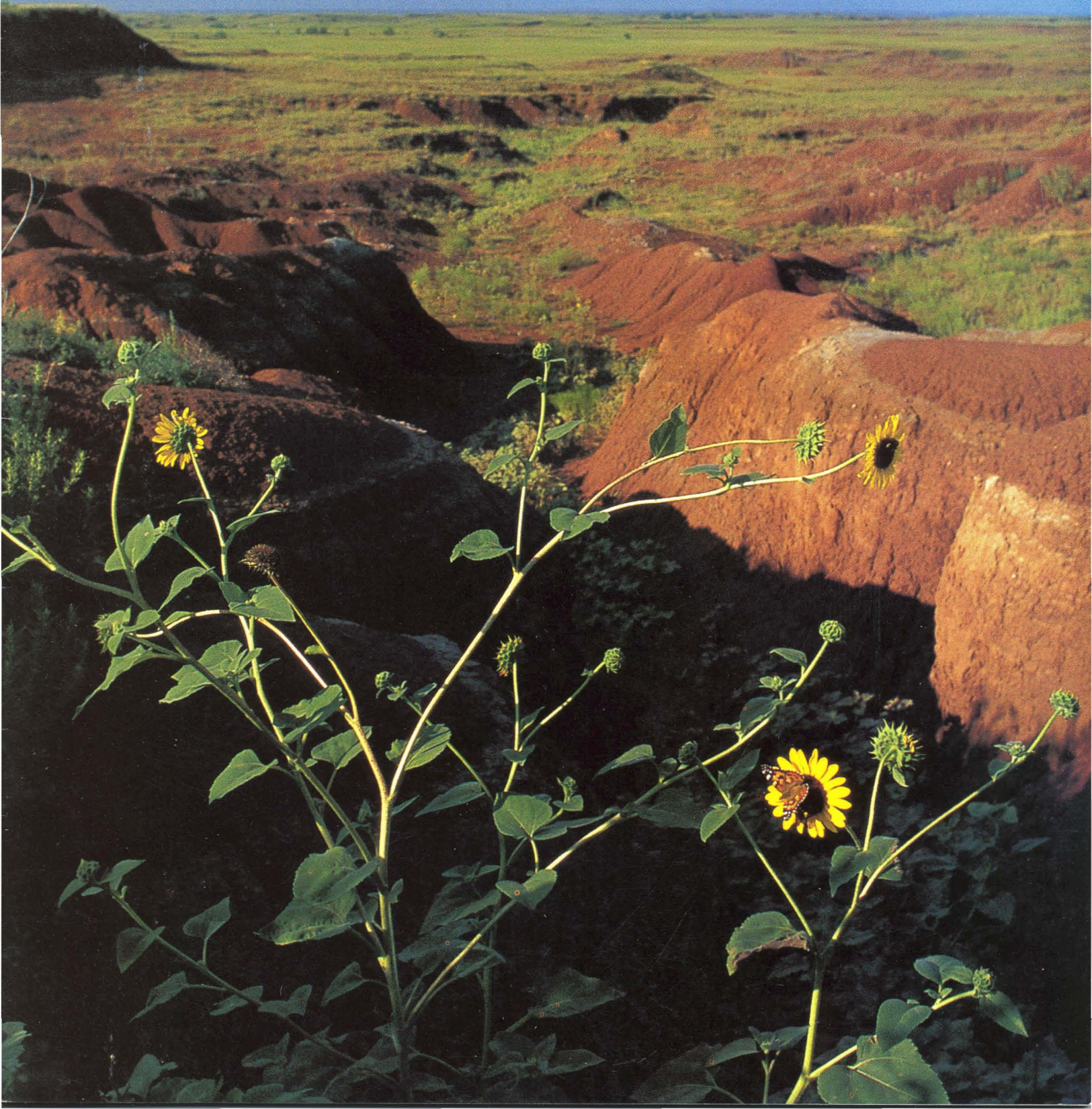


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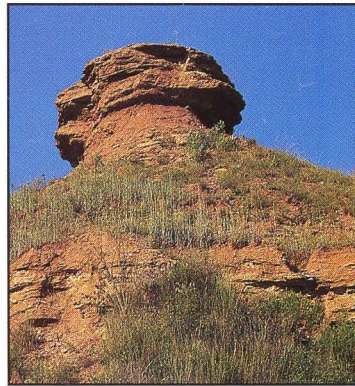
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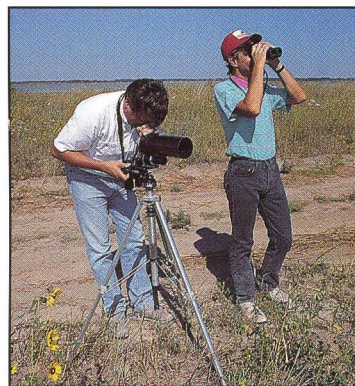
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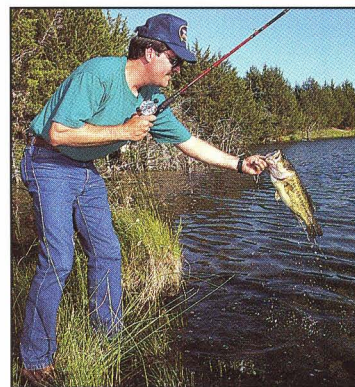
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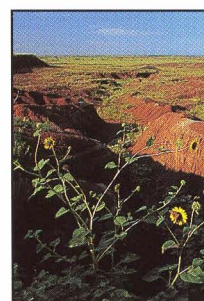
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Front: Red soil and erosion form the unique geography of the Red Hills. Mike Blair shot the scene near Hardtner with a 24mm lens, f/11 @ 1/125 sec. **Back:** This black-capped chickadee was photographed by Blair with a 600mm lens, f/8 @ 1/500 sec.

