlefish. Commercial fishing, however, must be carefully monitored to ensure that individual fisheries are not being damaged, and poaching must be stopped. If not, this most social of sport fishing activities in Kansas, and elsewhere, could be in danger. If not, the species itself will become endangered, as will paddlefish sport fishing.

Hopefully, paddlefish populations that migrate to Kansas will remain strong or become even stronger in the future. In the case of the spoonbill, species and sport are interconnected. And if the rivers rise in southeast Kansas come March, a whole different subculture will be gathering on the banks near Osawatomie and Chetopa, yelling "Fish on!" and "Thanks, buddy!"

Walleye: Where When & Whow! (The Three Ws)

text and photos by Marc A. Murrell
wildlife information representative
Valley Center



A 6½-pound walleye thrills any walleye fishermen, notice or expert. Not only is there fine eating ahead, but the challenge of catching these overgrown perch consistently is an angling game like no other.

If you read this article, I promise you'll catch a limit of walleye each time out. Your five-fish limits will weigh more than 15 pounds. You'll know what color of jig to use, when the walleye will bite and just how hold your mouth. All this is guaranteed or you money back . . . Yeah, right!

If you think anybody can guarantee you success walleye fishing, think again. Walleye are not easy to catch consistently even for the expert angler. And it's this challenge that draws so many to walleye fishing. That, and the fact that walleye are the tastiest fish that swims. This popularity has grown, especially over the last 10 years, and through tournament fishermen and dedicated walleye fanatics, we've gained a great deal of useful information.

The best way to apply this information is to fish when walleye are most susceptible: May. Walleye fishing can actually get good in late April and last through mid-July, but the peak fishing is usually in May. That's when the majority of fish have recovered from spawning and are ready to feed. It's also early in the season, and the fish haven't seen 469 dozen jig-and-worm combos hanging from a mile-long flotilla of boats drifting over.

The key to catching fish is knowing where to look. Walleye move daily according to boat traffic, weather, wave action and food availability. These movements can make them difficult to find. So, where do you start?

Craig Athon of Topeka likes to try a varied approach. "Anyone can catch fish on a given day, but to catch walleye consistently, you have to be flexible," Athon says. "One day the fish might be in two feet of water, and the next they might be in 50. You just never know."

Athon, a member of the Kansas Walleye Association for six years, has fished in more than 50 tournaments. He spends at least 3-4 days each week from April through August in search of these secretive fish and catches his share. "Too many fishermen have caught fish in a certain place or depth in the past and keep hammering that spot, even when they aren't catching any fish. They need to learn to check different areas for active fish."

In early May, Athon usually begins looking for fish in deep water near the river and creek channels, favorite walleye hang-outs. He studies topographical maps to find structure, then uses a Lowrance X-16 paper graph recorder to pin-point fish-holding ar-

eas on the water. Fish appear on the paper graph as small bumps on the bottom line, or as small Vs just off the bottom. Athon won't walleye fish without his paper graph. "Many people spend the money on good electronics but never take the time to use them," Athon says. "They would rather drift a nightcrawler across the entire lake than take a couple of hours to familiarize themselves with their equipment and the lake."

Using his graph, he looks for sharp bends in the channel, areas near the drop-off with brush, or where two channels meet. "After you fish a river channel for several years, you find some pretty good spots (stumps, brush piles, bridge abutments). If you line up several landmarks on shore, you can usually find them again each trip."

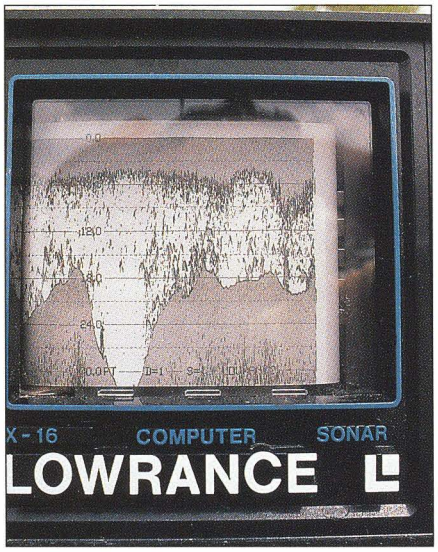
He also uses his graph to find other walleye hotspots. Old town or home sites submerged when lakes are filled can be walleye gold mines. The old foundations coupled with trees and stumps in 10-30 feet of water provide all the necessary ingredients for walleye in spring and summer.

Submerged hedgerows and road beds also hide hungry walleye. These can be located using topographical maps or by observing the shoreline. Many roads and hedgerows come to a dead end at the water's edge, and you can follow an imaginary line out in to the water to find these underwater treasures. Hotspots to look for include road beds, hedgerows (or any trees) or even points of land that reach to the submerged creek or river channel.

Once Athon finds a likely spot, he marks it with a fluorescent orange marker buoy. His bait of choice, along with millions of other walleye fishermen, is the jig and nightcrawler combo. "It's versatility, durability and effectiveness are tough to beat," he adds.

Athon's fishing technique depends on the weather. "If it's calm, I use my trolling motor to hover over the area, bouncing the jig and nightcrawler off the bottom. If I don't find fish, I slowly move outward from the marker. The fish sometimes hold right on the structure or break and other times they are several feet from it."

If the wind is blowing, like it often does in May, Athon anchors his boat in position. He maneuvers the boat upwind from the marker and carefully feeds out anchor rope until he's over the break or other structure. Precise boat positioning can be the difference in a limit of keepers and a couple of drum. "A good anchor is worth its weight in gold. Nothing is more frustrating than finding a great spot covered with fish only to have your anchor slip and ruin the fishing." Athon spoke from experience. The Water Spike is an anchor that holds most boats in the worst of winds and is available for about $35. Always tie the anchor to the front of the boat to avoid swamping the boat in heavy waves.



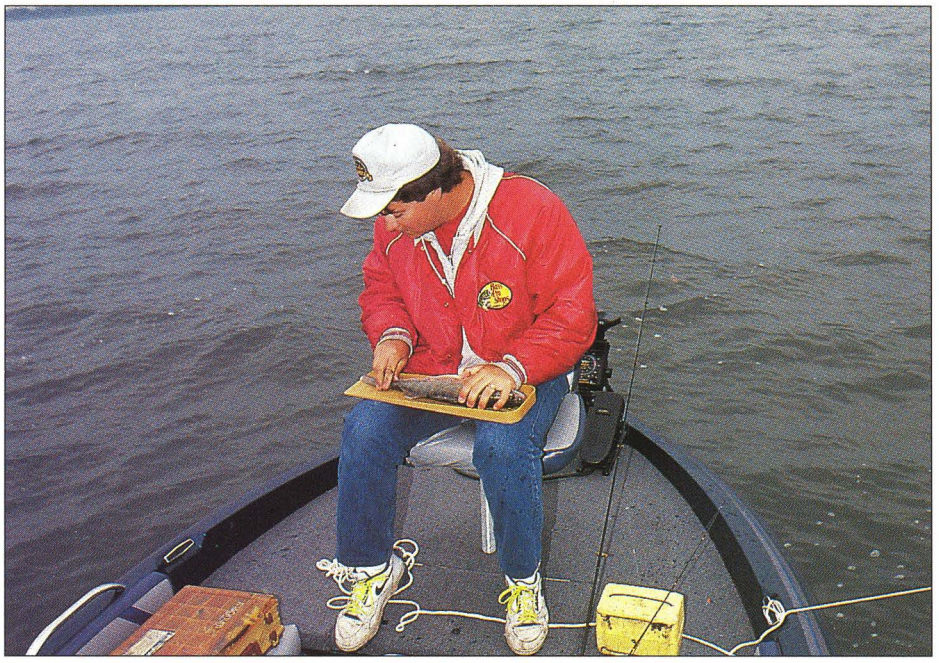
Walleye are structure fish, associating with sometimes subtle changes in the bottom contour. Quality electronics and the skill to use them are critical to success.

Athon advocates using two poles when anchored and fishes each differently. He fishes one vertically, just off the bottom, so that the bait bounces bottom as the boat rocks in waves. He likes to cast the other pole. "You cover much more area and increase your odds of finding active fish. On a channel, different depths can be fished by casting up onto the flat and bringing it down the break or vise-versa," he said. One method might work better than others depending on where the fish are holding on the channel edge.

If no fish are caught on a particular spot after 30 minutes, Athon turns on his graph and resumes searching. If he isn't successful after several stops in deep water, he starts looking in shallow water. In May, as the water warms, walleye often move onto flats 4-15 feet deep to feed on aquatic insects churned off the bottom by wave action. The trick is to find the magic depth.

One of the most productive ways to find fish on the flats is to drift. Again, the jig and nightcrawler is the lure of choice, but make sure the weight of the jig head is enough to keep the bait near the bottom. You may have to change jigs or vary the amount of line you have out de-


It's May and the walleye are feeding! Find just the right spot, and the action can be fast and fun. Here anchoring over submerged tree stumps along a dropoff was the ticket.



The 15- or 18-inch length limits on many Kansas lakes require anglers to handle short fish carefully before release to ensure survival. The intent of the restriction is to not only improve the size of fish caught, but to allow more fish to mature and spawn before they are harvested.

pending on the water depth and speed of your drift. Throw out a marker and check the depth when you catch that first fish. Try to maintain that depth through your drift.

While you may be able to keep your bait near the bottom in high winds with a heavy jig, your bait may be moving too fast to induce walleye to strike. Walleye are sometimes particular about how much energy they are willing to expend. Some days they'll nearly rip the rod from your hands and on others they may strike the bait at is drifts past, but make no effort to chase it if they miss.

Athon counters these "slow" fish by using a small water parachute called a drift bag. "It allows for a slower presentation in high winds by creating drag on the boat, and it can really improve your catch rate," he says. Drift bags can be adjusted for more or less drag and come in several different sizes and price ranges. Purchase one recommended for the length of your boat.

Other shallow-water spots that hold walleye include submerged weed beds and rocky points. Walleye move to these areas to feed, especially if the wind is blowing into them. A good way to fish these shallow areas is with a slip-bobber rig that holds the nightcrawler just inches off the bottom, letting wave action move and bounce it along.

Athon thinks most fishermen pass up these shallow hotspots. "We fished a weed bed last summer, and as another boat motored by we heard them saying we must be fishing for crappie since we were up in the weeds. We let them cruise on by, and we caught several 3-pound walleye as they faded from sight."

Athon regularly catches walleye at a variety of Kansas reservoirs but prefers one in particular. "Lovewell is head and shoulders above the rest in quality walleye fishing. I think the length limits are the best thing that has happened to walleye fishing in the state of Kansas." Athon went on to add Glen Elder, Milford, Wilson and Melvern reservoirs as other Kansas walleye hotspots.

Using all the information in this article might not guarantee you a limit of walleye, but it will certainly improve the odds of you catching one of the toothy critters. Study your maps, grab some nightcrawlers and find your nearest walleye lake. Oh yeah, think positive. Athon, and other dedicated fishermen like him, think they'll catch fish every time out. This thinking allows them to be flexible without getting discouraged. Your reward will come when you feel the throbbing pull of a big walleye.

Other Walleye Tips

Bait—Without a doubt, the jig-and-nightcrawler combination is the most widely used walleye bait. In fact, nightcrawlers are used in a variety of ways for walleye. Other good baits include leeches and minnows.

Bright is better for jig colors; hot pink, chartreuse and blaze orange all are popular. A variety of styles and sizes are available, and having some of each on hand allows you to adjust to different situations.

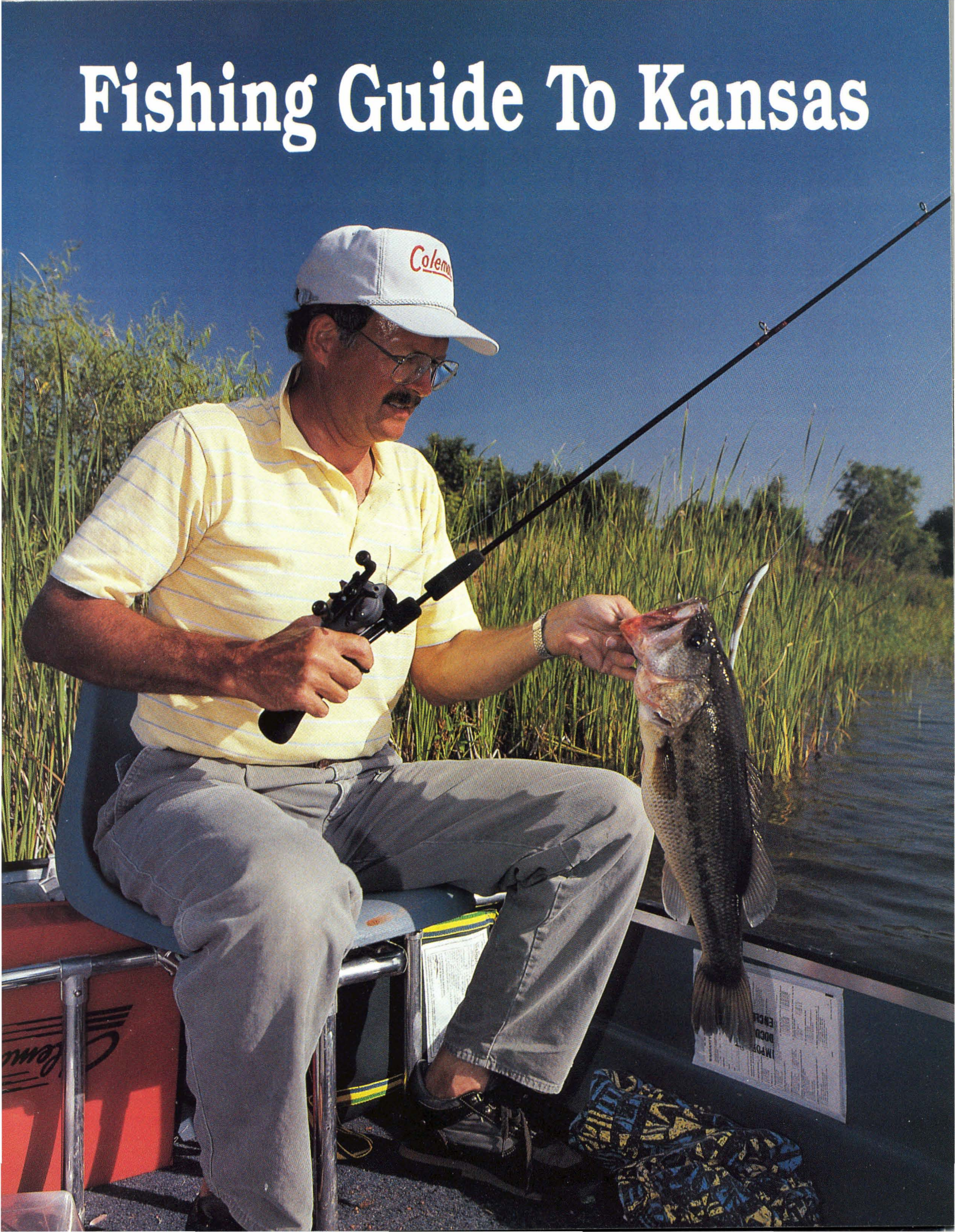
Landing Net—Don't wait until your fishing buddy knocks a 7-pound walleye off the hook with a small net. Never leave the ramp without a large landing net, and you may save a friendship. You'll definitely land more walleye.

Setting the hook—Walleye are often finicky and might peck at or spit out your bait a number of times before actually taking it. You need to read the fish's attitude. If they're finicky, wait, lower the rod tip and allow the fish to hold the bait. Gently raise the rod tip, and when you feel a steady pull, cross the fish's eyes. When fish are aggressive, they'll pick the bait up and move off immediately. You can set the hook quickly then.

Wind—Kansas wind is usually unwelcome, but it can help you catch more walleyes. If anchored, the wind gives your bait more action. Wave action stirs up food in shallow water, and walleye will move in a chow down. The choppy water surface makes it less likely that your boat will spook shallow walleye. A 10-20 m.p.h. wind is perfect.

Walleye angler diary—The Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks is looking for avid walleye anglers to take part in this yearly survey. Anglers record details of each trip and the information is used to evaluate walleye populations, management programs and regulations. For more information contact Don Gabelhouse at (316) 342-0658. *Murrell*

Fishing Guide To Kansas



Kansas Fishing: Have It Your Way

Fishing in Kansas might best be described by borrowing a slogan used by one of the hamburger chains: "Have it your way." You can literally have the fishing you desire in Kansas. If warm-water fish interest you, Kansas has a spot, a fish and a method you'll like.

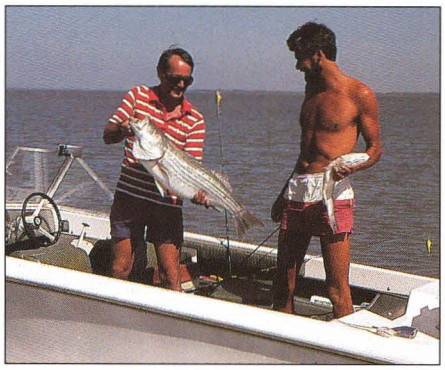
Lets start at the top and work down. It's the number of large federal reservoirs Kansas has that surprises most newcomers: 24 to be exact. They range from 1,200 acres to 16,000 acres in size and from timber shrouded, clear-water get-a-aways to rich, crappie infested, open-water lakes. The larger reservoirs are particularly known for crappie, walleye, white bass, and channel catfish. There are also fish for the specialist such as smallmouth bass, striped bass and wipers.

Several of the new lakes have substantial amounts of standing timber and offer good largemouth bass fishing. But crappie and walleye have taken over the spotlight at most Kansas reservoirs. Crappie are prolific and grow fast in the fertile waters of northeast Kansas reservoirs. Few states have better crappie fishing than Kansas.

In the northcentral Kansas, several reservoirs have emerged as premier walleye hotspots. Walleye fishing has improved in recent years with the implementation of the walleye length limits. More and more fishermen are learning the ways of walleye and catching lots of these toothy, delicious tasting fish.

Big fish specialists will love the striped bass, available in several reservoirs.The fresh-water striper has been stocked in Kansas since the early 1970s, and fish weighing more than 30 pounds are caught each year. The state record weighed 43 1/2 pounds. Two lakes offer good striped bass fishing, Cheney and Wilson, however, stocking programs may expand the striped bass opportunity.

Another big fish attraction is the flat-



head catfish. Flatheads swim in all of our larger streams and rivers, and they get big, too. The state record is now 87 1/2 pounds. A popular pastime in Kansas is setting banklines. Live bait is used as lines are set along the river's bank. The baits are then checked several times throughout the night. Bank lines or setlines account for most of the bigger flathead catfish caught each year. They'll take any bait, as long it's alive, and for those with patience, rod and reel is also a good way to fish for them.

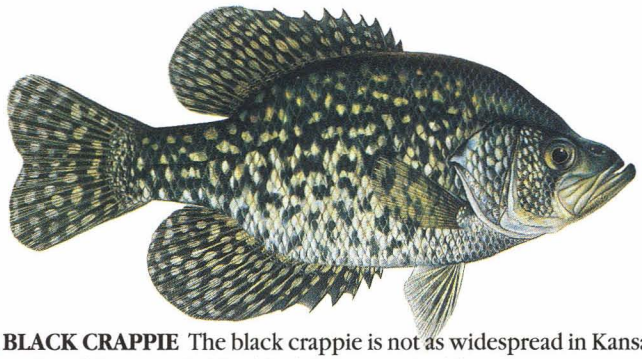
Channel catfish are perhaps the most widespread of the catfishes, and nearly every stream, reservoir and state fishing lake in the state provides good channel catfishing. Arguably one of the most popular fish with anglers, channel cats are raised in state hatcheries and stocked into the smaller waters by the millions. Reservoir channel cats are productive enough to maintain good populations. In some reservoirs, excellent channel cat populations exist, and they are often overshadowed by white bass and crappie. The best channel cat fishing usually comes after a rain as the water is rising. But you don't have to wait for a rainstorm at reservoirs. Whenever the dam is releasing water through he spillway, channel cats will congregate in the moving water below the dam and eagerly hit fishermen's offerings.