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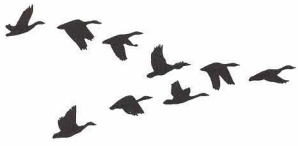
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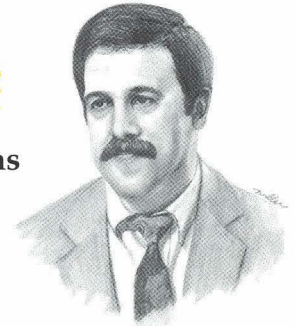
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The View From Here

Steve Williams



Silver Linings

As dry as much of our state has been through the last seven months, it's hard to imagine not wanting rain. I guess it's not that I don't want *any* rain, I just don't want another spring like we had last year. Just two years after record flooding at many of our reservoirs and state parks, we saw a repeat performance in 1995.

The high waters took a toll on state park facilities and kept park patrons away. We need a good year in 1996.

If the weather cooperates, we'll have a great year. All those clouds really did have silver linings, especially if you like to fish. In fact, the last three years have been miraculous for several of our western reservoirs. Cedar Bluff covered barely 500 acres in 1992, but today it covers nearly 4,000. Webster, Kirwin and Sebelius have similar stories. And not only have these lakes returned to near normal levels, but the flooded vegetation that grew on the once-dry lakebeds is terrific fish habitat. Both sportfish species and the baitfish they feed on prospered, meaning lots of fish that are growing fast. What more could anglers ask for? These western Kansas lakes are good bets for excellent fishing in 1996.

Reservoirs in the northeast that endured high water in 1993 and 1995 experienced similar results, although on a smaller scale. The high water flooded shoreline vegetation and created ideal spawning habitat. Species that benefitted from these conditions include largemouth bass, white bass, walleye and crappie. Also, the high water made fishing conditions difficult, so many lakes received light fishing pressure in 1995. Yes, 1996 should be a great fishing year . . . if the weather cooperates.

Park managers have had a challenging couple of seasons, to say the least. With limited resources, repairs were made through hard work and help from Friends Groups, only to see flooding again in 1995. But facilities will be open and ready for business again this spring, so visit your favorite state park this year, and bring your fishing pole.

And if all this isn't enough, state hatcheries at Farlington, Meade, Milford and Pratt had a great year in 1995. More than 43 million predacious fingerlings (walleye, sauger, saugeye, smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, wipers and striped bass) were stocked. More than