From reservoirs we step down to the smaller community and state fishing lakes. These small jewels are scattered around smaller towns and cities everywhere, and they can provide some great fishing. State fishing lakes are owned and managed by the department. These small lakes are any size from 50 to 200 acres and can be great places to introduce kids to fishing for channel catfish and bluegill. Community lakes are owned by the local city or county and often managed by the local district fisheries biologist. The Community Lake Assistance Program provides grant money that is used to improve the fishing opportunities at these lakes.

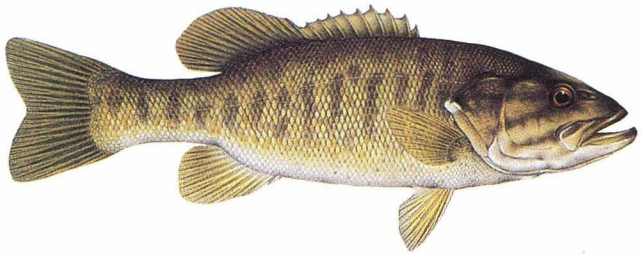
Kansas is fortunate to have more than 10,000 miles of fishable streams. Only the navigable rivers (the Arkansas, the Kansas and the Missouri) are open to public access, however, you must have permission to cross private land to get to the river bed. The rest of the state's streams, which range from wide, deep flowing rivers of the east, to the meandering prairie streams of the west, are privately owned. A little homework, knocking on landowner doors and some courteous asking can often open the gates to great private stream fishing. Many huge flatheads and channel cats are caught on privately owned streams by bankliners and setliners. The clear water of the Flint Hills streams hold catfish and spotted bass for the angler looking to get away from it all.

And last, but certainly not least, Kansas is blessed with more the 50,000 farm ponds that range in size from 1/2 acre to more than 100. These privately owned waterholes are only accessible with permission from the landowner, but they hold rich fisheries which include largemouth bass, bluegill and channel catfish. Farm ponds account for the majority of big bass and bluegill caught in Kansas each year.

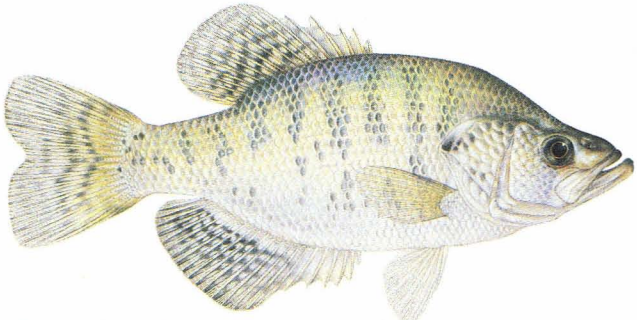
Have it your way in Kansas. Whatever your warm-water fishing preference, you'll likely find a place and an opportunity to enjoy it in Kansas.



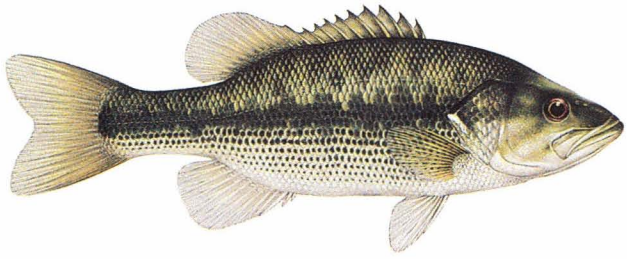
BLACK CRAPPIE The black crappie is not as widespread in Kansas as the white crappie.The black is more suited for clear-water, small impoundments. Large farm ponds are generally stocked with black crappie. Black crappie are distinguished by a uniform dark flecking, with no visible barring as seen on the white crappie. The world record black crappie weighed 6 pounds. The Kansas record is 4 pounds, 10 ounces.



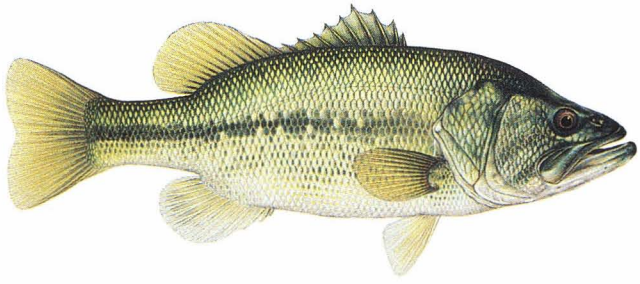
SMALLMOUTH BASS The smallmouth is a hard-fighting sport fish native only to a few waters in the southeast corner of Kansas. Introduced in several clear-water reservoirs, the smallmouth has adapted well, and has attracted a growing number of angler fans. Smallmouths prefer deep water and rocky structure. The mouth of the smallmouth extends to just below the eye. The world record smallmouth weighed a whopping 11 pounds, 15 ounces. The Kansas record is 5 pounds, 9 ounces.



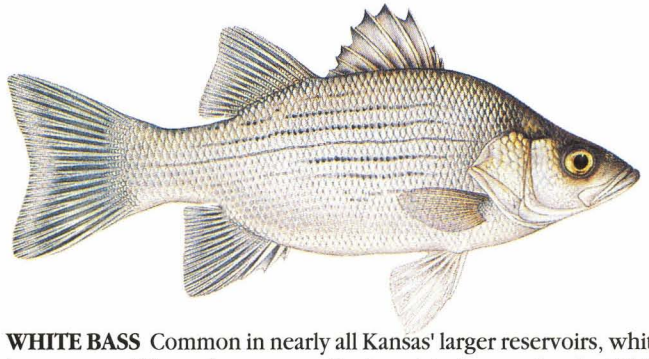
WHITE CRAPPIE The white crappie is abundant across Kansas, ideally suited to the large federal reservoirs. Known for its prolific numbers and delicious white meat, the white crappie is one of the most popular sport fish in the state. The rich waters of northeast Kansas reservoirs produce some of the finest fishing for slab-sided white crappie found anywhere in the U.S. The world record white weighed 5 pounds, 3 ounces. The Kansas record tipped the scales at 4 pounds, 1/4 ounce.



SPOTTED BASS Also known as the Kentucky bass, the spotted is native to eastern Kansas streams, mainly those that flow over limestone bottoms in the Flint Hills. It resembles the largemouth in coloration, with a more pronounced horizontal blotching and spots along the belly, but it acts more like a smallmouth when caught, fighting remarkably hard. The mouth extends to just below the eye. The Kansas record weighed 4 pounds, 7 ounces, and the world record is 9 pounds, 4 ounces.

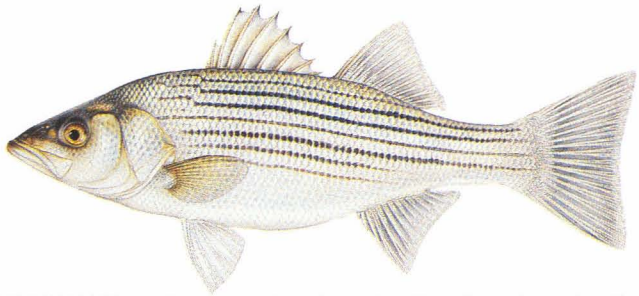


LARGEMOUTH BASS Part of a group known as the black basses, including the smallmouth and spotted bass, the largemouth is the largest. Common in farm ponds, the largemouth likes shallow, murky water and usually associates with structure such as weeds or submerged timber. Some of the newer reservoirs and smaller lakes with standing timber left in the basin also provide good largemouth fishing. Of the black basses, the largemouth is the only one with a mouth that extends back beyond the eye. The world record weighed 22 pounds, 4 ounces. The Kansas record is 11 pounds, 12 ounces

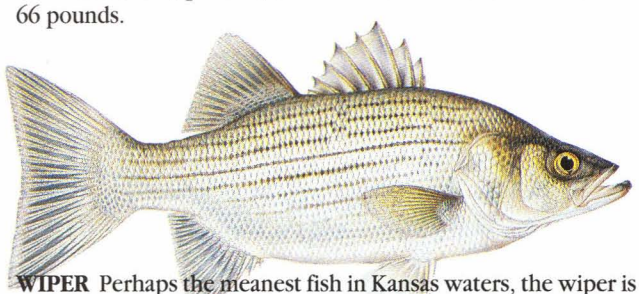


WHITE BASS Common in nearly all Kansas' larger reservoirs, white bass are prolific and are generally found in large schools. While popular any time of the year, white bass are known for their spawning runs, which may take them miles upriver above the reservoir. Fishermen gather along the streams near the deeper pools and cast jigs for the hard fighting white. They are so numerous in most Kansas waters, there is no daily creel limit. The Kansas state record white bass weighed 5 pounds, 9 ounces. The world record is 6 pounds, 13 ounces.

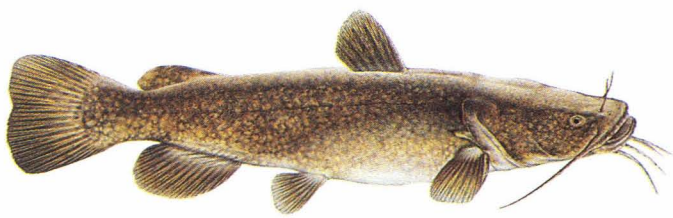
illustrations by Joseph R. Tomelleri



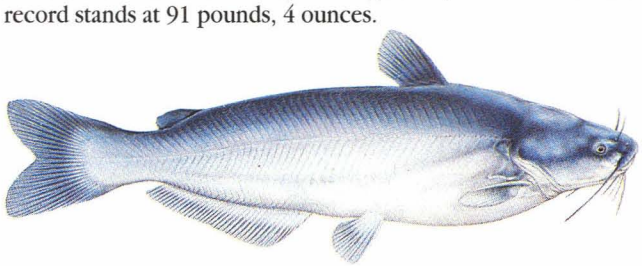
STRIPED BASS A saltwater native, the striped bass has adapted well to freshwater existence and has prospered in several Kansas lakes. They don't reproduce in Kansas waters, however, so populations are maintained through stocking programs. Stripers are legendary for their hard fighting nature and long, drag-sizzling runs. The Kansas state record is 43 pounds, 8 ounces. The freshwater world record is 66 pounds.



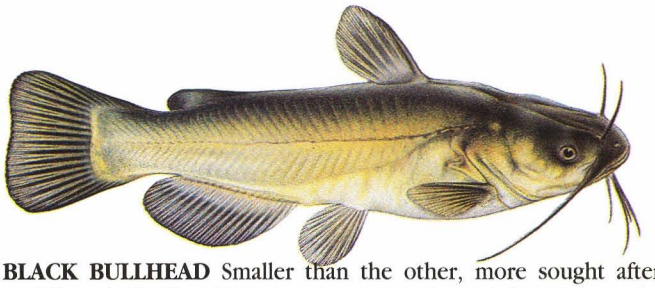
WIPER Perhaps the meanest fish in Kansas waters, the wiper is the cross between a white bass with a striped bass. Wipers grow fast, aggressively hit lures and fight like no other fish. It's no wonder Kansas anglers love them. The wiper, like its striper parent, has two rows of teeth near the rear of the tongue. The white bass has a single tooth patch on its tongue. The state record wiper weighed 18 pounds, 2 ounces. The world record wiper is listed at 23 pounds, 2 ounces.



FLATHEAD CATFISH Just as the name implies, this catfish has a broad, flat head with a lower jaw that juts out. Also called the calico cat, the flathead is a mottled brown to nearly yellow in color. Strictly predatory, the flathead is caught with live bait only, usually at night with banklines or setlines. Common in rivers and reservoirs across Kansas, the state record weighed 88 pounds, 8 ounces. The world record stands at 91 pounds, 4 ounces.

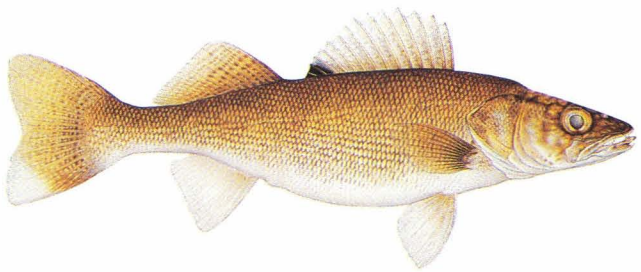


BLUE CATFISH The blue catfish looks much like the channel cat, except the blue has a humped back, a longer anal fin and gets bigger. Blues are native to several rivers in northeast Kansas including the Kansas and Missouri. Blues are seldom caught on the concoctions used for channel cats, preferring cut or live bait. The largest blue cat on record weighed 100 pounds, 8 ounces. The Kansas record weighed 82 pounds.

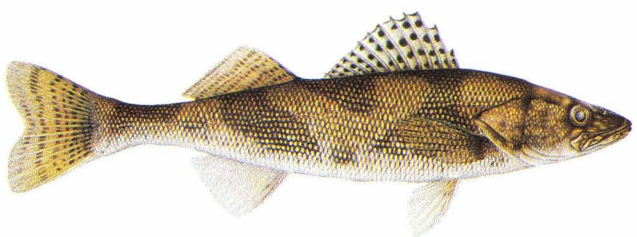


BLACK BULLHEAD Smaller than the other, more sought after catfishes, the bullhead is brown/green in color and doesn't have the forked tail like the channel cat. Common in nearly all streams, lakes and ponds, the bullhead bites worms and stink bait readily, and delights youngsters learning to fish. The state record is 7 pounds, 5 ounces. The world record is 8 pounds.

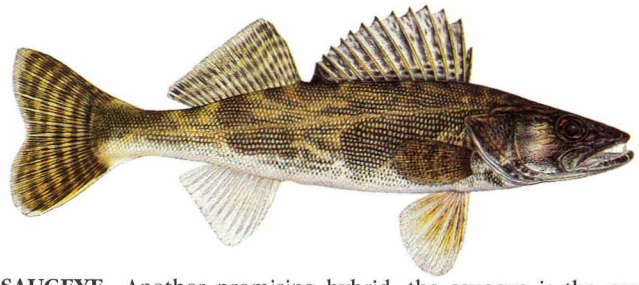
CHANNEL CATFISH The channel catfish is the bread and butter of Kansas fishing. Found in nearly all waters from large rivers and reservoirs to small prairie streams, good channel cat fishing is never far away. State lakes are also popular places to catch channel cats. Department hatcheries produce millions of channel cats each year. The state record channel cat weighed 33 pounds, 12 ounces. The world record is 58 pounds.



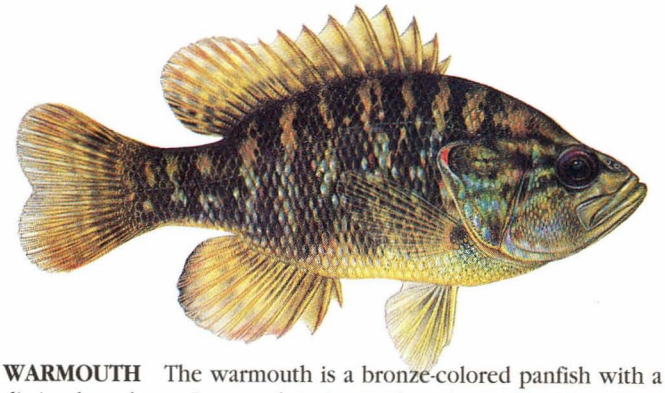
WALLEYE The walleye has become a highly sought game fish for Kansas anglers and have been stocked in most federal reservoirs and some larger state and community lakes. To help maintain these fisheries, millions of young walleye are hatched, raised and stocked each spring by department biologists and culturists. The state record weighed 13 pounds, 1 ounce. The world record is 25 pounds.



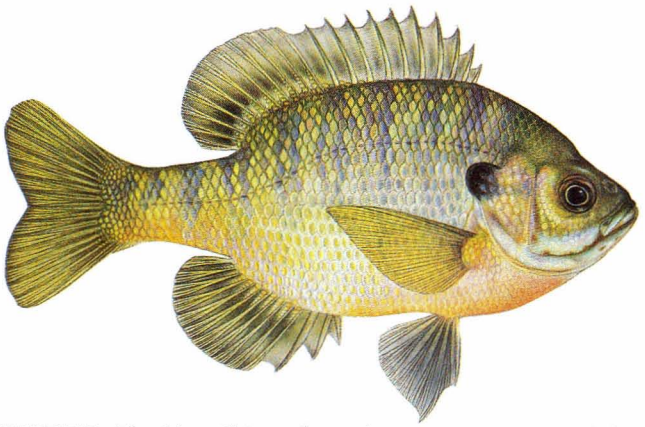
SAUGER This close cousin to the walleye loves murky water and current. Sauger are being stocked in several northeast Kansas reservoirs where walleye haven't done well because of high flow-through and murky water conditions. Sauger have been shown to be less vulnerable to be flushed out of a reservoir. Smaller than the walleye, the world record sauger weighed 8 pounds, 12 ounces . The state record is 2 pounds, 9 ounces.



SAUGEYE Another promising hybrid, the saugeye is the cross between a walleye and a sauger. Biologists hope the saugeye exhibits traits of both parents and survives better in less desirable reservoir conditions. Early results look promising. Difficult to distinguish from the parents, the saugeye will grow faster than either but probably won't get as big as the walleye. The world record saugeye weighed11 pounds, 12 ounces. The state record weighed 2 pounds 15 ounces

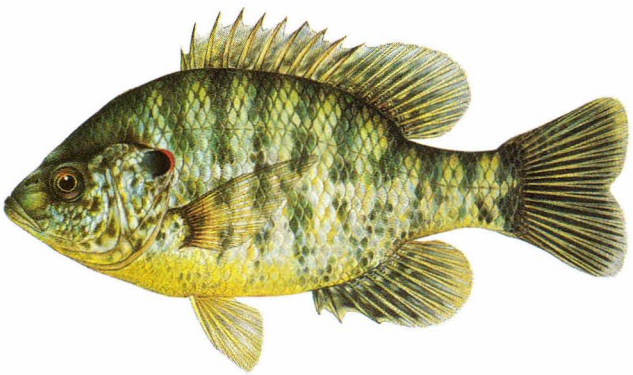


WARMOUTH The warmouth is a bronze-colored panfish with a distinctly red eye. Its mouth is larger than that of the bluegill or redear, and it usually shows vertical barring. It is most common in eastern Kansas lakes and streams. The state record warmouth weighed 1 pound, 1.76 ounces. The world record stands at 2 pounds, 7 ounces.

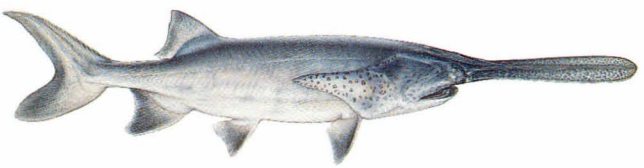


BLUEGILL The bluegill is perhaps the most common panfish in Kansas, and it provides many youngsters with their first fishing thrill. Although it doesn't grow to enormous weights, the tenacious saucer-shaped fish makes up for size with a scrappy fight. Common in most farm ponds and smaller community and state fishing lakes, bluegills are most easily caught when they move into shallow water and begin dishing out spawning beds. The state record bluegill weighed 2 pounds, 5 ounces. The world record is 4 pounds, 12 ounces.

GREEN SUNFISH Although it has a larger mouth and more elongated body than the bluegill, the green sunfish has the blue tab on the gill cover and is often confused with the bluegill. Commonly referred to as perch, green sunfish are aggressive and easy to catch. They can, however, easily overpopulate and become stunted in small impoundments. The Kansas record weighed 2 pounds, 5 ounces. The largest greenie on record weighed 2 pounds, 7 ounces.