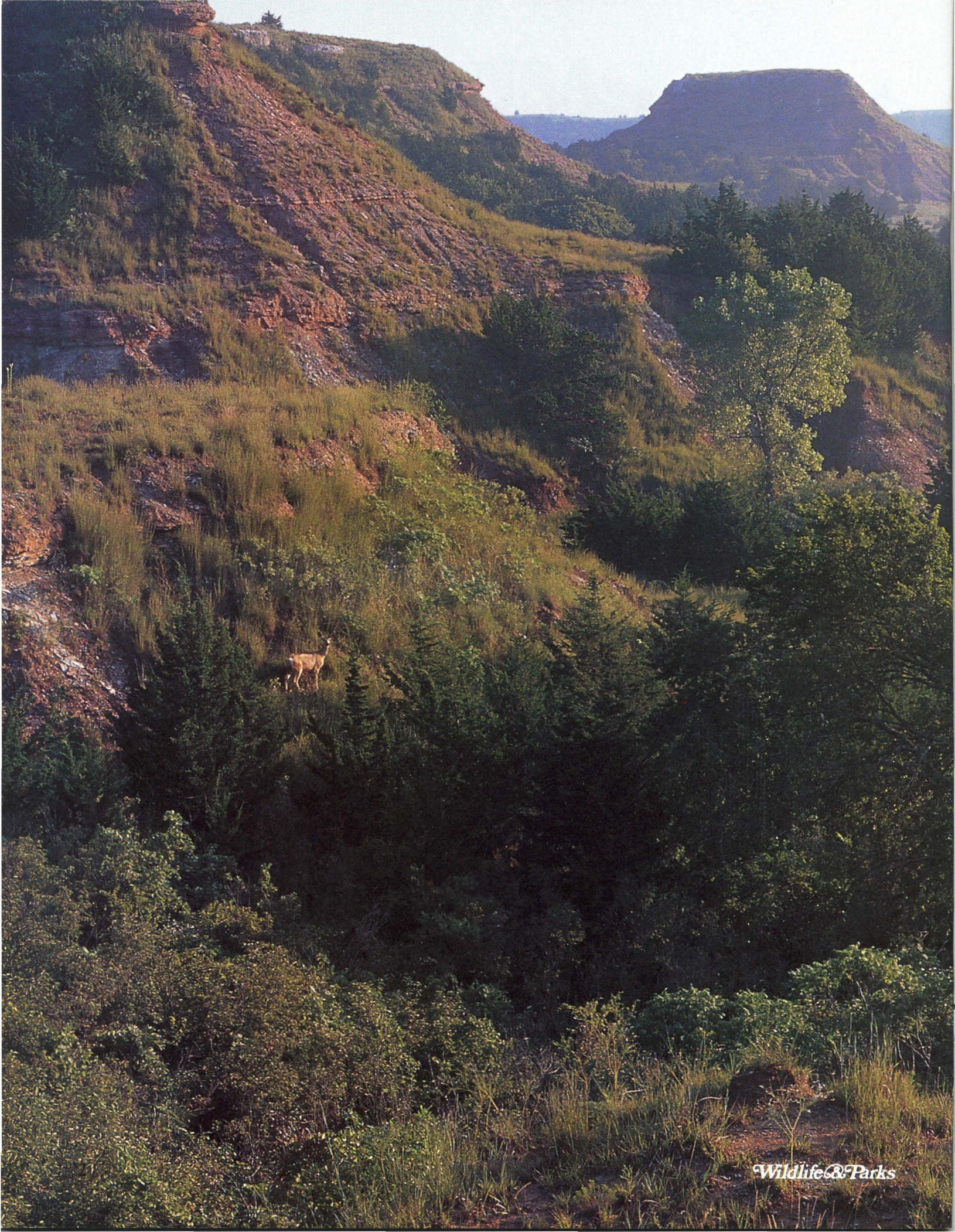


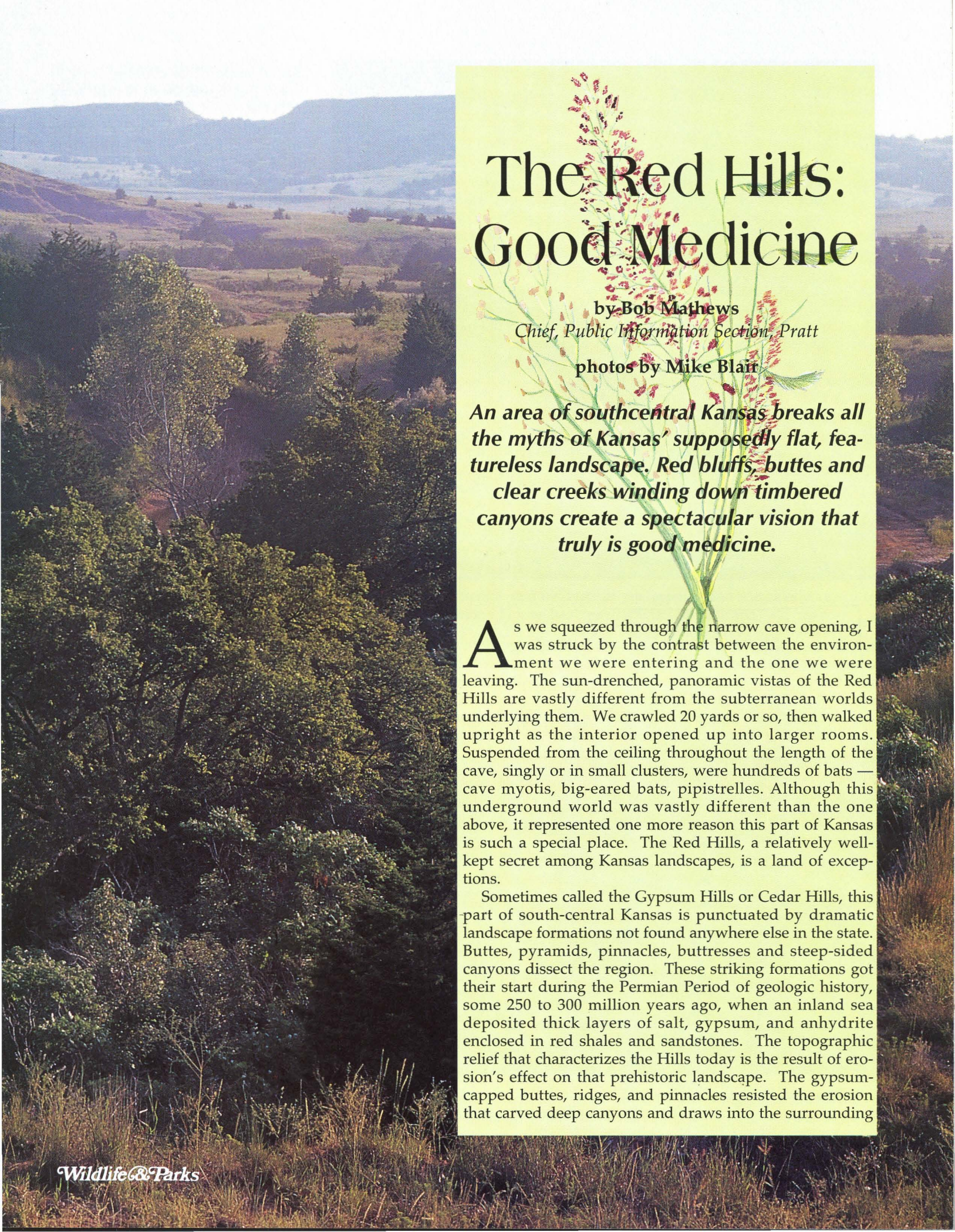
700,000 fingerling (5 inches) and 400,000 intermediate (10-12 inches) channel cats were stocked in state and community lakes, and more than 15,000 trout have been stocked in select waters across the state this winter.

For those who don't want to put up their shotguns just yet, the turkey season opens April 10 and runs through May 5. Last year, Kansas turkey hunters took a record 14,953 turkeys with the highest success rate of all the Midwest states (48 percent, or 65 percent of hunters with two tags taking at least one bird).

Spring is a time for optimism, after the cold of winter. With it comes new growth, soothing warmth and the promise of time spent outdoors camping, hiking, fishing or whatever you enjoy. If Mother Nature is agreeable this spring, I'll make it a point to enjoy some of the wonderful outdoor opportunities that await. See you out there!

Steve Williams





The Red Hills: Good Medicine

by Bob Mathews

Chief, Public Information Section, Pratt

photos by Mike Blair

An area of southcentral Kansas breaks all the myths of Kansas' supposedly flat, featureless landscape. Red bluffs, buttes and clear creeks winding down timbered canyons create a spectacular vision that truly is good medicine.

As we squeezed through the narrow cave opening, I was struck by the contrast between the environment we were entering and the one we were leaving. The sun-drenched, panoramic vistas of the Red Hills are vastly different from the subterranean worlds underlying them. We crawled 20 yards or so, then walked upright as the interior opened up into larger rooms. Suspended from the ceiling throughout the length of the cave, singly or in small clusters, were hundreds of bats — cave myotis, big-eared bats, pipistrelles. Although this underground world was vastly different than the one above, it represented one more reason this part of Kansas is such a special place. The Red Hills, a relatively well-kept secret among Kansas landscapes, is a land of exceptions.

Sometimes called the Gypsum Hills or Cedar Hills, this part of south-central Kansas is punctuated by dramatic landscape formations not found anywhere else in the state. Buttes, pyramids, pinnacles, buttresses and steep-sided canyons dissect the region. These striking formations got their start during the Permian Period of geologic history, some 250 to 300 million years ago, when an inland sea deposited thick layers of salt, gypsum, and anhydrite enclosed in red shales and sandstones. The topographic relief that characterizes the Hills today is the result of erosion's effect on that prehistoric landscape. The gypsum-capped buttes, ridges, and pinnacles resisted the erosion that carved deep canyons and draws into the surrounding

terrain. The caves here are remnants of that erosion process. This region has more caves than any other part of Kansas, with more than 400 in Barber and Comanche counties alone. Many of the narrower, steeper canyons in the region were probably once caves, until their roofs eroded away. A natural bridge spanning a canyon or streambed is a remnant of a cave roof that once covered a lengthier underground passage. In geologic terms, these caves are short-lived. Red Hills caves are younger than limestone caves, in general. Most gypsum caves in Kansas are thought to be only a few thousand years old, while most limestone caves are thought to be generally 100,000 to 10 million years old. While the caves are unique and numerous, it's the striking visual appeal of the above-ground environment that impresses first-time visitors.

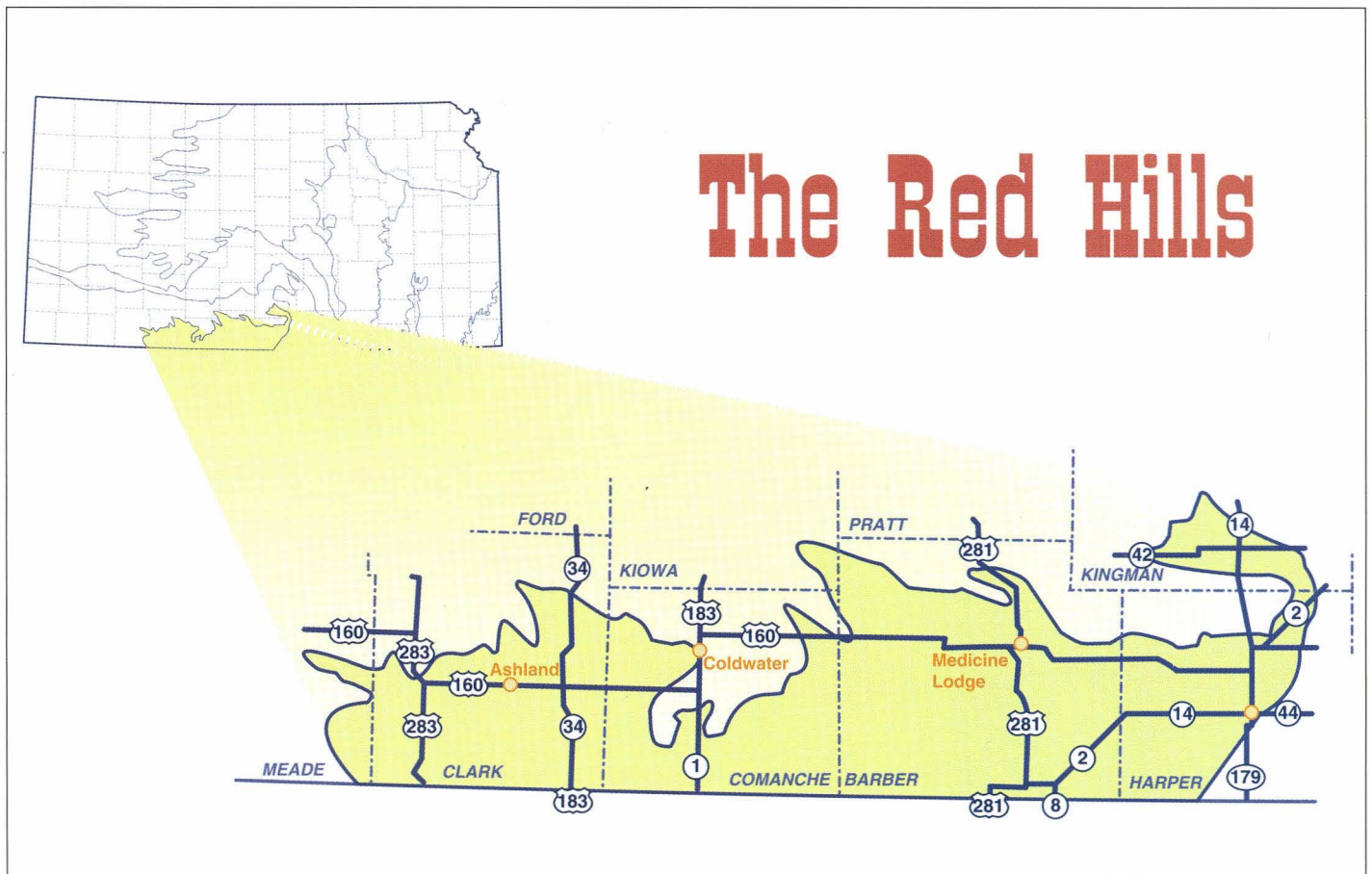
Eastern redcedar trees are scattered throughout the hills, and small patches of woody growth, including hackberry, elm, soapberry, wild plum, and smooth sumac occur in ravine bottoms and on north slopes. Trees commonly found along the region's streams include cottonwood, willow, black walnut, mulberry, osage orange, honey locust, black locust, catalpa, and green ash.