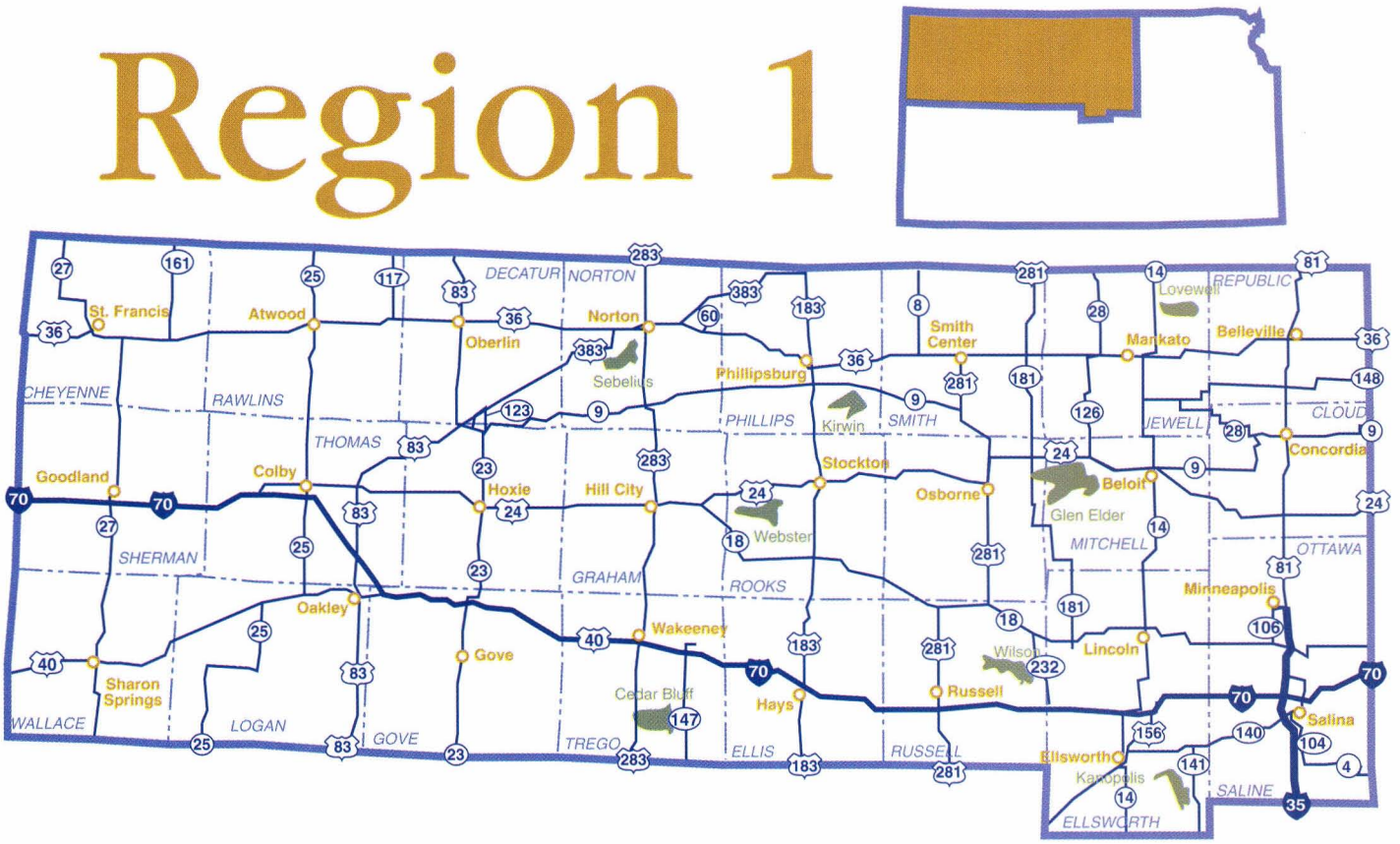


REDEAR SUNFISH The redear sunfish has been stocked into a select few lakes and reservoirs. It prefers deeper water than the bluegill, which it resembles in appearance, and is more difficult to catch. The redear has a narrow band of red on the gill cover lobe and usually shows vertical barring. They are popular locally with anglers because of the challenge they provide. The state record weighed 2 pounds, 15 ounces. The world record tipped the scales at 4 pounds, 13 ounces.



PADDLEFISH The paddlefish is a toothless plankton eater that resembles what one might think prehistoric fishes looked like. Common only in two rivers in Kansas, the Marais des Cygnes and the Neosho, the paddlefish is taken by fishermen only during the spring spawning runs, and then only during the special snagging season. Recent stockings of paddlefish in Kaw Reservoir in Oklahoma and in Tuttle Creek Reservoir are an attempt to bring the paddle-snouted fish back to some of its former range. The largest paddlefish on modern records weighed 142 pounds, 8 ounces. The Kansas record weighed 81 pounds.

Region 1



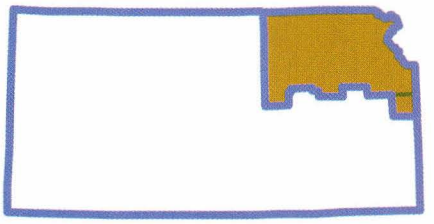
RESERVOIRS	boat ramps	boat rental	camping	drinking water	dump station	electric hookups	marina	picnic areas	swimming	trailer pads	bluegill	buffalo	bullhead	channel catfish	crappie	flathead catfish	green sunfish	largemouth bass	redear sunfish	sauger	saugeye	smallmouth bass	spotted bass	striped bass	trout	walleye	white bass	wiper
Cedar Bluff -- 1,000 acres, 13 miles S of I-70 on K-147	●		●	●	●	●		●	●	●				↑	↑	↑		↑				↑	↑			↑	↑	
Glen Elder -- 12,596 acres, 12 miles W of Beloit on US 24	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑				↑	↑	↑		↑	↑	
Kanopolis -- 3,550 acres, 33 SW of Salina on K-141	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑								↑	↑	↑
Keith Sebelius (Norton) -- 500 acres, 3 miles SW of Norton	●		●	●	●	●		●	●	●	↑		↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑			↑		↑			↑		↑
Kirwin -- 1,600 acres, 15 miles SE of Phillipsburg	●		●	●				●	●		↑		↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑								↑	↑	↑
Lovewell -- 2,986 acres, 4 miles E, 10 miles N of Mankato	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑								↑	↑	↑
Webster -- 1,500 acres, 8 miles W of Stockton	●		●	●	●	●		●	●	●	↑		↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑						↑		↑	↑	↑
Wilson -- 9,040 acres, 8 miles N of I-70 on K-232	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	↑	↑		↑	↑	↑	↑	↑				↑	↑	↑		↑	↑	
STATE FISHING LAKES																												
Jewell -- 57 acres, 6 miles S, 2 miles W of Mankato	●		●					●			↑			↑	↑	↑	↑	↑				↑				↑		
Logan - 25 acres, 1mile N of Russell Springs SFL	●		●					●						↑	↑				↑									↑
Rooks -- 64 acres, 2 1/2 miles S, 2 miles W of Stockton	●		●					●			↑		↑	↑			↑	↑	↑							↑		
Saline -- 38 acres, 2 1/2 miles N, 2 miles W of Salina	●							●						↑				↑										
St. Francis Sandpits -- 5 acres, 1 mile W, 2 miles S of St. Francis			●					●			↑			↑				↑										
Sheridan -- 67 acres, 11 miles E of Hoxie	●		●					●	●		↑			↑	↑			↑	↑									
Sherman -- 210 acres, 10 miles S, 2 miles W of Goodland	●		●					●	●																			

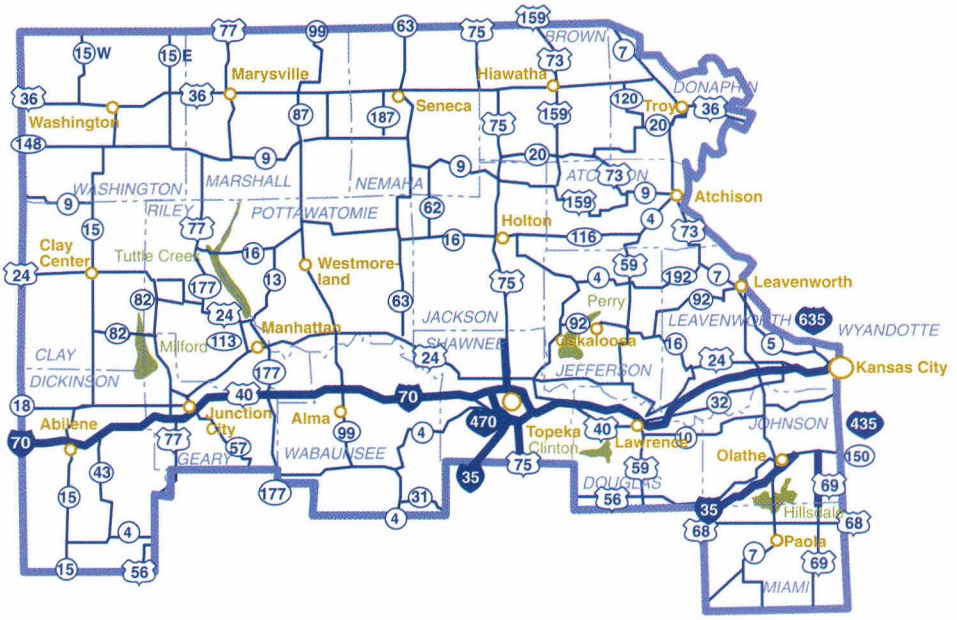
Reg 1 cont'

COMMUNITY LAKES	boat ramps	boat rental	camping	drinking water	dump station	electric hookups	marina	picnic areas	swimming	trailer pads	bluegill	buffalo	bullhead	channel catfish	crappie	flathead catfish	green sunfish	largemouth bass	redear sunfish	sauger	saugeye	smallmouth bass	spotted bass	striped bass	trout	walleye	white bass	wiper
Antelope Lake -- 80 acres, 2 miles W, 1 1/2 miles N of Morland	●		●					●			●			●				●	●								
Atwood Lake -- 45 acres, Junction of highways 25 and 36	●		●	●				●			●			●				●									
Belleville City Lake - 26 acres, Belleville	●		●	●	●	●		●			●			●				●	●								
Ellis City Lake -- 100 acres, Ellis	●		●					●						●													
Keller Lake -- 3 acres, NW edge of St. Francis			●					●			●			●				●	●								
Logan City Lake -- 25 acres, 2 1/2 miles S of Logan	●		●			●		●			●		●	●	●		●	●									●
Plainville Township Lake -- 158 acres, 2 miles W of Plainville			●					●			●		●	●			●	●	●								
Salina (Lakewood) Lake -- 20 acres, N end of Salina	●			●				●			●			●				●									
Smoky Hill Gardens -- 11 acres, 10 miles S, 2 miles W of Goodland			●	●	●			●			●			●	●			●									
Villa High Lake -- 2 acres, Colby			●											●													
RIVER ACCESS																											
Saline River -- low-water dam at Lincoln														●		●										●	
Saline River -- Wilson Reservoir Wildlife Area				●										●												●	
Smoky Hill River -- Kanopolis Reservoir Wildlife Area				●										●		●										●	
Smoky Hill River at Salina														●	●	●										●	
Solomon River at Beloit	●		●	●	●	●		●			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●									
Solomon River (north fork) -- Glen Elder Reservoir Wildlife Area	●		●								●	●		●	●	●	●	●				●	●	●	●	●	
Solomon River (south fork) -- Glen Elder Reservoir Wildlife Area	●		●								●	●		●	●	●	●	●				●	●	●	●	●	
Solomon River -- 10 miles W of low-water dam at Minneapolis												●	●	●		●											

Gene Brehm photo

Region 2





RESERVOIRS	boat ramps	boat rental	camping	drinking water	dump station	electric hookups	marina	picnic areas	swimming	trailer pads	bluegill	buffalo	bullhead	channel catfish	crappie	flathead catfish	green sunfish	largemouth bass	redear sunfish	sauger	saugeye	smallmouth bass	spotted bass	striped bass	trout	walleye	white bass	wiper
Clinton -- 7,000 acres, SW of Lawrence	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	↟			↟	↟	↟		↟								↟	↟	
Hillsdale -- 4,580 acres, 3 miles NW of Paola	●								●		↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟					↟			↟	↟	
Milford -- 16,200 acres, 5 miles NW of Junction City	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	↟	↟		↟	↟	↟	↟	↟				↟		↟		↟	↟	↟
Perry -- 12,600 acres, 18 miles NE of Topeka	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●				↟	↟	↟		↟									↟	
Tuttle Creek -- 15,800 acres, 6 miles N of Manhattan	●		●	●	●	●		●	●	●	↟	↟		↟	↟	↟	↟	↟								↟	↟	
STATE FISHING LAKES																												
Atchison -- 66 acres, 3 1/2 miles N and 2 miles W of Atchison	●		●	●				●			↟			↟	↟			↟										
Brown -- 62 acres, 8 miles E and 1 mile S of Hiawatha	●		●					●						↟	↟			↟			↟							
Douglas -- 180 acres, 1 1/2 miles E, 1 mile E of Baldwin	●	●	●	●				●			↟			↟	↟		↟	↟										
Geary -- 97 acres, 8 1/2 miles S, 2 miles W of Junction City	●		●					●			↟			↟	↟	↟	↟	↟				↟				↟		
Leavenworth -- 175 acres, 3 miles W, 1 mile N of Tonganoxie	●		●		●			●	●		↟			↟	↟	↟	↟	↟								↟		↟
Louisburg-Middlecreek -- 280 acres, 7 miles S of Louisburg	●		●					●			↟			↟	↟			↟	↟							↟		
Miami -- 118 acres, 8 miles E, 5 miles S of Osawatomie	●		●					●			↟		↟	↟	↟		↟	↟	↟									
Nebo -- 38 acres, 7 miles E, 1 mile S of Holton	●	●	●			●		●	●		↟			↟	↟				↟									
Ottawa -- 138 acres, 5 miles N, 1 mile E of Bennington	●		●	●				●			↟		↟	↟	↟		↟	↟										
Pottawatomie No. 1 -- 24 acres, 5 miles N of Westmoreland	●	●	●	●				●			↟		↟	↟	↟		↟	↟										
Pottawatomie No. 2 -- 75 acres, 1 1/2 miles E, 2 1/2 miles N of Manhattan	●		●	●				●			↟		↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟								↟		
Shawnee -- 135 acres, 7 miles N, 2 1/2 miles E of Silver Lake	●		●					●			↟		↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟								↟		
Washington -- 65 acres, 7 miles N, 3 miles W of Washington											↟		↟	↟	↟			↟										

Reg 2 cont'

COMMUNITY LAKES

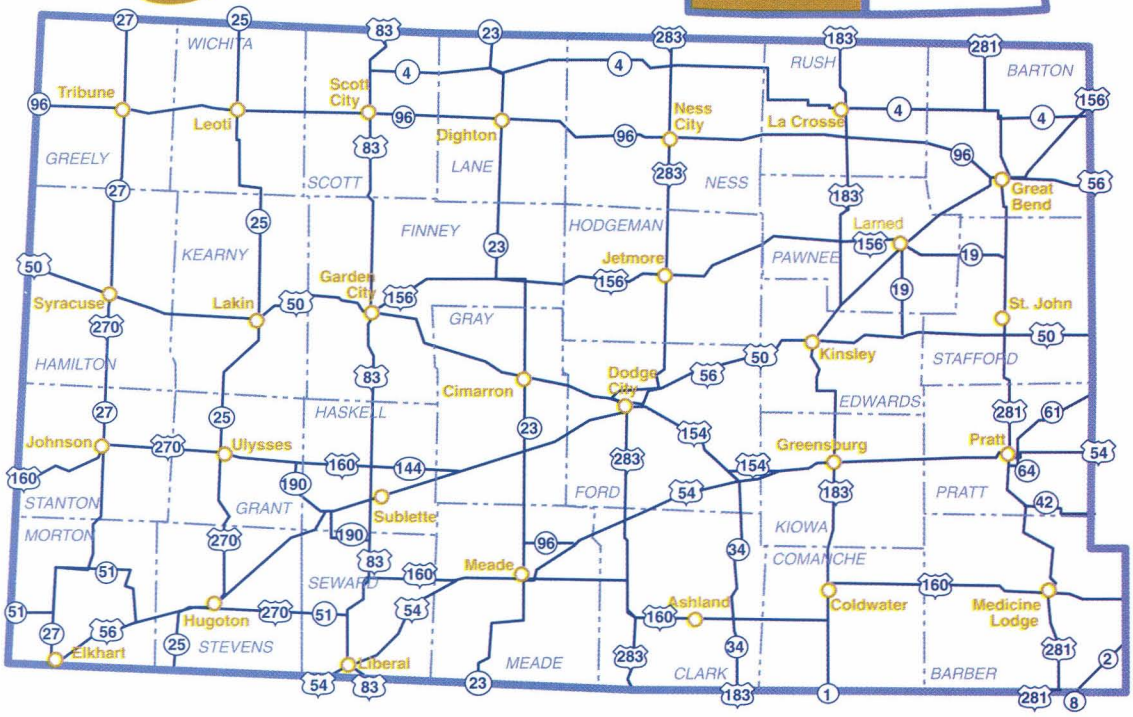
	boat ramps	boat rental	camping	drinking water	dump station	electric hookups	marina	picnic areas	swimming	trailer pads	bluegill	buffalo	bullhead	channel catfish	crappie	flathead catfish	green sunfish	largemouth bass	redear sunfish	sauger	saugeye	smallmouth bass	spotted bass	striped bass	trout	walleye	white bass	wiper
Alma City Lake -- 80 acres, 2 1/2 miles SE of Alma	●		●	●				●			●			●			●	●								●		
Antioch Park -- 3 acres, 6501 Antioch Rd., Shawnee Mission				●				●			●		●	●	●		●	●										
Atchison City Watershed Lakes -- 90 acres, Atchison	●		●	●	●	●		●	●				●	●	●			●							●			
Belleville (Rocky Pond) Lake -- 27 acres, Bellville City Park			●	●				●					●	●	●		●	●										
Big 11 -- 3 acres, 11th & State Ave., Kansas City				●				●			●	●			●													
Cedar Lake -- 56 acres, S of Olathe in Cedar Lake Park				●				●			●		●	●	●													
Cedar Crest Pond -- 1 1/2 acres, I-70 & Fairlawn Rd., Topeka								●			●			●				●										
Centralia City Lakes -- 400 acres, 2 miles S, 1 mile W of Centralia	●		●								●	●		●		●										●		
Elkhorn Lake -- 4 acres, Holton											●			●				●										
Frisco Lake -- 12 acres, Olathe				●				●			●			●	●			●										
Gardner City Lake -- 100 acres, 1 mile N of Gardner	●			●				●	●		●		●	●	●		●	●										●
Harveyville City Lake -- 25 acres, 1 mile N, 1 mile W of Harveyville											●			●	●		●	●										
Herington City Lake (new) -- 555 acres, 2 1/2 miles W of Herington	●		●					●	●		●		●	●	●		●	●								●		
Herington City Lake (old) -- 367 acres, 1 1/2 miles SW of Herington	●		●	●				●	●																			
Heritage Park Lake -- 20 acres, 160th & Pflumm Rd., Olathe	●							●			●		●	●			●	●										
Holton City (Prairie) Lake -- 78 acres, 1 1/2 miles N, 3 1/2 miles W of Holton	●		●	●		●		●			●			●	●			●										
Jeffery Energy Center -- 125 & 450 acres, 5 miles N, 3 miles W of St. Marys											●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●							●	●		
Lansing City Lake -- 1 1/4 acres, east edge of Lansing								●			●			●	●			●										
Leavenworth (Jerry's) Lake -- 3/4 acre, Jerry's Parks, Leavenworth								●			●			●					●									
Lenexa (Rose's) Lake -- 2 acres, 87th & Lackman, Lenexa								●			●			●				●										
Lone Star Lake -- 195 acres, 4 miles SW of Lawrence	●	●	●	●	●			●			●		●	●	●		●	●	●									●
Lake Olathe -- 172 acres, 2 miles W of Olathe	●	●	●	●				●			●			●	●	●		●										
Louisburg Lake -- 23 acres, SE edge of Louisburg											●			●			●	●								●		
Mahaffie Farmstead Pond -- 1 acre, Ridgeview & Kansas City Rd., Olathe								●			●			●				●										
Mary's Lake -- 3 acres, 1/2 mile E os Haskell & 31st St., Lawrence								●			●			●	●			●										
Marysville (Country Club) Lake -- 10 acres, 1 mile E of US-36 & 77											●		●	●	●		●	●										
Mission Lake -- 167 acres, Holton	●		●					●			●			●	●			●										
North Park Lake -- 3 acres, NW Bonner Springs				●				●			●			●			●	●										
Ogden City Lake -- 24 acres, Ogden											●	●		●	●		●	●										
Osawatomie City Lake -- 21 acres, 1 1/2 miles N, 2 miles W of Osawatomie	●							●	●	●	●			●	●		●	●	●									
Paloa City Lake (Lake Miola) -- 220 acres, 1 mile N, 1 mile E of Paola	●		●			●		●	●		●		●	●			●	●										
Pierson Park Lake -- 13 acres, 55th & Douglas, Kansas City								●			●		●	●			●	●										
Richmond City Lake -- 21 acres, 1 mile S, 1 1/2 miles E of Richmond	●		●					●			●			●	●			●										
Sabetha City Lake -- 100 acres, 6 miles W of Sabetha	●		●					●			●			●	●		●	●										
Lake Shawnee -- 416 acres, 3139 SE 29th St., Topeka	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●			●	●	●	●	●	●						●	●		●
Shawnee Mission Park Lake -- 135 acres, 79th & Renner Rd. Shawnee Mission	●	●		●				●	●		●			●	●		●	●							●			●
South Lake Park -- 5 1/2 acres, 87th & Valley View, Overland Park								●			●			●			●	●										
Spring Hill City Lake -- 40 acres, 1/2 NW of Spring Hill											●			●	●		●	●										
Stoll Park -- 1 3/4 acres, Overland Park								●			●			●				●										
Sunflower Park -- 1 1/2 acres, 4 miles W of DeSoto								●			●			●			●	●										
Troy 4-H Lake -- 5 acres, 1/2 mile SW of Troy											●			●				●										
Lake Wabaunsee -- 216 acres, 4 miles W of Eskridge	●		●					●					●	●	●	●	●	●								●		
Wamego City lake -- 5 acres, Wamego				●				●			●			●			●											
Waterville City Lake -- 8 acres, 1 mile N, 1 mile W of Harveyville											●			●	●			●										
Waterworks Lake -- 6 acres, Sheridan & Curtis St. Olathe								●			●		●	●	●	●	●											
Wyandotte Co. Lake -- 330 acres, Wyandotte County Park	●	●	●	●				●	●		●			●	●	●	●	●							●	●		●