Because of its topography and geographic location, these hills serve as a valuable refuge for plants and animals alike. Situated as it is, the Red Hills serves as a transition zone in which eastern and western species mingle. As part of the "mixed grass" zone, the Red Hills region is home to grasses, weeds, and wildflowers which are often more common east and west from it. One reason for that is the receptiveness of the region to "drift" — the invasion and recession of plant

life in response to climatic changes — of plant species in neighboring regions.

The topographic relief of the region tempers climatic stresses on plant life. If wet conditions prevail, the broken terrain of the Red Hills, with its steep slopes and porous soils, assists the rapid runoff of rainfall. As a result, plant species more suited to dry conditions are better able to withstand extended soggy weather patterns. Conversely, if dry conditions prevail, the valleys supply shade which moderates the drought and offers respite for plant species more at home in wetter regions. One botanist described the Red Hills as "...a citadel not only for plants of the drier west, but also for those of the moister east."

The soil composition of the region is an inviting medium for many forms of plant life. Primarily silty clay or sandy clay, the soil is well suited to accommodate the

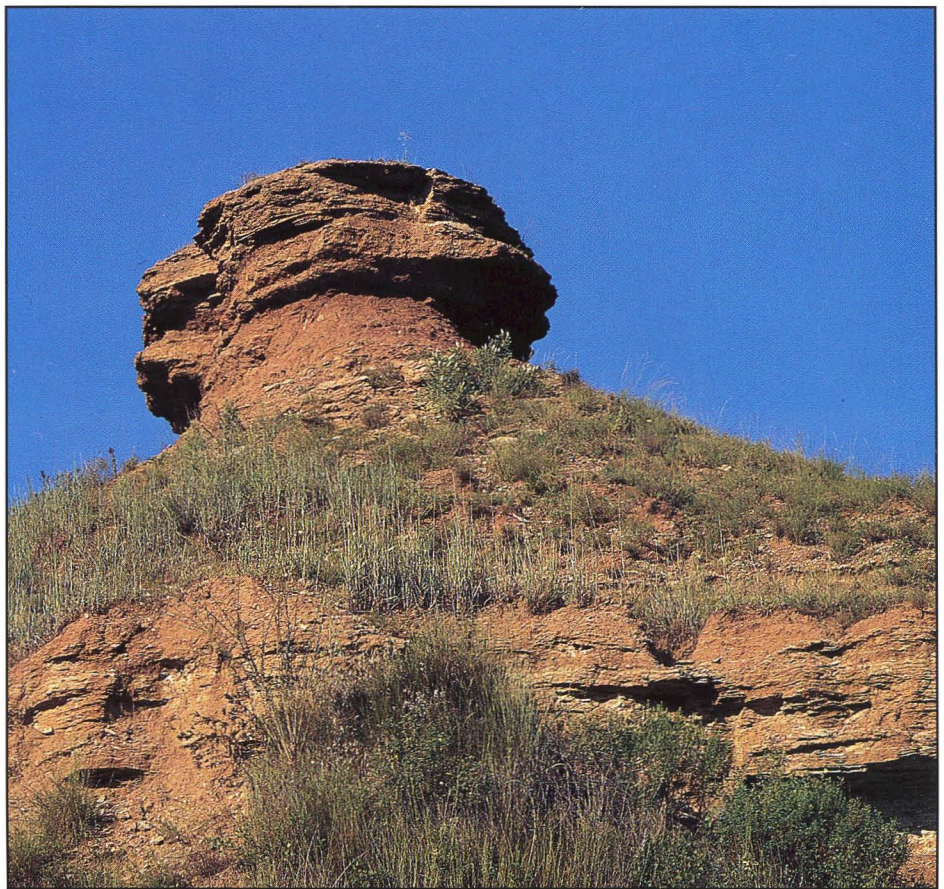


A drive down state highway 160 takes you through the heart of the Red Hills and provides wonderful viewing opportunities, not only of the beautiful landscape, but also of abundant wildlife including white-tailed and mule deer, turkey and countless bird species.

needs of many different kinds of plants. The sandy or silty element keeps the soil loose, while the clay holds the soil's moisture for extended periods of time. A generous supply of wildflower species characterize the Red Hills. Sharing space with them are a variety of grasses, as the region lies in the mixed grass region of Kansas, containing species common to the tall-grass prairies of eastern Kansas as well as the shortgrass prairies of the west.

As with most of the mixed-grass region of Kansas, big and little bluestems and Indiangrass can be found. Blue grama, buffalo grass, and hairy grama — shortgrass species common on the High Plains region — sprout on the drier uplands. Wildflowers color the hills through much of the year, beginning with early spring bloomers such as Easter daisies, through the yellow primroses and colorful Indian blanket of summer, to the deep red cardinal flower in fall.