Reg 2 cont'

RIVER ACCESS	boat ramps	boat rental	camping	drinking water	dump station	electric hookups	marina	picnic areas	swimming	trailer pads	bluegill	buffalo	bullhead	channel catfish	crappie	flathead catfish	green sunfish	largemouth bass	redear sunfish	sauger	saugeye	smallmouth bass	spotted bass	striped bass	trout	walleye	white bass	wiper
Big Blue River -- Rocky Ford Dam below Tuttle Creek Reservoir.								●			●		●	●	●	●		●	●	●						●	●	
Big Blue River -- Tuttle Creek Reservoir Wildlife Area	●		●										●	●	●	●	●	●								●	●	
Big Blue River at Marysville											●		●	●	●	●	●	●								●	●	
Delaware River, Perry Reservoir Wildlife Area, Valley Falls	●		●	●				●		●				●	●	●	●	●									●	
Kansas River at Edwardsville	●													●	●	●		●										
Kansas River at Lawrence	●													●	●	●											●	
Kansas River at Topeka	●													●	●	●											●	
Kansas River at mouth of Big Blue River, Manhattan	●													●	●	●		●										
Little Blue River -- 1 mile W, 6 miles S of Hanover	●		●										●															
Marais des Cygnes River -- low-water dam, Osawatomie												●	●	●	●	●							●				●	
Marias des Cygnes River -- low-water dam at Ottawa												●	●	●	●	●							●				●	
Missouri River at Atchison	●													●		●							●				●	
Missouri River -- city parks in Doniphan, Atchison, Leavenworth and Wyandotte counties	●											●		●		●				●							●	
Republican River -- Milford Reservoir Wildlife Area	●		●										●													●	●	
Rock Creek -- Clinton Reservoir Wildlife Area	●		●											●	●		●									●	●	
Wakarusa River at Eudora	●													●	●	●		●										
Wakarusa River -- Clinton Reservoir Wildlife Area	●		●											●	●	●		●								●	●	

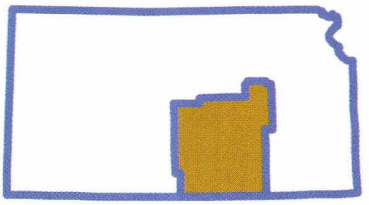
Mike Blair photo

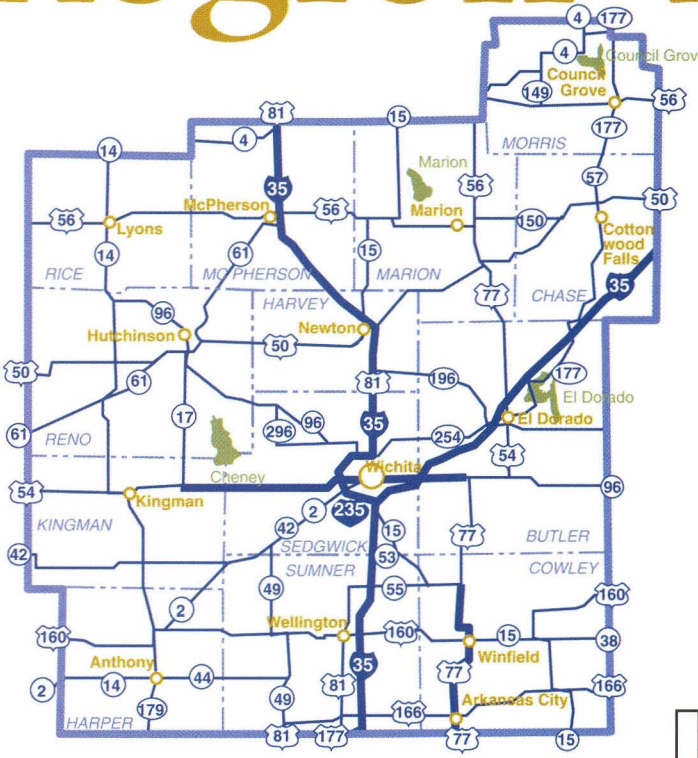
Region 3

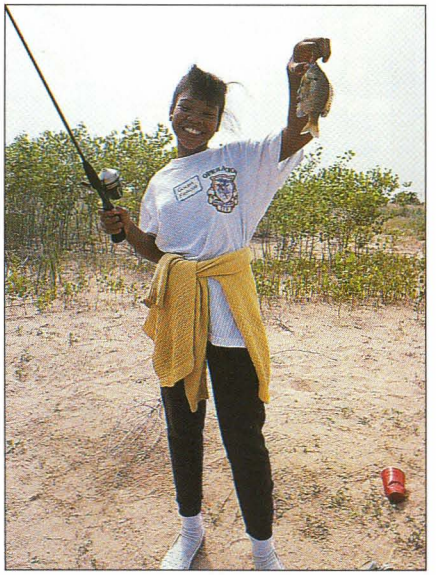


STATE FISHING LAKES	boat ramps	boat rental	camping	drinking water	dump station	electric hookups	marina	picnic areas	swimming	trailer pads	bluegill	buffalo	bullhead	channel catfish	crappie	flathead catfish	green sunfish	largemouth bass	redear sunfish	sauger	saugeye	smallmouth bass	spotted bass	striped bass	trout	walleye	white bass	wiper
Barber -- 77 acres, N edge of Medicine Lodge	●		●	●	●			●			●			●	●			●	●							●		
Cimarron National Grasslands Pits -- 11 acres, 8 miles N of Elkhart			●					●			●		●	●			●	●	●						●			
Clark -- 337 acres, 8 1/2 miles SW of Kingsdown	●		●	●				●			●		●	●	●		●	●								●	●	
Finney Sand Pits -- 5 acres, S edge of Garden City			●					●						●			●	●										
Goodman -- 40 acres, 4 miles S, 2 1/2 miles E of Ness City	●		●					●			●			●				●	●									
Hain -- 53 acres, SW of Spearville			●										●	●			●											
Hodgeman -- 87 acres, 4 miles E, 2 miles S of Jetmore			●					●					●	●				●										
Kiowa -- 21 acres, NW edge of Greensburg	●		●	●				●			●			●	●			●	●									
Meade -- 80 acres, 8 miles S, 5 miles W of Meade	●		●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●			●		●	●	●	●									
Scott -- 115 acres, 11 miles N or Scott City	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●		●	●	●		●	●	●						●			
Ford -- 48 acres, 5 miles E, 3 miles N of Dodge City											●			●					●							●		
COMMUNITY LAKES																												
Beymer Sandpit -- 18 acres, 2 1/2 miles S of Lakin			●	●				●	●		●		●	●	●		●	●										
Coldwater City Lake -- 250 acres, 1 mile S, 1 mile W of Coldwater	●		●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●		●	●	●		●	●										●
Jetmore City Lake - 110 acres, 1 mile S, 5 miles W of Jetmore	●		●	●		●					●			●				●	●									●
Lake Charles -- 1 acre, Dodge City Community College											●			●	●			●							●			
Great Bend (Veterans Park) -- 13 acres, Great Bend	●							●			●			●	●			●	●		●							
Mariah Hills Golf Course Pond -- 2 acres, Dodge City											●			●	●			●							●			
Pratt County Lake -- 51 acres, 2 1/2 E of Pratt	●		●	●				●		●	●		●	●	●		●	●								●		●
Reinhart Lake -- 10 acres, 2 N, 1/2 W of Bison			●					●					●	●			●											
Stone Lake (Great Bend) - 50 acres SW of Great Bend	●							●			●		●	●	●			●										●
Warren Stone Memorial Lake -- 2 acres, 2 miles E of LaCrosse	●		●					●			●			●				●										
RIVER ACCESS																												
Ninnescah River (south fork) -- 2 miles E, 1 mile S of Pratt			●					●			●		●	●			●	●										
Ninnescah River (south fork) -- Lemon Park, Pratt								●					●	●			●											

Region 4







RESERVOIRS	boat ramps	boat rental	camping	drinking water	dump station	electric hookups	marina	picnic areas	swimming	trailer pads	bluegill	buffalo	bullhead	channel catfish	crappie	flathead catfish	green sunfish	largemouth bass	redear sunfish	sauger	saugeye	smallmouth bass	spotted bass	striped bass	trout	walleye	white bass	wiper
Cheney -- 9,550 acres, 20 miles W of Wichita	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●				↟	↟									↟		↟	↟	↟
Council Grove -- 3,280 acres, 1 mile N of Council Grove	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		↟		↟	↟	↟	↟	↟			↟					↟	↟	↟
El Dorado -- 8,000 acres, 3 miles E, 2 miles N of El Dorado	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟				↟	↟			↟	↟	
Marion -- 6,160 acres, 4 miles NE of Marion	●		●	●	●	●		●	●	●				↟	↟	↟		↟								↟	↟	↟
STATE FISHING LAKES																												
Butler -- 124 acres, 3 miles W, 1 mile N of Latham	●		●	●				●			↟		↟	↟	↟			↟	↟							↟		
Chase -- 109 acres, 2 1/2 miles W of Cottonwood Falls	●		●					●	●		↟			↟	↟			↟			↟	↟	↟			↟	↟	↟
Cowley -- 84 acres, 13 miles E of Arkansas City	●		●	●				●			↟		↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟			↟	↟			↟		
Kingman -- 144 acres, 7 miles W of Kingman	●		●					●			↟			↟	↟	↟	↟									↟		
McPherson -- 46 acres, 6 miles N, 2 1/2 miles W of Canton	●		●					●			↟		↟	↟	↟		↟	↟										
COMMUNITY LAKES																												
Afton -- 258 acres, 25 miles SW of Wichita	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	↟		↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟								↟		↟
Anthony City Lake -- 156 acres, 1 mile N, 1/2 miles W of Anthony	●		●	●	●	●		●	●	●			↟	↟	↟			↟			↟							
Carey Park Pond -- 1 acre, S end of Hutchinson				●				●						↟	↟			↟										
Chisholm Creek Park -- 3 acres, NE of Wichita				●				●			↟		↟	↟			↟	↟						↟				
Dillon Outdoor Ed. Center -- 3 acres, NE of Hutchinson				●				●			↟		↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟										
Harvey County East Lake -- 254 acres, 7 miles E of Newton	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	↟		↟	↟	↟		↟	↟										
Harvey County West Lake -- 15 acres, 4 miles N, 3 miles W of Halstead	●		●	●		●		●	●	●	↟		↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟										
Marion County Lake -- 153 acres, 2 miles E, 2 miles S of Marion	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	↟		↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟			↟		↟			↟		↟
Riggs Park -- 1 acre, Haysville				●				●			↟			↟				↟										
Sedgwick County Parks -- 63 acres, NW Wichita				●				●			↟		↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟						↟				↟
Watson Park -- 42 acres, S Wichita				●				●			↟			↟	↟			↟						↟				↟

Reg 4 cont'

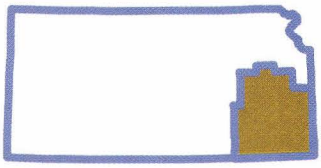
	boat ramps	boat rental	camping	drinking water	dump station	electric hookups	marina	picnic areas	swimming	trailer pads	bluegill	buffalo	bullhead	channel catfish	crappie	flathead catfish	green sunfish	largemouth bass	redear sunfish	sauger	saugeye	smallmouth bass	spotted bass	striped bass	trout	walleye	white bass	wiper
Wellington City Lake #1 -- 67 acres, NE of Wellington	●			●						●	↑		↑	↑	↑		↑	↑										
Wellington City Lake #2 -- 350 acres, 5 miles W, 1 1/2 miles S of Wellington	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	↑		↑	↑	↑		↑		↑							↑		↑
Winfield City Lake -- 1,200 acres, 10 miles NE of Winfield	●		●	●		●		●	●	●	↑		↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑					↑			↑		↑
Winfield Island Park Lake -- 7 acres, N of Winfield			●	●				●			↑		↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑							↑		

RIVER ACCESS

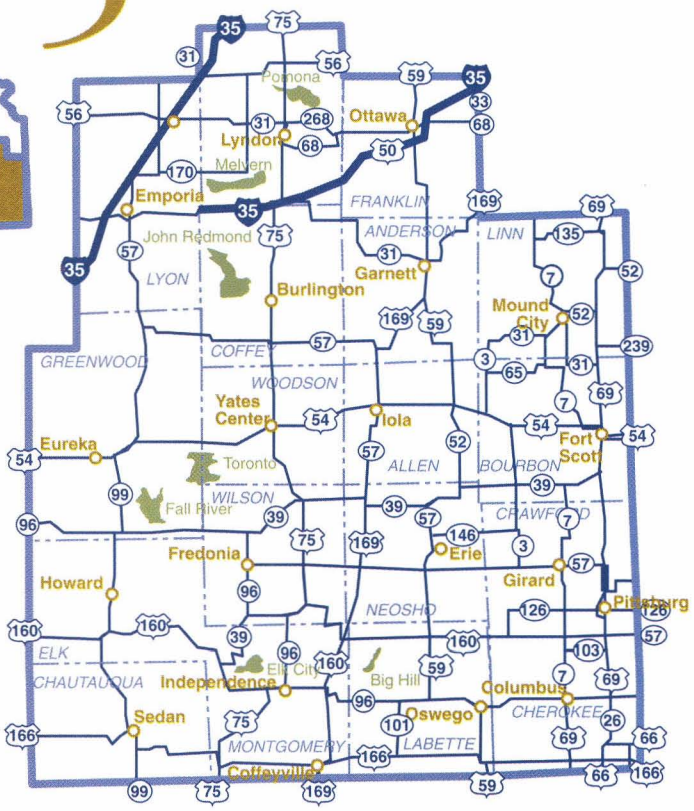
Arkansas River -- Kaw Wildlife Area			●									↑		↑		↑										↑	↑	
Arkansas River at Arkansas City												↑		↑		↑												
Arkansas River at Geuda Springs			●					●						↑		↑											↑	
Arkansas River -- low-water dam at Oxford														↑		↑												
Arkansas River -- 21st St. Bridge, Wichita				●				●			↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑									↑	
Arkansas River -- Lincoln St. Bridge, Wichita				●				●			↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑									↑	
Chikaskia River -- Drury Dam, 5 1/2 miles S of South Haven														↑		↑							↑					
Cottonwood River at Cottonwood Falls												↑		↑		↑	↑										↑	
Cottonwood River -- Marion Reservoir Wildlife Area	●		●											↑	↑	↑										↑	↑	↑
Little Arkansas River through Wichita			●	●							↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑										
Neosho River -- Council Grove Reservoir Wildlife Area														↑		↑											↑	
Walnut River at Arkansas City												↑		↑		↑											↑	
Walnut River at Winfield												↑		↑		↑										↑	↑	

Mike Blair photos

Region 5



Mike Blair photo



RESERVOIRS	boat ramps	boat rental	camping	drinking water	dump station	electric hookups	marina	picnic areas	swimming	trailer pads	bluegill	buffalo	bullhead	channel catfish	crappie	flathead catfish	green sunfish	largemouth bass	redear sunfish	sauger	saugeye	smallmouth bass	spotted bass	striped bass	trout	walleye	white bass	wiper
Big Hill -- 1,240 acres, 4 1/2 miles E of Cherryvale	●		●	●	●	●		●	●	●	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟				↟				↟	↟	
Elk City - 4,450 acres, 4 miles NW of Independence	●		●	●	●	●		●	●	●	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟								↟	↟	↟
Fall River -- 2,500 acres, 25 SE of Eureka	●		●	●	●	●		●	●	●		↟		↟	↟	↟		↟					↟			↟	↟	
John Redmond -- 9,400 acres, 2 miles N 1/2 W of Burlington	●		●	●	●	●		●	●	●		↟		↟	↟	↟	↟									↟	↟	↟
Melvern -- 7,000 acres, 35 S of Topeka	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	↟	↟		↟	↟	↟		↟		↟			↟			↟	↟	
Melvern River Pond - 90 acres, 1/2 mile S of Melvern Reservoir	●		●	●	●	●		●		●	↟			↟	↟		↟	↟								↟	↟	↟
Pomona -- 4,000 acres, 25 S of Topeka	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		↟		↟	↟	↟										↟	↟	↟
Toronto -- 2,800 acres, 15 SW of Yates Center	●		●	●	●	●		●	●	●		↟		↟	↟	↟		↟					↟				↟	

STATE FISHING LAKES																												
Big Hill Wildlife Area -- 13 3/4 acres, 6 miles E of Cherryvale											↟			↟	↟		↟	↟	↟							↟		
Bourbon -- 103 acres, 4 miles E of Elsmore	●		●	●				●			↟		↟	↟	↟		↟	↟	↟				↟			↟		
Crawford -- 150 acres, 9 miles N, 1 mile E of Girard	●		●	●	●	●		●	●	●	↟		↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟				↟	↟		↟		
La Cygne -- 2,600 acres, SE of La Cygne	●	●	●	●	●	●		●		●	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟						↟		↟	↟	↟
Lyon -- 135 acres, 5 miles W, 1 mile N or Reading	●		●	●				●	●		↟			↟	↟			↟								↟		
Marais des Cygnes Wildlife Area -- 1,967 acres, 7 miles N of Pleasanton	●										↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟								↟	↟	
Mined Land Strip Pits -- 1,500 acres, Cherokee, Crawford & Labette cos.	●		●								↟		↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟			↟	↟		↟	↟		↟
Montgomery -- 105 acres, 3 miles S, 1 mile E of Independence	●		●					●			↟		↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟							↟		
Neosho -- 92 acres, 6 miles S, 1 mile W of St. Paul	●		●	●				●	●	●	↟		↟	↟	↟		↟	↟	↟									
Neosho Wildlife Area -- 800 acres, 1 mile E of St. Paul	●										↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟	↟										↟
Osage -- 140 acres, 3 miles S, 1/2 mile E of Carbondale	●	●	●	●				●			↟			↟	↟	↟	↟	↟								↟		
Wilson -- 110 acres, 1 mile S, 1 mile E of Buffalo	●		●					●			↟			↟	↟		↟	↟					↟			↟	↟	
Woodson -- 180 acres, 5 1/2 E of Toronto	●				●			●			↟		↟	↟	↟		↟	↟	↟			↟	↟	↟		↟		↟

Reg 5 cont'

COMMUNITY LAKES

	boat ramps	boat rental	camping	drinking water	dump station	electric hookups	marina	picnic areas	swimming	trailer pads	bluegill	buffalo	bullhead	channel catfish	crappie	flathead catfish	green sunfish	largemouth bass	redear sunfish	sauger	saugeye	smallmouth bass	spotted bass	striped bass	trout	walleye	white bass	wiper
Altamont City Lake -- 13 acres, 4 miles S of Altamont			●								●		●	●	●		●	●	●									
Blue Mound City Lake -- 19 acres, 1 mile N, 2 miles W of Blue Mound											●		●	●			●	●										
Bourbon County Lake -- 106 acres, 1 mile E, 2 miles N of Hiattville	●		●	●				●	●		●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●									
Carbondale City Lake -- 265 acres, 2 miles E of Carbondale	●		●								●		●	●	●		●	●								●		●
Chanute City Lake -- 80 acres, S edge of Chanute	●		●	●	●	●		●			●		●	●	●		●	●					●			●		
Cherryvale City Lake -- 11 acres, 1.4 mile S of Cherryvale	●		●					●			●			●	●	●		●	●									
Coffeyville Leclere & Pfister Park Lakes -- 10 acres Coffeyville								●			●			●	●		●	●							●			
Empire Lake -- 800 acres, SE of Riverton	●	●									●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●				●				●	
Edna City Lake -- 10 acres, 2 miles W, 1 mile S of Edna	●		●	●				●			●			●	●		●	●	●				●					
Fort Scott Lake -- 360 acres, 2 miles S, 3 miles W of Fort Scott	●							●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●								●	●	●
Fort Scott Gunn Lake -- 10 acres, NW corner of Fort Scott	●	●	●	●	●	●		●		●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●				●			●			
Fort Scott (Rock Creek) Lake -- 75 acres, 1 mile S, 2 1/2 miles W of Ft. Scott	●		●	●				●			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●								●	●	
Garnett Cedar Creek Lake -- 310 acres, 6 miles S, 2 miles W of Garnett	●	●						●				●	●	●	●	●		●										
Garnett City Lake (north) 55 acres, N edge of Garnett	●			●				●			●			●	●	●	●	●	●							●		●
Garnett City Lake (south) -- 10 acres, S edge of Garnett			●	●				●			●			●	●	●		●							●			●
Gridley (Bishop) Lake -- 33 acres, 1 mile N of Gridley	●		●	●				●			●			●	●			●	●							●	●	●
Jones Youth Rec. park -- 3 acres, Emporia				●				●			●			●				●					●					
Kahola Lake -- 405 acres, 11 miles W, 8 miles N of Emporia	●			●				●			●		●	●	●		●								●			
Lebo Lake -- 70 acres, 2 miles E, 1/ mile N of Lebo	●		●								●			●	●	●	●	●	●							●		●
Madison City Lake -- 114 acres -- 2 miles S, 1/2 mile W of Madison	●		●					●	●					●	●	●		●					●			●		
Moline City Lake -- 185 acres, 4 mile NW of Moline			●								●		●	●	●		●	●										
Mound City Lake -- 148 acres, 4 miles W of Mound City	●		●								●		●	●	●		●	●	●							●		
Olpe City Lake -- 90 acres, 1/2 mile W, 1 mile S of Olpe	●							●			●			●	●			●										
Osage City Lake -- 50 acres, 1 1/2 miles S of Osage City	●										●		●	●	●			●								●		●
Parker City Lake -- 7 1/2 acres, 3/4 mile S, 1/2 mile W of Parker											●			●		●	●	●										
Parsons City lake 980 acres, 4 mile N, 3 1/2 mile W of Parsons	●		●	●				●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●			●						●	●
Peter Pan Park -- 3 acres, Emporia				●				●			●			●				●				●							
Pittsburg College Lake -- 2 acres, Pittsburg				●				●			●			●			●	●										
Playters lake -- 3 1/2 acres, Pittsburg								●			●			●	●		●	●										
Pleasanton City Lake No. 1 -- 127 acres, 1 mile N, 1/2 mile E of Pleasanton	●							●	●		●		●	●	●	●	●	●										
Pleasanton City Lake No. 2 -- 11 acres, 1/4 mile W of Pleasanton											●		●	●	●	●	●	●										
Pleasanton City lake No. 3 -- 32 acres, 1/2 mile W of Pleasanton											●		●	●	●	●	●	●										
Prescott City Lake -- 25 acres, 1 mile E, 1/2 mile S of Prescott											●		●	●	●		●	●										
Quivira Scout Lake -- 475 acres, 5 mile N, 1 mile E of Sedan	●							●			●			●	●	●	●	●					●			●		
Sedan City Lake (new) -- 70 acres, 5 mile N of Sedan	●			●				●			●			●	●			●								●		
Sedan City Lake (old) -- 55 acres, 7 miles N of Sedan	●		●					●			●	●		●	●			●										
Strawn City Lake (new) -- 3 acres, Center of Strawn City	●							●			●			●			●	●	●							●	●	●
Thayer City Lake (old) -- 30 acres, 2 mile W, 1/4 mile S of Thayer				●				●			●		●	●	●	●	●	●										
Thayer City Lake (new) -- 45 acres, 2 1/4 miles W, 1/4 mile S of Thayer	●										●			●	●	●		●	●									
Yates Center Lake (old) -- 250 acres, 1/2 mile S of Yates Center	●							●					●	●	●				●							●		●
Yates Center Lake (new) -- 210 acres, 2 miles W, 3 miles S of Yates Center	●										●			●	●		●	●	●							●		●

RIVER ACCESS

Caney River at Grenola														●		●						●						●
Cottonwood River -- low-water dam at Emporia														●		●	●										●	
Cottonwood River at Cottonwood Falls												●		●		●	●										●	
Elk River -- Elk City Reservoir Wildlife Area								●				●		●	●	●		●					●			●	●	
Fall River at Eureka												●	●	●		●	●						●					
Fall River -- low-water dam at Fredonia												●	●	●	●	●							●				●	

Reg 5 cont'

	boat ramps	boat rental	camping	drinking water	dump station	electric hookups	marina	picnic areas	swimming	trailer pads	bluegill	buffalo	bullhead	channel catfish	crappie	flathead catfish	green sunfish	largemouth bass	redear sunfish	sauger	saugeye	smallmouth bass	spotted bass	striped bass	trout	walleye	white bass	wiper
Fall River -- Fall River Reservoir Wildlife Area	●		●									●	●	●	●			●					●				●	
Little Caney River -- low-water dam at Caney	●		●									●	●	●	●	●							●				●	
Marais des Cygnes River -- Marais des Cygnes Wildlife Area			●					●			●	●	●	●	●	●							●			●	●	●
Marais des Cygnes River -- Melvern Reservoir Wildlife Area	●		●									●	●	●	●	●	●						●				●	
Marmaton River -- low-water dam at Fort Scott														●	●	●							●			●	●	
Neosho River -- low-water dam at Burlington												●	●	●	●	●							●			●	●	
Neosho River -- low-water dam at Chanute												●	●	●	●	●							●				●	
Neosho River -- low-water dam at Chetopa			●					●				●	●	●	●	●							●				●	
Neosho River -- low-water dam at Emporia														●		●	●										●	
Neosho River -- low-water dam at Hartford			●					●				●	●	●	●	●							●				●	●
Neosho River -- low-water dam at Iola												●	●	●	●	●							●				●	
Neosho River -- low-water dam at Neosho Falls			●									●	●	●	●	●							●			●	●	
Neosho River -- Neosho Wildlife Area			●									●	●	●	●	●							●				●	
Neosho River -- John Redmond Reservoir Wildlife Area														●		●											●	●
110 Mile Creek above Pomona Reservoir			●											●	●	●										●	●	
Shoal Creek at Galena			●					●			●			●		●	●					●	●					
Spring River -- low-water dam at Baxter Springs								●				●	●	●	●	●		●					●			●	●	
Spring River -- SE of Riverton below Empire Lake												●	●	●	●	●		●					●			●	●	
Spring River -- off K-96 near Kansas-Missouri state line												●	●	●	●	●		●					●			●	●	
Verdigris River -- low-water dams at Coffeyville												●	●	●	●	●		●			●					●	●	●
Verdigris River -- low-water dams at Independence												●	●	●	●	●					●					●	●	●
Verdigris River -- low-water dam at Neodasha	●		●					●				●	●	●	●	●		●			●		●			●	●	
Verdigris River -- Toronto Reservoir Wildlife Area			●											●	●		●					●					●	

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1830 Merchant
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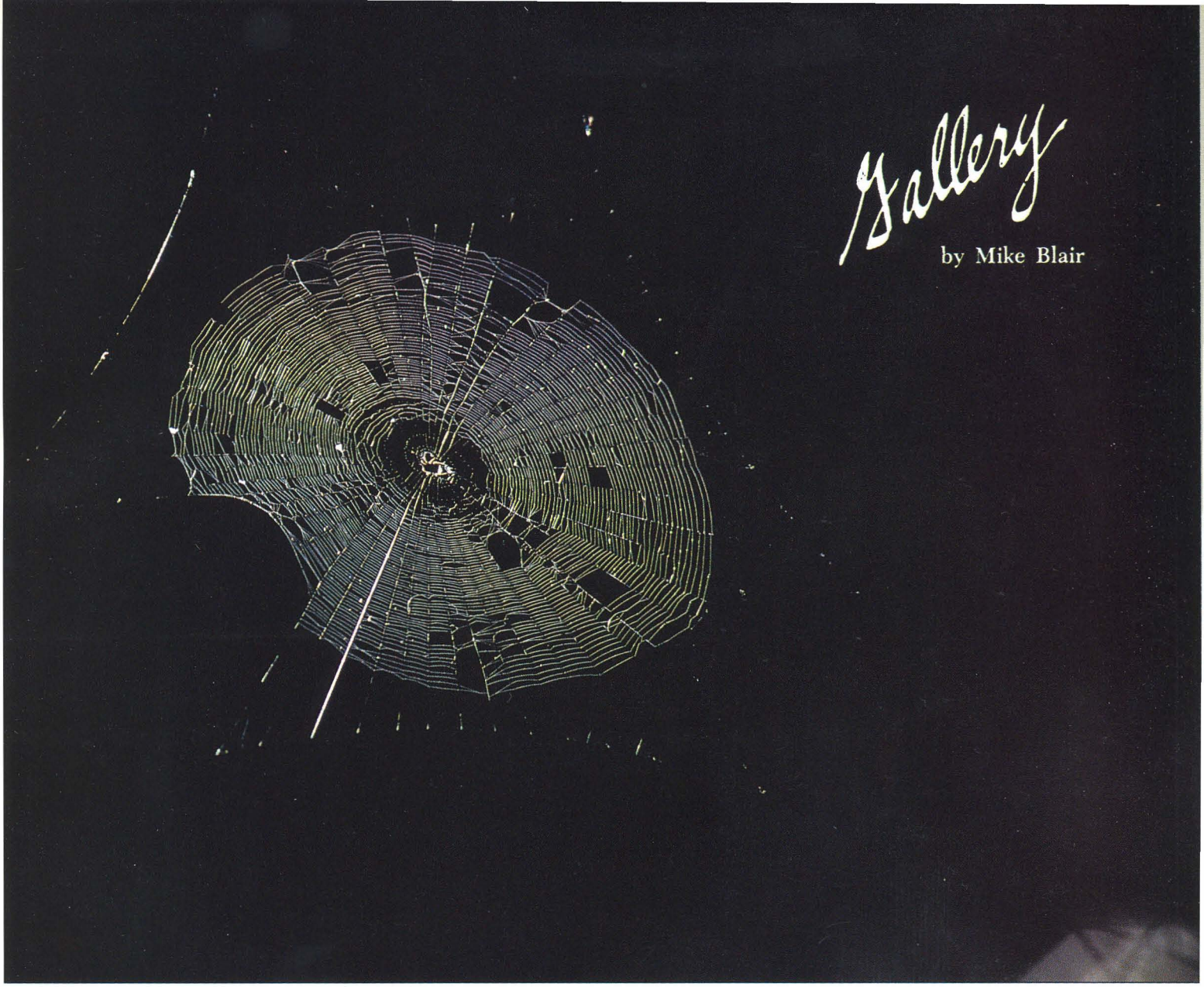
(316) 342-0658

Gallery

by Mike Blair



Webs of beauty. While most of us avoid spiders at any cost, there's no denying that the intricate webs they weave can provide striking works of art. **Above:** 400mm lens, f/8 @ 1/250. **Right:** 105mm lens, f/5.6 @ 1/125.

Left: 200mm micro lens, f/16 @ 1/60. **Below:** 105mm lens, f/5.6 @ 1/250.

WILD CURRENTS

letters

Edited by Mark Shoup

WHAT ABOUT HAWKS?

Editor:

We would like to know more about the red-tailed-hawks, sparrow hawks and falcons of our area in eastern Kansas. For several months last summer, we seldom saw the red-tailed or sparrow hawks.

Do they migrate to other areas during certain seasons of the year? In what type of locations do they nest? Also, I have wondered how long a life span they have.

We watch for them in our parks and along roadsides and find them very fascinating birds of prey.

J. E. Brown
Kansas City

Dear Mr. Brown,

The largest, most widely-distributed and best-known hawk in North America is the red-tailed hawk. They are common along roadways, can be found throughout Kansas, and are deadly on rodents. Although some redtails migrate, many live in the state year-round. We usually have an influx of raptors into the state in winter. They build nests 15-70 feet high in trees.

The bird you call a sparrow hawk is also as known as the American kestrel, the most common falcon in Kansas and the smallest raptor. It nests in both city and country and feeds on insects, small birds and rodents. It, too, can be found in Kansas year round although some do migrate in winter. An opportunist, the kestrel nests in tree cavities, nooks and crannies of buildings and bridges, just about anywhere they find a suitable spot about 30 feet above ground.

Ironically, the only other falcon you might see in the Kansas City area (although rarely) is the endangered peregrine falcon. In recent years they have been reported to nest on tall buildings in downtown metropolitan areas. From this vantage point, they can easily prey on a city's abundant supply of pigeons, which are often nuisances. Their natural nesting habitat is tall cliffs overlooking hunting territory.

Red-tailed hawks have been known to live as long as 17 years in the wild, while kestrels seldom live past 6 or 7 years.

For more detailed information on hawks and falcons, consult a good bird identification book. Also, read "Iron Talons, Hunter's Eye," in the May/June 1990 issue of KANSAS WILDLIFE AND PARKS magazine (Page 39). --*Shoup*

OLD-TIMER'S PRAISE

Editor:

You are doing an excellent job. Congratulations to you on all the beautiful photos and interesting articles. Thank you.

I was born in Kansas on May 23, 1911, so you know that I am an old-timer. Grew up at Kipp, in Saline County, and left Kansas and served in the army during WWII from 1941-45. I have lived in California ever since, until the last two years, which I have spent in Idaho.

I served in the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1935-36 at Camp Jayhawk, near Lawrence; in the Black Hills, South Dakota; and at Camp Bonanza, Idaho. I hope that our new President will bring back the CCC.

I want to thank you for keeping your price so reasonable on your good magazine. Sometime I hope you might write a story on Kansas butterflies.

Ray Henry
Meridian, Idaho

DRAINAGE DEFENDED

Editor:

I have just finished reading the article, "McPherson Valley Wetlands," by Bert Wilson in the Nov./Dec. issue of KANSAS WILDLIFE AND PARKS magazine (Page 21) and found it to be shortsighted on information. Throughout this article, Mr. Wilson continually referred to the drainage, and henceforth, farming of the McPherson Wetlands as a

STICK-A-TICK

Editor [received last December]:

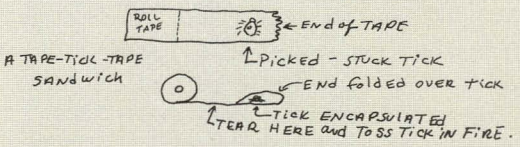
And a very merry "Ya All Tide" season to ya. My favorite wife, Chick, and I are surrounded by ticks of all sizes and colors. We struggled to get rid of them with the tweezers and gasoline jar, the sledge hammer and anvil -- forget those methods.

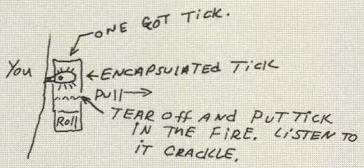
Roll off about 2 feet of 3/4-inch masking tape and re-roll it into a small roll. When you see one of those pesky ticks crawling on you, peel off about 1 inch of tape, press the gummy side of the tape on to the tick, and your "tick is stuck." Now fold the end of your tape back over your tick, and it is encapsulated. Your tick is "plumb got."

Many times you can pick three or more ticks before you fold the tip back. Tear the end off the roll, and regardless of what you do with it, that tick ain't going nowhere.

If the tick is imbedded, gently wrap the tape around the pesky tick and encapsulate it. Then, gently pull until it lets go. Put peroxide on the bite to cleanse and stop the itching. Repeat the peroxide when itching starts up again.

If you have a better method, we would like to hear it. We find this method reliable, sure, quick, effective, sanitary, safe, environmentally safe, cost-efficient and convenient. By the way, this process is not patented, so go on -- use it.





"Me 'n Chick"
Mack and Chick McWilliam
Asbury, Missouri

mistake made by an old farmer who was just land happy.

I wish to inform you that this is not the case. According to the public historic records, the McPherson County Commissioners searched for a person with the courage, ingenuity and funds to accomplish this assignment. John J. Schrag is the man who between 1901-1921 administered this idea and made it a reality.

In order to accomplish such a task, Mr. Schrag incorporated the use of horses, a slip, and a steam shovel that he himself designed and built. (No small task in the present, much less 80 years ago.) At the time, Mr. Schrag accepted the challenge and furnished the money and other resources to drain this land and provide much-needed farm acreage for the new westwardly-mobile frontier.