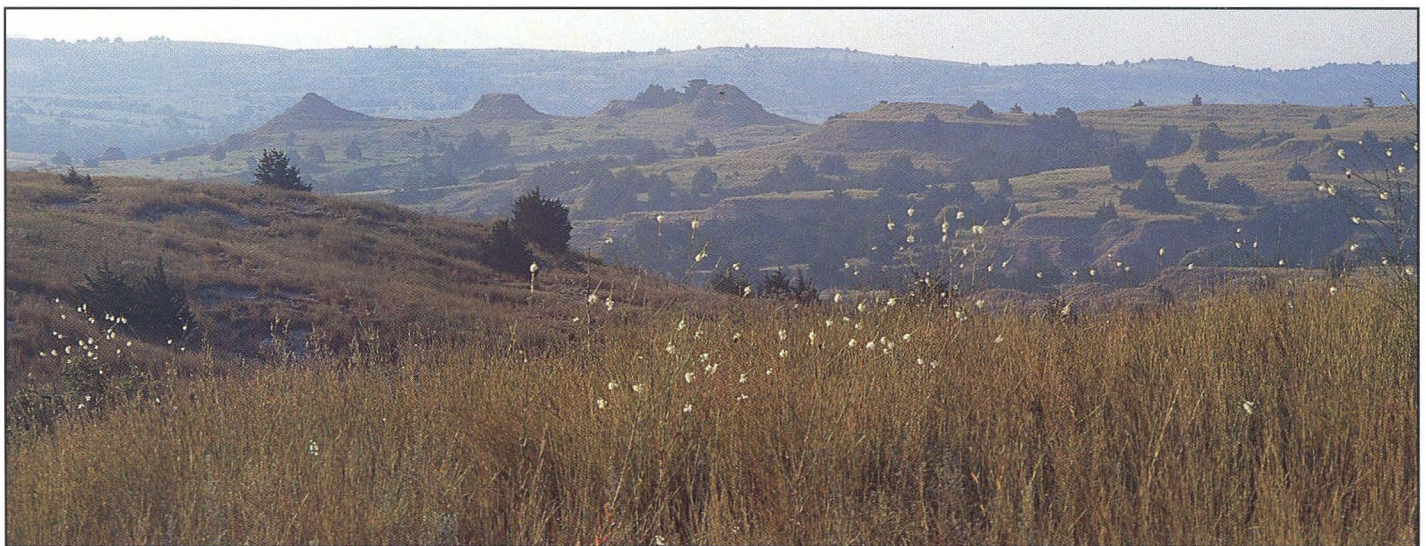
The Red Hills is home to many amphibians and reptiles typically found in the High Plains region. In addition, several species common in the American Southwest reach their northern limit here. Among them are the red-spotted toad, New Mexico blind snake, Texas long-nosed snake, Texas night snake and checkered garter snake.



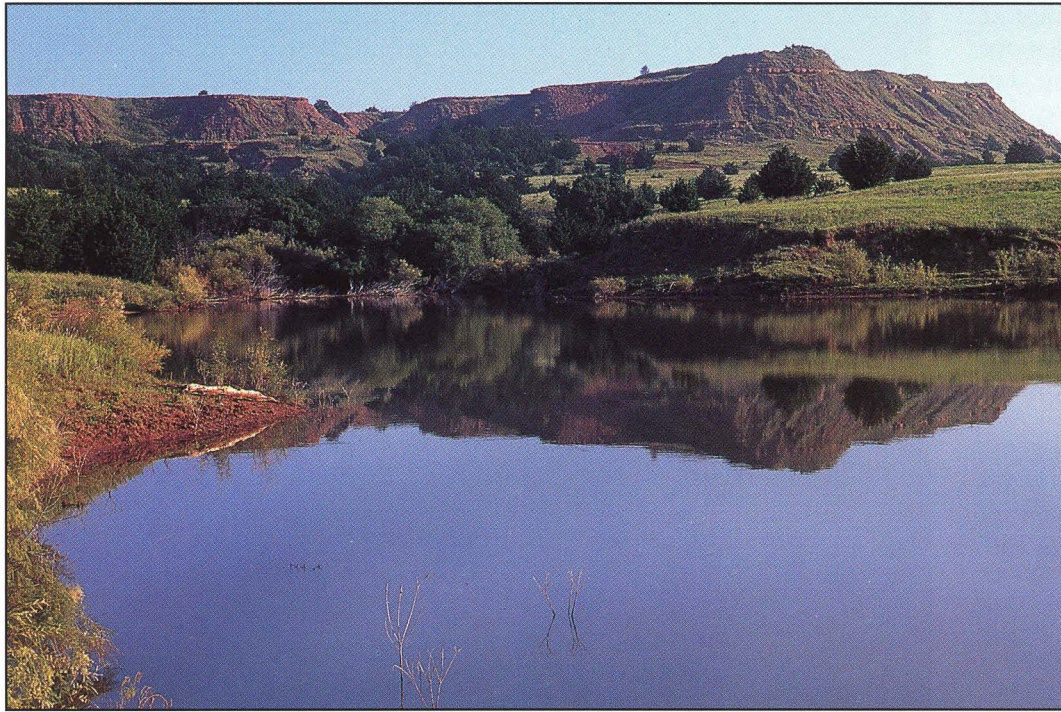
The Red Hills are characterized by layers of salt, gypsum, and anhydrite enclosed in red shales and sandstone. Erosion has created spectacular formations and caves.

For wildlife watching, the Red Hills presents unsurpassed opportunities in Kansas, according to Bob Gress and George Potts, authors of *Watching Kansas Wildlife*. The "Gypsum Hills Scenic Drive," rated

one of the top wildlife observation locations in Kansas, offers visitors a chance to see a rich variety of wildlife. Mountain bluebirds, cedar waxwings, and Townsend's solitaires are common winter visitors.



The grassland is considered mixed-grass, and it is unique in that there are moist bottom lands with plants more common in the eastern part of the state and arid hillsides with vegetation more common in the western part of Kansas.



Numerous spring-fed ponds dot the Red Hills region, providing livestock and wildlife watering holes, terrific fishing holes and beautiful scenes. Lunger bass and channel cats wait anglers' lines.

Complementing the abundant supply of deer, turkey, bobcats and coyotes are more unique — to Kansas, anyway — species such as roadrunners and armadillos.