I would like to quote Mr. Wilson's final paragraph: "We have much to be proud of in the history of our state; however, every generation makes mistakes that future generations must correct." I can only guess what the next generation is going to make of these wetland restoration plans, and maybe they too will have to correct another generation's "mistake."

Rynnell R. Schrag
Hesston

Dear Mr. Schrag,

In no way was the McPherson Wetland article meant to belittle John J. Schrag. Even a pure environmentalist would have to admire the ingenuity and hard work it took to build the ditch. There was a line in the article that defended Schrag's actions on Page 23, saying " . . . little was known about the benefits of wetlands and farm land was needed for food production."

We do believe it was a mistake to drain and fill wetlands. Today, we've learned that wetlands can prevent or lessen the impact of floods; they purify the water; they help refill water tables; they prevent pollution from spreading to other waterways; and last but certainly not least, wetlands provide hundreds of wildlife species a place to live. Wetlands are perhaps our most important and life-rich habitat.

Eighty years ago, wetlands weren't so highly regarded. There were twice as many wetland acres then, so the loss of one wasn't nearly as critical then. Almost universally, it was considered good to transfer wetlands into farm ground. Today's farming techniques are much more efficient, as evidenced by USDA farm programs designed to reduce crop surpluses.

I hope, we've learned a lesson. Without wetlands, our landscape might be an arid, desolate and lifeless one. I hope we'd miss the honking of geese in the fall, the whistling wings of ducks, the colorful flocks of shorebirds, or the strange purring calls of sandhill cranes. With no wetlands, all these wild treasures would soon disappear. I hope future generations will commend us for our wisdom and continue to preserve wetlands.

I would never condemn John J. Schrag for his work 80 years ago. But I do commend the people who have discovered a lost treasure and long for its return. I think wetlands are just such a treasure. --*Miller*

NONRESIDENT NOTE

Editor:

I am writing with both concern and disappointment about possible changes in deer hunting regulations in Kansas. When I read the article "Iowa Bans Kansans," in the Nov./Dec. issue of KANSAS WILDLIFE AND PARKS magazine (Page 36), it concerned me that Wildlife and Parks would allocate 5 percent of the Kansas firearms permits to nonresidents.

Being a lifetime resident of Kansas and the holder of a lifetime hunting license and an avid deer hunter, I was naturally disappointed to be refused a permit for 1992; however, reading the article really rubbed the wrong way.

Not until I heard a newscast on this topic, which basically said the same thing as the article, did I decide to write. I am not sure how many Kansas hunters feel the same way, but I am sure it would be considerable.

The economics of out-of-state monies coming to Kansas appears to have higher priority to our authorities than rewarding Kansas citizens who have made a deer season possible in Kansas through their hunting license and tax dollars.

In many instances, the issuance of permits to out-of-state hunters would make for an unsafe situation by concentrating larger numbers of hunters on public areas.

I would like to make it clear that I am not so much against nonresident hunters as that I don't feel it to be proper to offer nonresident deer permits until firearm deer permits are available to all Kansans upon request.

Dennis Arnberger
Great Bend

Dear Mr. Arnberger:

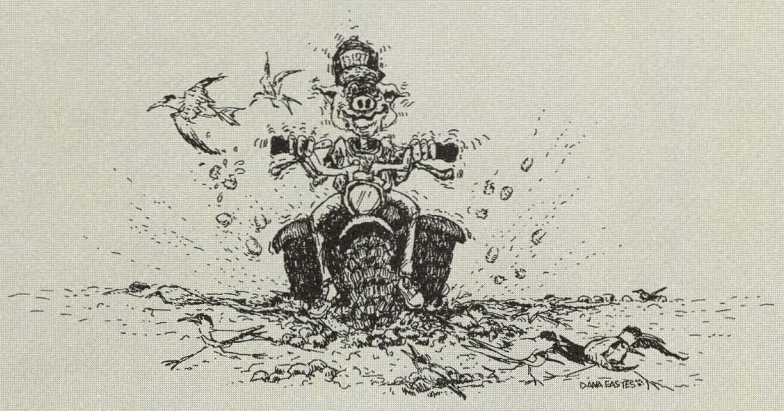
You are not alone in your concern. In fact, you express well what the majority of those opposed to nonresident deer permits feel.

However, as Secretary Ensley said in the Jan./Feb. issue of KANSAS WILDLIFE AND PARKS (Page 36), "Currently, we have a number of deer management units where 'any deer' and 'buck only' permits are left over after the regular firearms permit drawing. These are the areas where we can allow nonresident permits without affecting resident hunting opportunity."

Obviously Unit 5, which includes Great Bend, is not one of these areas: only 620 permits were offered in 1992, and none were left over. For this reason, the agency is requesting that 0 percent to 5 percent of permits allocated be offered to nonresidents, in addition to those offered Kansans. This would be applied on a unit-by-unit basis, and the 0 percent would logically apply in units with no leftover permits.

In answer to your safety concern, there is no evidence to suggest that nonresidents will hunt mainly on public land. The majority of pheasant hunters use private land, and I'm sure most hunters paying the price of a nonresident permit ($200 plus $60 for a nonresident hunting license) will take the time to obtain permission on private ground before investing in a trip to Kansas.

In short, people in this agency realize and appreciate the contributions of Kansas sportsmen to our resources. We applaud them frequently in this magazine and in other publications, and we would not undercut their interests for any reason. In fact, our nonresident deer hunting proposal has been carefully designed to protect the opportunities of resident deer hunters and the deer herd, while allowing a limited number of nonresidents. --*Shoup*



T&E TAKES ATV

Last summer, a Columbus, Neb., man pleaded "no contest" in Platte County Court for violating Nebraska's Endangered Species Act. He was ordered to pay a fine and forfeit his three-wheeled all-terrain vehicle (ATV).

The man had driven his ATV through a colony of nesting least terns and piping plovers in a sand pit along the Platte River on June 6. Least terns are on both state and federal lists of endangered species. Piping plovers are on both lists as threatened species. According to Nebraska Game and Parks Commission biologists, signs were posted at the colony declaring the area off limits.

In addition to losing his ATV, the man was ordered to pay a $500 fine. [Forfeiture of equipment and vehicles used in committing such crimes is common in Kansas, as well.] --*The Hound and Hunter*

SONGBIRD SILENCE

Last Sept. 12, Mrs. Mayree Mangus watched a robin fall dead from a tree in her yard in Minneapolis, Ks. When she went to see about the bird, she noticed several other birds laying around her yard, so she called the Minneapolis Police Department.

Officer Chancy Smith was sent to the Mangus residence to investigate. Mangus told Smith that the birds would drink from the water running down the gutter and get sick. She also said that this same thing had happened two years earlier and that there were about 25 or 30 dead birds in her yard.

Smith followed the water up the street to a house where automatic sprinklers were running. At this residence, he observed a fine, bluish granular substance over the entire sidewalk, driveway and down the curb and gutter around the residence. He collected samples and contacted the county extension agent, who identified the substance as Furadan, a chemical meant for crop use.

Smith then asked the Minneapolis police to contact a Wildlife and Parks conservation officer, and I [Larry Stones] drove to the scene from Glen Elder State Park. Before I left Glen Elder, however, I asked Smith to take pictures, collect samples of the granules and dead birds, and interview neighbors. When I arrived on the scene, Smith and I talked with the neighbors again, and we investigated the area and found even more dead birds. Certain that the polluted water was the source of the bird-kill, Smith contacted Chuck Moore, assistant director of emergency preparedness. Moore brought a fire truck to the scene and flooded the area in an effort to remove the toxic substance.

Even after the area was flooded, bluish-purple granules could be seen in the cracks in the drive and sidewalks.

Furadan had apparently been applied to the lawn as a grub worm preventative, but this controlled crop-use chemical has strict guidelines for underground application. It is meant for use only on crops such as corn, not on residential lawns.

The owner of the property was cited for violation of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (unlawfully taking or killing migratory birds). This is a federal violation, and the property owner was fined $475.

This entire case exhibits how well separate law enforcement agencies can work together. The Minneapolis Police Department, the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the State Board of Agriculture and the Department of Health and Environment all worked on the case together. Officer Smith is to be commended for the way he handled this problem. Environmental abuse is something we all need to be aware of, and the lasting effects are something our children and grandchildren will have to live with, if we still have a liveable environment. --*Larry Stones, conservation officer, Kirwin*

THAT YOU?

It wasn't exactly the call of the wild, but Wildlife and Parks conservation officer Dudley Foster had an interesting experience "calling" poachers last December. Foster and fellow conservation officer Harley McDaniel had staked out an untagged, freshly shot and field dressed deer north of Pittsburg, hoping the suspect would return to retrieve the deer.

After a long wait, they prepared to leave the area for awhile. Foster decided to walk to the road to see if it was clear before they drove out of the dark field with their headlights off. His plan was to yell back to McDaniel when he reached the road, provided no one was around. When he reached the road, the coast appeared to be clear.

"Harley!" he yelled back to the field.

"Yeah!" McDaniel hollered back.

"Yeah!" yet another voice repsonded.

Curious, Foster started walking toward the second voice. "What are you doing?" Foster questioned

the darkness.

"Deer hunting!" came the reply.

The man behind the voice in the dark was charged with hunting deer without a deer permit, failure to wear blaze orange and hunting without a hunting license.

For Foster, this technique was a first. "I've called in ducks and rattled in deer, but this is the first time I've called in a poacher." --*Shoup*

YEAR OF THE NATIVE

Millions of endangered plants and animals could disappear if primitive peoples are driven off their territory and assimilated into dominant cultures around the world, says a Worldwatch Institute report. North and South American Indians, Australian aborigines, African Bushmen, ethnic Mongolians, Afghan nomads, and forest people of the Philippines and Malaysia all possess unique knowledge that could be valuable to mankind, according to the report.

"We cannot protect all of the world's environment without them," said author Alan Thein Durning, a senior researcher at the nonprofit group.

For example, the forest-dwelling Kpelle of Liberia sow wide varieties of crops that form a gene pool that Western scientists need to protect against pests and changing soil and climate conditions, Durning said. They also have unique knowledge of plant-based medicines that may be used by modern science.

Indigenous groups are organizing to protect themselves and win legal control of their land, and the United Nations is considering a universal declaration of their rights to help guide states in protecting them. The U.N. General Assembly and the World Bank are declaring 1993 the International Year of the World's Indigenous People, pledging to push protection of cultural minorities around the world.

As many as 5,000 groups guard 12 percent of the Earth's land area. They differ from the rest of humanity because they live closer to the earth and remain distinct from their countries' dominant cultures.

The World Bank estimates that 300 million indigenous or tribal people live in 70 countries encompassing nearly all types of climate and terrain. "Most consider themselves caretakers, not owners, of the land," Durning said. --*Associated Press*

ANTI-HUNT DEFEAT

Arizona voters overwhelmingly defeated a controversial proposition last October. Proposition 200 was designed to appear as an amendment with the primary objective of eliminating the use of leghold traps on Arizona state lands. However, this proposition contained a deceptive statement that could have been utilized to outlaw sport fishing and hunting on all nonprivate lands in Arizona. --*Sport Fishing Institute Bulletin*

A SKUNK BY ANY OTHER NAME . . .

Thought you'd heard it all when it comes to false claims and half-truths circulated by Endangered Species Act (ESA) opponents? Think again. The Abundant Wildlife Society distorts the act and endangered species issues to unrecognizable proportions.

This group labels environmental organizations as "anti-God," "anti-American" and "anti-gun."

But where the Abundant Wildlife Society goes above and beyond the normal anti-environmental rhetoric is in its stance on predators. While habitat destruction, introduced species and pollution are scientifically proven causes of species decline, this group rewrites the facts and blames predators as the primary reason for the decline of songbirds and big-game species. Their viewpoint is summed up with the analogy, "The predator is to wildlife what the weeds are to the farmer and what the criminal is to mankind."

This group targets one audience in particular -- sportsmen and women -- by distributing to sporting goods shops flyers that espouse the group's claims. They have also attempted to reach the general public through editorials placed in local newspapers from Pennsylvania to Missouri. As absurd as this group's allegations about predators are, people unfamiliar with the interconnectedness of wildlife believe them.

To set such stories straight and prevent the general public from being misled, conservationists must respond to these and other tactics. Talking rationally to the managers of the stores where such propaganda is distributed is one effective way; writing letters to the editor and editorials for local newspapers is another way.

Recovery efforts for the wolf, the grizzly bear, the peregrine falcon and other endangered predators could be hindered if the general public takes for fact the predator-bashing propaganda of the Abundant Wildlife Society and related groups. --*Leslie TeWinkel, The Leader*

CONSERVATION PREZ?

President Bill Clinton doesn't need to wait for legislation to encourage conservation, according to Marchant Wentworth, legislative director for the Izaak Walton League of America. "He can make some simple changes to encourage conservation within the first month of his term," says Wentworth.

"First, take the White House solar collectors out of storage," notes Wentworth. "Former President Jimmy Carter's solar collectors were mothballed when he left D.C -- like the programs to encourage solar and renewable energy. Reinstalling the solar collectors on the White House roof would breathe new life into these programs and give new hope to the companies that are struggling to compete with our subsidized coal, oil, gas and nuclear industries."

Second, Wentworth recommended making the controversial Council on Competitiveness "really about competition." The current council protects inefficient technologies and preserves the old thinking that stifles real competition, he explained, adding, "Instead, the council should encourage healthy competition to foster green technologies, global communication and reasonable economic development."

Encouraging use of alternative transportation is an easy third activity the new president could do for conservation. Currently, some federal agencies provide workers with free or subsidized parking.

"Clinton should encourage agencies to

provide incentives to workers to bike, walk or take mass transit to work," Wentworth says. "The federal government also should work with state and local governments to make transit more reliable, affordable and safe."

Fourth on Wentworth's list of to-do's for Clinton is to revamp the 1994 budget to include more cash for conservation. Monies in dedicated user-fee funds that have been impounded should be released, says Wentworth, and programs such as the Wetlands Reserve Program should be adequately funded and expanded. --*Izaak Walton League of America's "Tip Sheet"*

ESA FACTS

The following are the most common myths about the Endangered Species Act (ESA):

Myth: The Endangered Species Act blocks economic development.

Fact: Of the 48,000 consultations required under the ESA between 1979 and 1986 in order to complete federal projects, fewer than 1 percent resulted in the finding that a species would be jeopardized by a proposed development, and only one-tenth of 1 percent were actually stopped.

Myth: Reviewing the economic impacts of species protection versus development is not allowed under the ESA.

Fact: The current language of the ESA requires the Secretary of the Interior to include economic considerations when designating critical habitat for endangered species, and if he concludes that the costs outweigh the benefits, he may exclude an area from critical habitat designation unless the habitat is necessary to prevent extinction. When such a situation arises, he may convene the so-called "God Squad," a committee of cabinet-level officials, to determine whether or not to exclude a species from listing.

Myth: The ESA does not take into account the human cost of species protection.

Fact: Resource abusers cite the delta smelt in California's San Joaquin and Sacramento rivers as an example of putting a species' needs before human welfare. They claim that protection of the smelt will drastically reduce the amount of water that can be diverted from the rivers for human use, and imply that this will create a water shortage for 20 million Californians. They do not mention that 80 percent to 85 percent of the water is already diverted for the use of agribusiness and is heavily subsidized by taxpayers. Nor do they mention that the water diversions are economically and environmentally unsustainable and that Californians are paying an economic price for wasteful water use by industry. In sum, the human cost of business as usual is considerably higher than that required for protection of the smelt.

Myth: Complying with the ESA makes it too expensive for industry to do business.

Fact: Every year, many seas turtles were being killed when they were accidentally caught in shrimpers' nets. The shrimpers refused to use specially designed turtle excluder devices that free turtles from the nets, saying they were too expensive and reduced the shrimp catch. But under the ESA, shrimpers were finally forced to use the devices. The cost of the devices has been relatively low, and the loss of shrimp economically insignificant.

Myth: Protecting endangered species costs jobs.

Fact: Although the protection of endangered species can require economic adjustments, the ESA is often blamed for job loss that results from other causes. For example, the resource abusers claim that listing the northern spotted owl in the Pacific Northwest has resulted in enormous job losses. However, the timber industry has eliminated 26,000 jobs since 1979 while increasing output of their products. In this case, automation and the export of raw logs is costing more jobs than any other challenge facing timber workers. In addition, when the ancient forest are liquidated -- in 10 years if the resource abuse movement has its way -- more timber jobs will be lost. --*National Audubon Society*

ENVIROMENTALITY

I can't fool my grandchildren with long, thundering outdoor stories if I don't even know the small brown bird in the lilacs. --*John Madson*

ZEBRA MUSSELS INVADE ARK RIVER

According to recent information from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, a "Zebra Mussel Watch" has been issued for midwestern states. The small barnacle-sized mussel is an exotic brachiopod that some conservationists fear could threaten aquatic ecosystems and damage industry.

The zebra mussel escaped from its homeland in the Black and Caspian seas in the 1700s and emigrated to western Europe. From there, it later hitched a ride across the Atlantic in the ballast tanks of ships and entered the St. Lawrence Seaway. By 1988, it had reached the Great Lakes, and early last year was reported in the Mississippi River.

In the fall of 1992, zebra mussels were found in the Arkansas River at the border of Oklahoma and Arkansas.

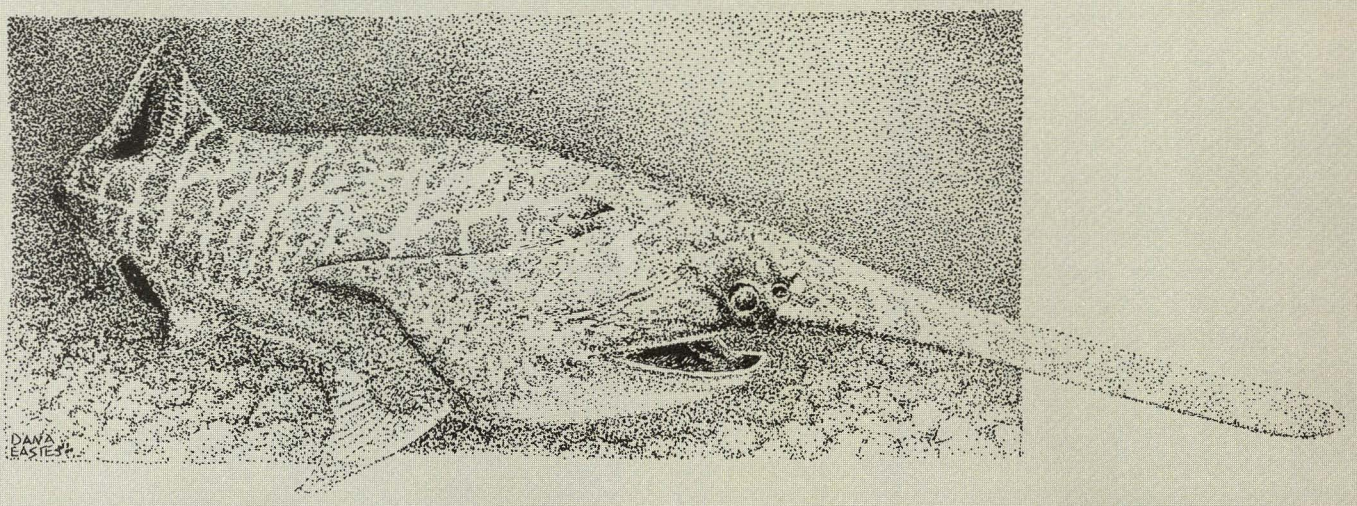
Because of their sheer numbers (females can produce 100,000 eggs per season) and the fact that they grow in clusters, zebra mussels can smother native freshwater mussel beds. Other wildlife are vulnerable, too. Zebra mussels are filter feeders, gleaning tiny particles of organic food from the surrounding water. Some observers fear they will deplete the supply of food available to shad, paddlefish and other native species.

Zebra mussels look like small clams with yellow or brown D-shaped shells, usually with dark- and light-colored stripes. Most are smaller than 1 inch long.

The small mussel may also pose a multibillion-dollar threat to industry, agriculture and municipal water supplies by collecting on piping and water supply systems and clogging or destroying them.

Unlike larvae of most freshwater mussels, young zebra mussels don't attach to fish or other hosts prior to adulthood. Consequently, they can easily spread anywhere that water currents, wildlife or human activities take them. One of the zebra mussel's most effective means of dispersion is the same one that got it to North America -- travelling in bilge water of boats.

Kansas boaters who visit Arkansas, Missouri and Oklahoma can help prevent the spread of zebra mussels to Kansas by removing all water from boats before they are moved from one body of water to another. Zebra mussel larvae are so small they can live in a teaspoon of water, so live-wells, pumping systems, bilges and engine cooling systems should be flushed with hot tap water. Boat bodies and all equipment that comes in contact with the water should be cleaned before moving. --*Shoup*



GO FOR THE GIANTS

Every fisherman loves to catch fish, and plenty of Kansas fishermen are big-fish specialists. The rich rivers and reservoirs produce some huge specimens of both native and introduced species.

The flathead catfish is perhaps the most sought after big fish in Kansas and one of the largest. Native to the state's rivers and streams, flatheads can grow to enormous weights. The state record, caught in 1990, weighed 88 pounds, but larger flatheads are reportedly swimming in Kansas.

Usually associated with large, slow-flowing rivers (the Cottonwood, Kansas, Neosho, Osage and Verdigris, for example) the flathead has adapted well to lakes and reservoirs these rivers flow into. In fact, the most recent state record was taken from Pomona Reservoir in northeast Kansas. Excellent flathead fishing can also be found in John Redmond, Lovewell, Toronto, Tuttle Creek and other older Kansas reservoirs. Banklines and trotlines are the most popular flathead angling methods, although rod and reel may be the most exciting way to land the big cat.

The flathead catfish isn't a bottom scavenger like the channel cat or bullhead, but rather an efficient nighttime predator. Veteran flathead fanatics use only live bait, some opting for carp or goldfish up to a foot long. Every summer, numerous 30- to 70-pound flatheads are caught all across the state.

Perhaps the most fun way to catch flatheads is the least known -- casting lures along rip-rap shoreline in midsummer. The flatheads move into the crevices and holes created by the rip-rap, and fishermen pulling shad-imitation crankbaits just over the rocks are often treated to arm-jolting strikes. Many of the northeast Kansas reservoirs have rip-rapped causeways or dams that harbor big flatheads.

The daily creel limit for flathead is five, and the possession limit is 15.

Another whiskered giant that swims Kansas waters is the blue catfish. Although records from the turn of the century report 150-pound and larger blue cats, the state record, caught on rod and reel in 1988, weighed 82 pounds. Blue cats are common in some of the northeastern rivers, particularly the Kansas, and are also taken strictly on live bait.

The daily creel limit for blue catfish is 10, with a possession limit of 30.

Each March, fishermen gather at two dams in southeast Kansas to catch the prehistoric-looking paddlefish. Catches of 25- to 60-pounds are common. These plankton-feeding monsters are only caught by snagging, and the season is open for a few weeks each spring on the Neosho River near Chetopa and on the Marais des Cygnes River at the Osawatomie Dam. Large saltwater gear is necessary to cast the heavy weights and land the large fish in the current. The white, firm flesh is boneless and delicious.

The final big-fish attraction for Kansas anglers is the freshwater striped bass. Stocked into select reservoirs in the early 1970s, the striper has adapted very well in two of them: Cheney, near Wichita, and Wilson, near Russell. The state record striper weighed 43 1/2 pounds and was taken with live bait at Wilson Reservoir. Cheney has produced several over 30 pounds, and biologists have released bigger fish from test nets at both reservoirs.

The striper is particularly popular because of the hard fight it puts up, characterized by long, sizzling runs that test the drag of even the most expensive reels. Two popular methods for catching stripers include trolling large crankbaits and drifting live bait. Summertime anglers have found that vertically jigging spoons near deep-water structure can also produce good catches of stripers. Perhaps the most exciting fishing is when, on rare occasions, a school of stripers corrals a school of shad near the surface. The resulting feeding frenzy is a fishermen's dream as stripers hit anything in front of them.

In most lakes where stripers are found, the daily creel limit is two, with a possession limit of six. However, at Cheney Reservoir, the daily creel limit is two stripers, two wipers or one of each. *--Miller*

PANFISH LOCAL LAKES

Small community lakes fill an important niche in the rich blend of fishing waters in Kansas. Normally, since they're owned and operated by local city or county governments, they're located just a short drive from town. Although community lakes in Kansas range in size from one acre to 1,200 acres, most are small enough to welcome anglers of all ages and levels of experience.

Community lakes are ideal places to introduce novice anglers to the sport. Panfish such as bluegill, green sunfish, crappie, and bullhead catfish are plentiful and easily caught. For anglers just learning the ropes, that's an

important consideration. Also, since community lakes are generally close to town, it's easier to give developing anglers frequent but short doses of the fishing experience.

Above all, panfishing is just plain fun. Pound for pound, panfish are among the scrappiest fighters that swim. That helps explain why even the most experienced and specialized gamefish anglers keep coming back to panfish to relive some of their earliest fishing experiences. Unlike the sophisticated gear sometimes required for striped bass, walleye, largemouth bass or the other "glamour" species, panfishing is characterized by its simplicity. Appropriately, a few simple rules can improve panfishing success.

Fishing equipment should be simple and easy to use. A spincast reel on a light action rod is perfect for novice anglers and is ideally suited to panfishing. A cane pole, bobber, hook and worm will catch fish as well as the most sophisticated fishing gear. It's normally best to match the tackle to the fish. For panfish, that means light or ultralight tackle, light line (2- to 6-pound test), small sinkers and bobbers, and small (size 6 to 10) hooks.

Bluegill will readily take natural baits such as crickets, worms, and grasshoppers threaded onto a long-shanked bait hook. Attach a bobber a couple of feet above the bait and cast out. Experiment with the depth of the bait until you locate them. Green sunfish will readily take a worm-baited hook, too, as well as small spinners fished around shoreline weed beds or timber. Crappie bite best on small jigs, or jigs and minnows, fished in and around underwater brushpiles. Bullheads are bottom feeders, so send a worm-baited hook to the bottom and wait for a bullhead to grab it.

If kids get bored, break up the day by taking short walks along nearby streams, woods, and prairies.

Don't forget to have the right licenses. Kansas law requires Kansas residents age 16 to 65 possess a state fishing license, unless exempt by law. (Consult the annual Fishing Regulations Summary.) Nonresidents 16 years and older must also have either an annual or short-term Kansas fishing license. An additional permit is required to fish most community lakes, and it's important to remember that most community lakes have special length and creel limits for certain species. Check with the local county clerk for details. -- *Mathews*

UNDER CURRENTS

A Richness of Distraction

by Mark Shoup

In late January, it's past time to pull my tree stand. Would Logan like to go?

"Yes! Yes!" With a four-year-old around, company is no problem, but I have forgotten that such outtings tend to define themselves. Just a little tree-climbing adventure, I think.

It's a blinding, 50-degree day -- an aberration for this winter. For the first time in three months, the earth is mostly snow-free. As we bounce along a county road, Logan spots a familiar pasture.

"That's where we one time went to get our Christmas tree." And farther along, "That's where we got our this-year's tree. It was snowing!"

"That's right, Bud," I proudly note my boy's prodigious memory as we pull onto a muddy road. "I'd almost forgotten." As we plow through puddles, I feel the day expanding, defining itself.

Finally, I stop the truck. We step into the warm sun, and I point to a shelterbelt in a field of grass and explain where we were going.

"Oh! A honeybee landed on my boot!" Logan exclaims.

"It did? Were you afraid?"

"No. It thought I was a flower."

It's a day for distractions. As we cross the field, Logan spots tracks in the lingering patches of snow.

"I saw some BIG tracks right beside me," he says. "I think it's maybe a boot track. No, it's not a boot track."

"It's not? Well, what is it?"

"Probably it's some kind of poky creature."

"Maybe it's the abominable snowman." I wait for a response.

"Daddy, are there any dangers out here?"

"No, Bud," I assure him. "Just the weather, and today is a fine day."

Inside the belt, the ground is completely snow-covered, and tracks -- mostly old ones -- are visible everywhere. It's a small outdoor classroom.

"Look, Logan. Rabbit poop!" I'm excited for his sake. "We call wildlife poop 'scat'." I find a different pile of scat. "Look at this. You know what it is?"

"Scat!" he answers proudly.

"That's right, but this scat is much bigger. It's deer scat."

"Why did it poop in its tracks?"

"Well, Bud, a deer just poops anywhere it wants to."

Right below my tree stand, I discover an owl pellet.

"This is like scat only it comes from the other end of the animal. How is this different from that other scat?"

"Because it has bones in it."

I turn the pellet over and examine the bones. "The owl eats a bird or other animal and throws up the bones and feathers or fur in a pellet."

"Probably bat bones," he replies.

I look at him and laugh. "Well, I'd better get my stand."

While Logan inspects the owl pellet, I climb the tree, all the while describing the wildlife I saw from this stand last fall -- a red-tailed hawk just above me, a Cooper's hawk gliding through the cedars below me, woodpeckers and squirrels within arms reach, quail "disappearing" into the leaves as an owl lands in the trees above.

Before I know it, I'm back on the ground, and we are heading up the shelterbelt just to see what we can see. We find coyote tracks with clear claw marks, and I explain that dogs and coyotes -- unlike bobcats -- cannot retract their claws. Then we find pheasant tracks, rabbit tracks, a squirrel scratching. Near the end of the belt, we flush a great-horned owl.

"I didn't see its horns," Logan wonders as I explain. "Why is it out at day?"

Questions, answers -- perhaps not always correct. I love it. As we leave the shelterbelt, we pick three locust beans, two with deer nibble marks.

Back at the truck, we pull away beneath a cluster of redwing blackbirds, and a symphony of birdsong sends us homeward. As my son falls asleep on my arm, I sigh. A perfectly planned outting, I think.

SPRING TOM TRADITION

As the night sky brightened ever so slightly, I could just make out the outline of thick timber barely 150 yards away. I cupped my hands around my mouth and hooted: ""Who cooks for you, who cooks for you, who cooks for you all." The barred owl imitation echoed through the timber, and then the hoped-for response returned -- a tom turkey gobbled. Then another sounded off just to the north of the first, then two more and then a double gobble that I couldn't quite locate. My skin tingled, and I was shaky with excitement and anticipation of the morning's hunt.

Every turkey hunter dreams of such a morning. Lots of toms that weren't bashful about making noise. I look forward to these spring mornings more now than I did 10 years ago when I first started hunting turkeys. Ten years ago, I didn't know what to expect from turkey hunting. It was relatively new to Kansas. Today, Kansas turkey hunters are enjoying the benefits of one of the most successful wildlife management programs in history. The turkey population has actually grown faster than the hunting tradition. Last spring 17,000 spring gobbler permits were sold. That's a healthy increase from only 10,000 just three years before, but the success rate for spring hunters has stayed nearly 50 percent.

Nearly every county has wild turkeys and two subspecies, the Rio Grande and the eastern, are common in their respective ranges.

Hunters in the western three-fourths of the state chase the Rio Grande subspecies. The Rio Grande is distinguished by the buff-colored tail feathers and a preference for open country. Equally at home along a wooded stream or in the middle of a sagebrush pasture, the Rio relies on seeing danger at a distance. The eastern subspecies, however, is much more inclined to inhabit thick hardwood timber stands. Usually thought of as a warier bird, the eastern is legendary for being tough to fool with a call.

Turkeys in Kansas have been a pleasant surprise. During the reintroduction program, it was assumed that the amount of river and stream-side habitat would limit the number of turkeys. However, as trap and transplant efforts have continued, turkeys have shown to be remarkably adaptable, taking up residence in abandoned farmsteads, shelterbelts and other timbered areas. Large winter flocks of up to 400 birds often gather and provide great wildlife viewing opportunities through the cold months. In the spring, however, the flocks break up and spread out across the country.

In the early years of Kansas turkey hunting, access to land with turkeys was limited by the small number of birds. It was generally thought to be nearly impossible to get permission to hunt on private ground. However, as the statewide population increased, and after the birds scatter each spring, most areas of good habitat have the potential to offer good hunting opportunities. This includes many public areas.

Turkeys are highly mobile creatures, and may move miles from wintering ground to spring nesting areas. Hunters who spend considerable time scouting a month or so before the season will find areas with good numbers of birds. It's also common for toms to move miles during the breeding season in search of unattached hens. An area that one day held no turkeys can provide good hunting the next.

Scouting also pays off if the hunter is able to observe birds and their movement. Knowing where the birds feed, loaf and roost can be valuable when you're deciding where to set up and hunt in the predawn darkness. Toms will often favor an open hilltop or ridge to strut each morning. It's not uncommon for the bird to fly down and gobble and strut just after sunrise from this area. A hunter who knows this can set a decoy and call near the strutting area and stand a good chance of fooling the tom.

Being in the right place may be the most important facet of spring hunting, but good camouflage and skill with the call are also critical to success. Good camouflage lets the hunter blend in with the surrounding vegetation, which varies from region to region. Perhaps the most important factors in hiding are to break your outline with brush or a tree to your back, covering your face and hands and holding as still as possible. A turkey's sharp vision will surely catch the hunter who moves too quickly or at the wrong time.

Calling must be learned and practiced. It's perhaps best to learn from an experienced caller, but excellent videos and audio cassettes are available. Practice to become proficient then spend any time you can in the field listening to the real thing. After that, it becomes a matter of experience: hunting gobblers and learning how each reacts to the call. Even veteran turkey hunters learn each time out.

The recent growth in interest in Kansas turkey hunting attests not only to the growing turkey population, but also to the enjoyment the sport provides. Last spring, more than 16,500 Kansas hunters took almost 8,900 toms, nearly double the 1989 harvest. This is a tremendous increase from the first season in 1974, when 308 hunters killed 123 birds.

This spring, an unlimited number of permits are available in Unit 2, which includes all of Kansas except the southwest (Unit 1), where only 100 permits were issued. Landowners in Unit 1 who were unsuccessful in the drawing for that area may purchase hunt-own-land permits from the Pratt Operations Office for $10.50. Unit 2 permits are sold over the counter at select Wildlife and Parks offices for $20.50, until 5 p.m. May 7. The season runs April 14-May 9.

Few things can be compared to the feeling the hunter gets when a tom thunders out a gobble in the still, early-morning woods in response to a call. Mounting anticipation is truly a rush as the unseen bird gets closer to the caller. It's never easy to fool the keen-eyed wild turkey, but few of the really good things in life are easy. -- *Miller*

COLEMAN SPONSORS STAMP

Wichita's Coleman Company has become the first corporate state sponsor of the Department of the Interior's Junior Duck Stamp contest, an environmental and art education program.

This joint effort among the Coleman Company, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Federal Duck Stamp Program will serve as a model for private-public partnerships in other states holding Junior Duck Stamp Contests.

To find out more about becoming a corporate state sponsor of the Junior Duck Stamp Program, or more about the program in general, contact the Federal Duck Stamp Program, USFWS, 1849 C Street NW, Room 2058, Washington, DC 20240, (202) 208-4354. *--Department of Interior release*

FOXY HUNTER

When stalking prey, the red fox (Vulpes vulpes) may run and pounce, stalk and pounce, or even "nap and pounce." When a fox pounces and misses, it sometimes curls up and appears to sleep. After a time, the prey may reappear, and you know what happens next.

The main part of the fox's diet is rabbits and mice. Mice are eaten whole after the bones are crushed. Birds are also swallowed whole, but only after feathers have been removed. They eat carrion occasionally, but it must be fresh. In warmer months, the fox diet includes a variety of insects and plants, as well as turtles and snakes. Favorite snacks are grasshoppers, crickets, beetles, blackberries, grapes, strawberries, raspberries, apples, persimmons and mulberries.

When food is plentiful, the fox kills more than it can eat. The surplus is covered or buried and marked with urine, but the fox may or may not return to the food cache. If it does, the motive is not necessarily hunger. Sometimes, the fox plays with the food and then moves on.

In the wild, foxes live as long as 10 years. Males may weigh as much as 15 pounds, and females are slightly smaller.

Except during the breeding season, the fox does not have a special home to which it returns at night. They prefer open areas close to forest borders. Dens are usually the abandoned burrow of some mammal like the groundhog, but the female fox will dig a burrow if necessary. Four or five trails may approach the den, but the entrance generally faces the sun. Some fox families use two dens that may be a mile apart. Occasionally, some young are moved to the second den, and the parents maintain both dens.

Because the fox uses the same paths repeatedly, it is not extremely difficult to track. Look for fur along the trail. The fox uses its teeth for grooming, discarding the removed fur. *--Laura Gray, Martha Lafitte Thompson Nature Sanctuary*

MOUSE PATROLLER

It was during an annual Christmas Bird Count for the Southeast Kansas Audubon Society Chapter a few years ago that the best birds of the day were spotted. They were three short-eared owls. Perched like sentinels on top of wooden posts, they seemed to be guarding an open meadow. Then we saw one go on patrol, flying low over the field in search of mice.

I wondered where the birds had come from -- possibly from the prairies of southern Canada. Short-eared owls are found nearly worldwide. However, these birds probably had wandered south to escape the thick blankets of snow that conceal their mouse meals in the northland.

These yellow-eyed predators get their name from the short feather tufts on their heads. The feather tufts are often referred to as ears and are so short that they may not be noticed by the casual observer. The short-eared owl has a 3 1/2-foot wing span and an unusual flopping style of flight. Like the northern harrier, this owl prefers to fly low over the ground while hunting for rodents. Look for the tawny brown streaks and the dark patch at the bend of the wing as identification marks.

Short-eared owls are different from the tree-loving, nocturnal owls. They shun the woods and will hunt over meadows, prairies and marshes at twilight or even midday. They nest on the ground, often laying four to seven eggs, depending on the abundance of rodents in the area. The short-eared owl is declining over most of its range and is listed as a species in need of conservation (SINC) in Kansas because its status as a nesting bird is uncertain.

Short-eared owls are nomadic during migration and will hunt in groups. They often congregate where there are concentrations of small rodents. For instance, when northern England was experiencing a great plague of field mice in 1890, 400 pairs of owls were on hand to help alleviate the problem. In 1913, a California rodent plague subsided only when owls appeared in force. Some people shot a number of short-eared owls before they realized they were terminating one of nature's most efficient and economical pest exterminators.

The short-eared owl is also known as the bog-trotter and will inhabit Kansas statewide from mid October to mid April. *--Ed Miller, nongame biologist, Independence*

SPIRITUAL OBSERVATION

"I do not talk of spirituality in a traditionally religious sense but as a natural capacity we all have for a closer connection to life. Such a capacity is by far the most important tool in nature observation, and its is impossible to teach, for it is our birthright and only waits to be awakened.

"It does not matter how the awakening comes. Many things may help. But no philosophy or set of exercises should be taken as a prescription for deeper awareness. Truth is all one. The traditions of the native Americans are very helpful because they grow out of a long and intimate contact with nature. But I could just as well focus on the traditions of many other peoples. In fact, I believe that almost anyone who lives close to the earth for a long time must eventually arrive at the same foundation. Whatever form his or her philosophy may take, it must reflect the simplicity and oneness that are the roots of all existence.