This region of Kansas was critically important in the re-establishment of wild turkeys to the state. Like many other native wildlife species, wild turkeys disappeared from Kansas in the early twentieth century, primarily due to unregulated hunting and wholesale conversion of native habitats to crop production and other uses. In the mid-1960s, Kansas Wildlife and Parks biologists began a concerted effort to re-establish turkeys in the state. Rio Grande turkeys were obtained from the King Ranch in Texas, in exchange for lesser prairie chickens trapped in Kansas. The transplanted turkeys took to the Red Hills in grand fashion. In fact,

the growing Red Hills flocks served as a “reservoir” for re-establishment of turkeys throughout much of the rest of the state. For a period of about 20 years — from the late 1960s through the 1980s, biologists annually trapped Rio Grande wild turkeys from burgeoning Red Hills

flocks. The trapped turkeys were then transported to release sites at various locations around the state. The trapping and transplanting made possible one of the most successful wildlife management projects in Kansas history.

That success is illustrated in the number of turkey hunting permits issued in the state over the years. In 1974 — Kansas' first spring turkey season — a total of 400 permits were authorized in a limited portion of the state, including the Red Hills. In 1984, a total of 4,221 permits were issued for the spring season. In 1995, the total number of permits and second turkey tags issued statewide totalled more than 27,000.

Historically, the Red Hills offered some of the best hunting in Kansas. A report in the July 4, 1872 edition of the Hutchinson News attested that “. . . a drive 60 miles southwest brings us to the best hunting ground in Kansas, in the valleys and



The Red Hills harbored the first sustainable wild turkey populations after the department began reintroducing them to Kansas. Today large flocks gather in winter and provide good viewing opportunities.

among the hills of Medicine Lodge Creek in Barber County. In addition to other game, here are deer and wild turkey in the greatest abundance."

The Plains Indians called this region the Medicine Hills, and its major river the Medicine River. They believed that spirits in the hills helped heal their ailments. While the benefit of those "friendly spirits" could be argued, one advantage of the springs and streams in the region is that they contain calcium and magnesium sulfates and other natural salts dissolved from the gypsum and dolomite beds that abound in the headwaters. Many of

these natural chemical compounds have therapeutic effects. Magnesium sulfate, for example, is also known as Epsom salt.

The Red Hills, in general, have a therapeutic effect on visitors. The region's solitude, scenic terrain, bountiful wildlife, colorful plant life, clear streams and wide-open spaces have a soothing effect on just about any visitor who passes through. Removed as they are from the more heavily-traveled highway routes through Kansas, they still are a relatively well-kept secret even among Kansans.

Like many people, I suspect, I discovered the Red Hills by acci-

dent, when simple curiosity drew me off the highway and down a gravel road years ago for a look at Clark State Fishing Lake. Nestled in a deep canyon, against a backdrop of rugged breaks stretching off to the south and east, the lake opened my eyes to the fact that there's a rich and varied world inside our state's borders. And, although the Red Hills province is just one of many unique and unexpected environments in the Sunflower State, I personally guarantee that this region will be an eye-popping surprise to anyone who has accepted the notion that the Plains States are monotonous. ♡



Calcium Treasures

text and photos by Mike Blair
staff photographer, Pratt

Looking for shed antlers is a fun way to spend a late-winter day. Deer hunters can learn more about deer movements, and they often come away with prized shed antlers.



We searched for an hour without success, enjoying a warm afternoon hike among the trees. Deer trails were well defined this time of year, beaten into the compressed floor of the late winter woods. My family scattered out through the forest corridor and followed separate trails in hopes of finding newly-shed deer antlers.

In particular, I was interested in the rack of a big whitetail I'd occasionally seen in a small corner of these woods. The deer wasn't huge, but had nice five-by-five antlers with forked back tines. I'd filmed the buck in September and jumped him several times in October, but I had never seen him from my tree-stand while bowhunting. Even so, I had a hunch the deer stayed close.

We were nearly through the trees

when my wife called out. "Over here!" she said, picking up a large, curved beam. I hurried over and saw at once that the antler belonged to my buck. The small fork on the back tine was broken off, but two short spikes emerging from the antler bur were sure proof. I was thrilled with the find, but a closer inspection revealed an even greater surprise: a deep gouge chipped from the antler contained an unmistakable razor cut. Apparently on an adjacent property, the buck had narrowly escaped a bowshot!

We returned home that day, feeling especially lucky. But the story didn't end there. Three months later and half a mile upstream, I found the matching side of the deer's rack while squirrel hunting. Then the following bow season, the same buck appeared

beneath my treestand on a foggy, November morning, and I took him home. Comparing the racks, it was interesting to learn that while the new antlers carried similar mass, they had lost tine length, and one four-inch tine was missing altogether. The buck was past his prime, but even so, the four-by-five rack remains one of my favorite bowhunting trophies.

That's what shed hunting is all about. Looking for shed antlers is a springtime hobby that seems to grow in popularity each year. Though hunters have always used late winter as a prime time to scout deer movements and look for the antlers of their favorite bucks, others have recently joined in the search. The growing interest in antlers for decorative use - in items ranging from furniture to knife handles - puts hobbyists on the lookout for these natural treasures. Shed hunting combines exercise and adventure for all ages, and the payoff yields some of nature's finest and most durable artworks.

Deer antlers have long held a special fascination for man. Though often carelessly called "horns", antlers are impressive bony adornments that grow from a male deer's skull each year. True horns, such as those found on domestic cattle, are composed of keratin and grow continually throughout life, but antlers are composed of calcium and phosphorous. They begin as living tissue under a protective covering called velvet. Growing antlers are supported by a rich blood and nerve supply, and are the fastest form of bone growth known. Each year they grow into fantastic shapes, harden for use as weapons, and are finally cast in late winter. The cycle is repeated annually until death.

The antler casting process is remarkable in itself. Antlers are joined to a deer's skull at special junctures called pedicels. In fall and early winter, these bony connections are extremely strong. Under tremendous impact, such as a clash of heads during a fight, an antler may break off, but it almost never breaks at the pedicel. As the deer

mating season wanes and a buck's blood testosterone diminishes, minerals are resorbed from the antler bases by the deer's body. In a few days' time, antlers that once couldn't be knocked off, now simply fall off. In some cases, both antlers may drop together. In others, days or weeks may pass before the second antler is shed.