"Finally, I want to emphasize that spiritual observation is not some mystical, magical thing that is peculiar to medicine men and shamans but something latent in all of us. Many great writers, artists and religious leaders have turned to nature for solitude and inspiration throughout the ages. Yet those who have expressed it so freshly -- people like Emerson, Thoreau, Muir, Burroughs, Carson and others -- are basically no different from you and me. The thing that empowers them is not so much their genius as their joyful awareness of life and their ability to see nature as it is, reflected clearly in the deepest levels of the mind and heart.". *--Tom Brown, from Tom Brown's Field Guide to Nature Observation and Tracking*

notes

PLAYA PRINT PRODUCES

Last fall, Manhattan wildlife artist Jerry Thomas gave Wildlife and Parks all 500 limited-edition prints of his painting of a southwestern Kansas playa lake, entitled "Evening Retreat." (The department's Wildtrust private donation fund paid printing costs.) The department then gave 90 prints to each of the other states in the Playa Lake Joint Venture: Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas.

The impact of this gift extends far beyond the initial value of the 500 prints. The North American Waterfowl Management Plan, of which the Playa Lakes Joint Venture is a part, will give matching funds to states for donations of money, land or other "in kind" contributions that come from sources other than federal funds. In this case, Wildlife and Parks has valued the prints at $125 each (Thomas' prints currently sell for $100-$300 each) and applied for a $62,500 matching grant from the North American Plan.

The grant application will be for the fourth year of the Joint Venture in Kansas and will be combined with $50,000 from Wildlife and Parks, $25,000 from Ducks Unlimited and $25,000 from Phillips Petroleum. If the North American Plan approves the grant, it would mean $312,500 for Playa Lakes in fiscal year 1994.

"Jerry's contribution could turn a $200,000 project into a $300,000 project," says Wildlife and Parks agriculture liaison Charlie Lee. "This just shows what a positive impact one person's efforts can have on wetland projects."

In Kansas, the playa lake prints will be used as Wetland Conservation Awards. The prints will be awarded to landowners who have shown significant achievements in conserving or enhancing wetlands anywhere in the state. Preliminary plans are for Kansas Farm Bureau to frame and present the awards at their annual meeting.

The Playa Lake Joint Venture is an international effort by federal and state agencies, private conservation organizations, corporations, and individuals joining together to restore waterfowl and other migratory bird populations by protecting vital playa wetland habitat. --*Shoup*

Former Assistant Secretary of the Interior Mike Hayden joins Ducks Unlimited officials near Dodge City for dedication of Wild Turkey Playa, a Playa Lakes Joint Venture project.

CLINTON CLEANUP

No, it's not another new hairdo for the President. It's a litter patrol. On April 17, businesses and private citizens will combine their efforts in the Tenth Annual Clinton Cleanup at Clinton Reservoir and State Park.

Although the day is reserved for litter control, entertainment and education are also integral parts of the agenda. Outdoor education booths, a free lunch and various other activities will help reward the expected 600-1,000 volunteers who show up to help keep their favorite park a pristine recreational area.

The event is sponsored by the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and is underwritten by the Douglas County Historical Society, Farmland Industries, FMC Corporation, Hallmark Cards and Quaker Oats.

April 24 has been set aside as an alternative date in case it should rain on the 17th. For more information, contact Jerry Schecher at Clinton State Park, (913) 842-8562. --*Shoup*

EXTENSION TREES EXTENDED

The Kansas State University Cooperative Extension Service has announced its annual Conservation Tree Planting Program, which offers low-cost tree and shrub seedlings for use in conservation practices. Thirty-one different species are available, measuring from 5 to 18 inches. The plants are offered for use in establishing wildlife habitat, windbreaks, erosion control, woodlots and Christmas tree plantations.

According to studies conducted by Kansas State University Extension Service, wheat grown near shelterbelts has produced as much as 50 percent more grain than wheat grown in unprotected portions of fields. Tree windbreaks also help animals save energy during bitter cold spells. As a result, the animals consume less feed, which reduces the growers' costs.

The program is administered through the State and Extension Forestry office in cooperation with the Cooperative Extension Service, the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, the Soil Conservation District and the U.S. Forest Service.

For more information, contact your local office of the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, the Soil Conservation Service or the Cooperative Extension Service, or contact the Extension Forestry, 2610 Claflin Road, Manhattan KS. 66502, (913) 637-7050. --*Shoup*

FARMERS AND WILDLIFE

Are you a farmer who loves wildlife? Then Farmers and Wildlife is for you. Farmers and Wildlife is a newsletter published by the Department of Wildlife and Parks and the Kansas Cooperative Extension Service.

Farmers and Wildlife is published three times a year, and it's dedicated to helping farmers enhance wildlife on their land. The publication covers such diverse subjects as algae control in farm ponds, range and cropland management tips, and Food Security Act rules.

Best of all, it's free.

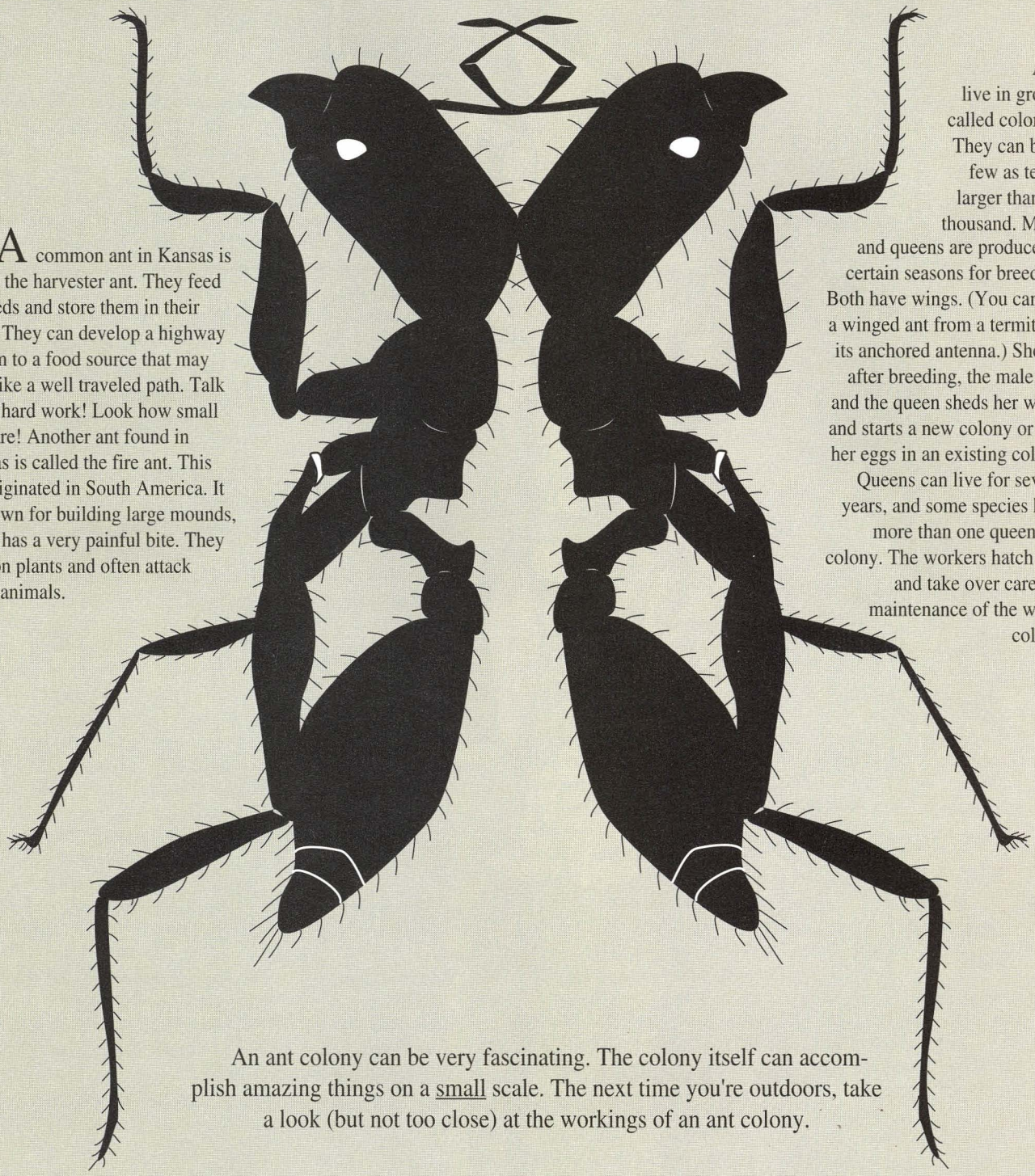
To subscribe to Farmers and Wildlife, contact Charles Lee, Ag Liaison, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, Call Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506. --*Shoup*

By Dana Eastes

When ants come a crawling

Have you ever looked closely (but not too close) at an ant pile? What looks like complete chaos is actually a highly organized group of insects. Every individual insect has a specific job and works for the good of the colony, an attribute that most humans admire.

A common ant in Kansas is called the harvester ant. They feed on seeds and store them in their nests. They can develop a highway system to a food source that may look like a well traveled path. Talk about hard work! Look how small they are! Another ant found in Kansas is called the fire ant. This ant originated in South America. It is known for building large mounds, and it has a very painful bite. They feed on plants and often attack small animals.

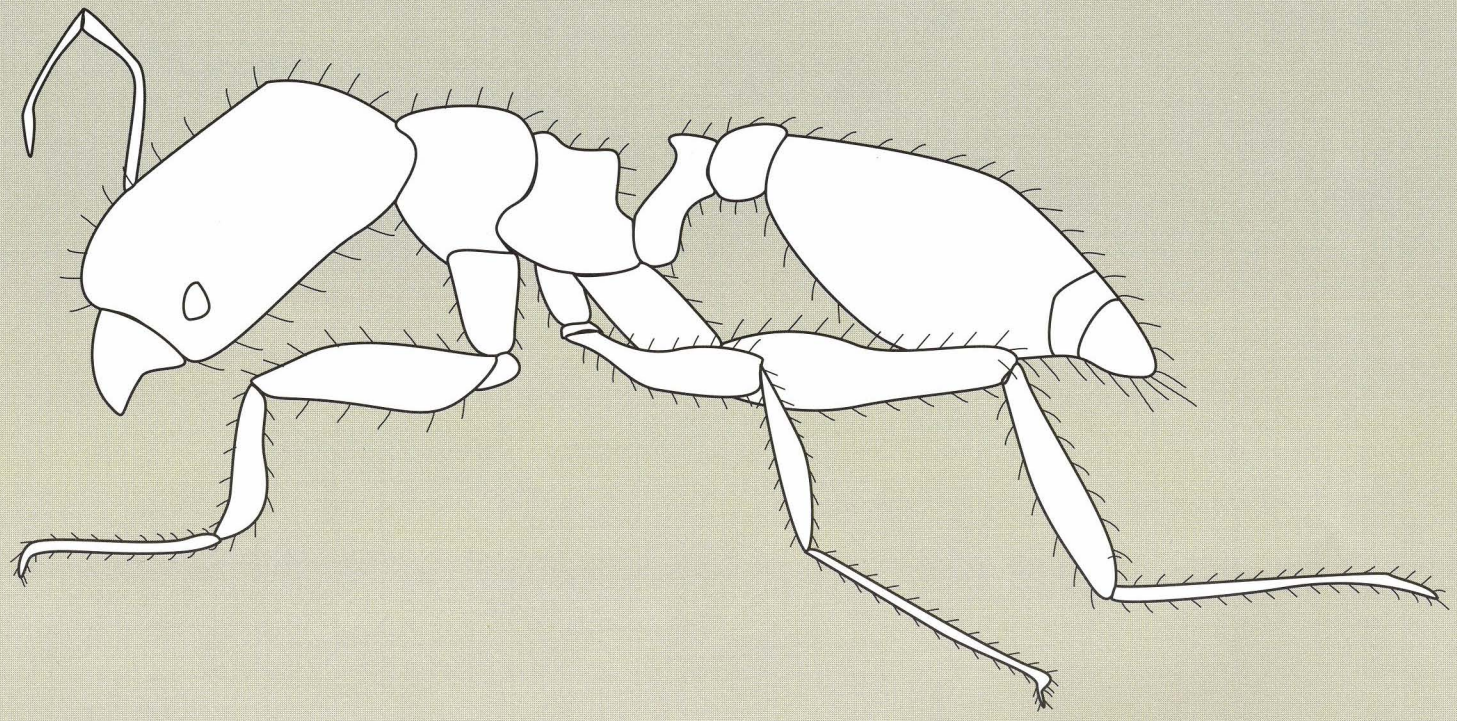


Ants live in groups called colonies. They can be as few as ten or larger than ten thousand. Males and queens are produced at certain seasons for breeding. Both have wings. (You can tell a winged ant from a termite by its anchored antenna.) Shortly after breeding, the male dies and the queen sheds her wings and starts a new colony or lays her eggs in an existing colony. Queens can live for several years, and some species have more than one queen in a colony. The workers hatch first and take over care and maintenance of the whole colony.

An ant colony can be very fascinating. The colony itself can accomplish amazing things on a small scale. The next time you're outdoors, take a look (but not too close) at the workings of an ant colony.

Wait !!! Don't step on me!!!

COLOR ME!!!



HARVESTER ANT

Pheidole bicarinata vinelandica

HIGH GROUND

by Marc A. Murrell

Passing On The Outdoor Tradition

In just a few short weeks, I'll be a father. Is it a boy or girl? Will I be a good father? Will I be able to change its clothes without breaking something? How will I react if my child hurls all over me in the check-out line at Dillons? These questions and more will be answered soon after "D" (delivery) Day, but one may not be answered for several years: Will my child want to and be able to hunt, fish and enjoy the outdoors?

I grew up loving the outdoors. I completed the Kansas Hunter Education Course in 1974 when I was 9 years old. My first hunting trips consisted of my dad chasing pheasants and quail and me chasing my dad, trying to keep up. My first gun was a Savage over-and-under .22/.410, which could only be cocked with Dad's permission. This made shooting at anything but a stationary target nearly impossible, so, I assumed Dad didn't want the embarrassment of me out shooting him. His version was a safety thing.

We never harvested much game, and a good clean kill on a hedgeball was the highlight of many hunts. Success didn't matter as the mold was set—I would hunt for the rest of my life.

My love for fishing started much earlier. Childhood photos document my first fish when I was 4 years old, a trophy bullhead. Subsequent pictures record my progression on yearly vacations to Lake of the Ozarks with nice stringers of crappie.

On weekend camping trips, I kept my grandfather company for hours while we fished for channel cats and listened to Royals baseball games. We never caught much but enjoyed the company and peace just the same. Occasionally, a catfish big enough to choke down the pound of liver he used for bait would swim along. After landing the fish, I would receive critical instruction on how to remove the hook and avoid the catfish's sharp spines. The mold was set—I was hooked for life.

Although my dad doesn't hunt or fish anymore, he is the one credited with my outdoor introduction. And soon, I will have the opportunity to do the same with my own child. I will teach, through experiences, the magic of the natural world. A flock of mallards settling into the decoys, a flopping 2-pound crappie tricked with a chartreuse sassy shad, and a cackling pheasant flushed from a staunch Brittany point will all be part of the curriculum.

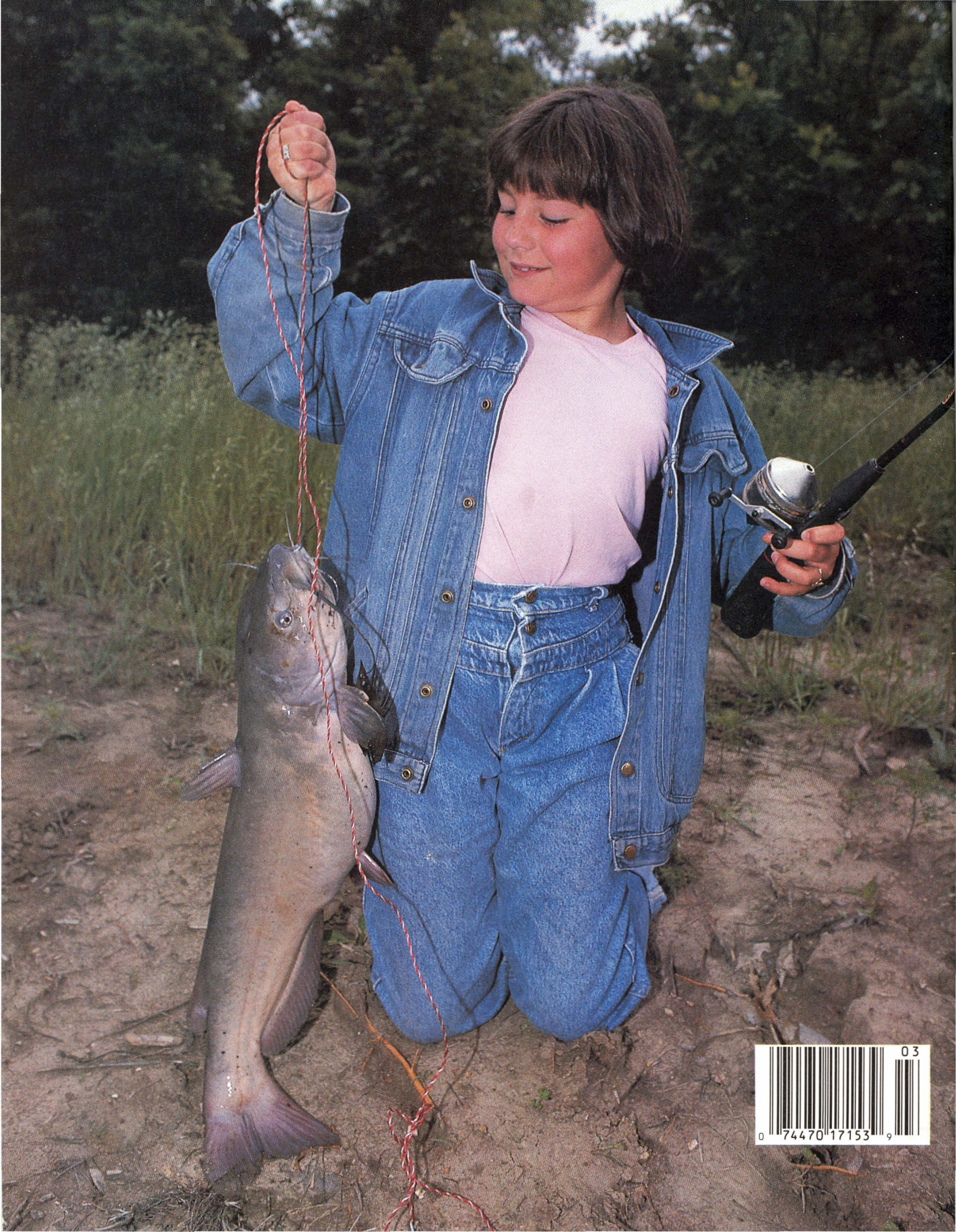
I dream of my 5-year-old sifting through my tackle box wondering which lure we'll be using at Grandpa's pond tomorrow. I visualize an anxious, yet nervous, 12-year-old waiting for the gun barrel to quit shaking long enough to shoot his or her first spring turkey. And two years later might find us in adjacent tree stands as a small buck approaches my child's stand. "Draw, pick a spot, smooth release," I silently mouth to the trembling teen. My dreams are unlimited.

Dana Eastes illustration

Most people think I hope for a boy. I guess I do, but it really doesn't matter as long as the baby is healthy. And besides, the joy of the outdoors doesn't discriminate. I know many young ladies who love to hunt and fish. Either sex can carry the torch just fine.

I promise to provide my child with every opportunity to learn about and enjoy the outdoors. If he or she doesn't want to hunt or fish, that's fine. I will support my child in whatever it chooses. But there is one guarantee in their life: if they want to hunt and fish, ole Dad will be there all the way.

(Editor's Note: The author recently became a father to a beautiful, healthy baby girl. Only weeks old, Ashley has already listened to her share of hunting and fishing stories.)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