These conditions are illustrated by various finds I've made in the past. Several springs ago while shed hunting with my youngest daughter, the glint of tines caught my eye along a wooded fenceline. Hurrying over, we found a beautiful matched set of antlers lying together at a deer crossing. Apparently, as the buck leaped the fence, both antlers dislodged, landing just inches apart. That's unusual. More commonly, matched antlers are separated by some distance along a trail.

I once followed a single buck track in new snow during March, finding one antler at the end of a windbreak and its mate 200 yards later. The track pattern led me to believe that the buck had kicked both antlers off with a hind hoof. These antlers were obviously shed just minutes apart. But proximity doesn't necessarily prove when the antlers were cast. Last spring, I found an old antler in a grassy draw, and continued walking to find its matching side a quarter-mile farther on. These antlers may have been shed the same day, or on different days as the buck followed the same route to his bedding area.

In these cases, I was lucky to find matched sets of antlers. Usually, it's rewarding enough to find a single side, particularly if it comes from a familiar animal. Most of my finds have been singles, but sometimes I've found an antler one year, and its matched side from the same season several years later. I always mark the year of find on each antler with a permanent marker, to compare racks in the event that sheds from the same deer are found several years running. Also, mapping the location of each find helps identify the animal's home range.



The author's collection of antlers displays many of the matched sets he has found, representing many hours and many miles of searching.

Time of antler casting varies from deer to deer, but older, bigger deer usually shed their antlers earlier than young bucks. I've seen yearling bucks with both antlers as late as early April, and have heard of big Kansas bucks dropping antlers as early as December.

Last January, I had an experience with an early dropper while photographing several mature whitetail bucks. The oldest buck was a five-by-six with a long, narrow rack, and the younger was an even more impressive five-by-five. I expected to have several months of filming before both deer lost their antlers, but the old buck surprised me. On January 19, I found his right antler lying in a pasture, apparently dropped at daybreak after the buck left a wheat field. Over the next 11 days, I filmed the one-horned deer several times with his companion, and then the morning of January 31 the younger buck was alone. I found the old deer's left antler that same day in the wheat, and interestingly, the bald buck traveled alone from then on. By late February, the younger buck was still carrying both antlers, and though I looked for months, I never found his sheds.

In Kansas, most antler shedding

is complete by mid-March. This is the ideal time to search, since weather is often pleasant, insects are not a problem, and new vegetation has not yet begun to hide cast antlers. Getting out early also lessens the chance that rodents have found and damaged antlers, a typical problem in many parts of the state. Squirrels, porcupines and many rodents seem to crave the minerals in cast antlers. Chewed antlers, while sometimes visually interesting, are usually weak and unappealing. Antlers that lie for a year or more are usually damaged in this way.

Fallen antlers also weather rapidly in contact with moist soil. During their first year on the ground, they remain in roughly the same condition as when freshly shed. But after two years, there is a noticeable change in color and porosity. The antlers gradually deteriorate to a dull gray, and by the 3rd year they are often cracked and unattractive. When collected and stored in dry conditions, shed antlers will stop weathering and remain stable for years.

Sometimes while antler hunting, entire skulls are found. The rut often seriously weakens older



Jay Bailey, Pratt, shows a rack taken from a dead deer found while hunting sheds. Finding a shed is more encouraging since it means the buck still roams the area.

bucks, since they feed little during this time and typically lose one-fourth of their body weight. Bucks wounded in combat may be further weakened by cold weather, and mortality is common during winter months. If a buck dies before shedding its antlers, the horns remain firmly attached to the skull. Finding an antlered skull is a special bonus when antler hunting.

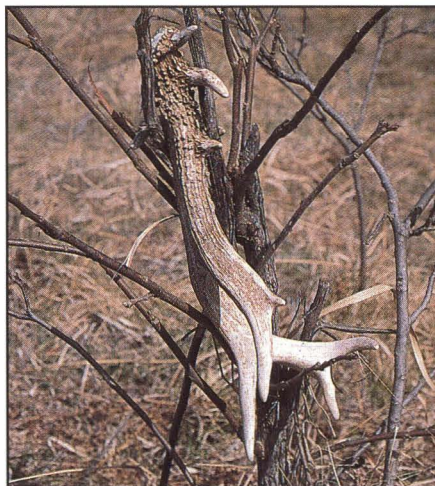
One of my favorite finds occurred while still hunting deer along a sandy creek one October. As I prepared to cross, a massive antler tip protruding from the sand caught my eye. I unearthed the rack to find it attached to a huge skull, stained and spotted by months below the soil line. When washed, the skull was a beautiful natural artifact which now hangs in my office.

Several organizations like the Boone & Crockett and Pope & Young Clubs have historically recognized trophy antlers taken by hunters. But until recently, there was no formal organization to deal with shed antlers. In 1990, an organization called the North American Shed Hunters Club was formed. During its five years of existence, the organization has grown to a membership of thousands, representing most American states and Canadian provinces. Once a year, the club holds its annual meeting in

St. Paul to score and record antlers found by shed hunters. Every four years, the club updates a coffee-table record book containing photos and information about the largest antlers measured.

Currently, two Kansas entries grace the Club's top ten list for whitetail sheds in North America. A single, non-typical antler scoring 114-0/8 stands at number five, and a typical antlers ranks 3rd with a score of 98-4/8.

There's no special trick to finding antlers. It's largely a matter of putting in legwork. By the time antlers are shed, bucks are in a rou-



A shed, such as this unusual antler found wedged in a sapling, may give evidence of a deer not previously seen.

tine that involves the best winter food available. In Kansas, wheat and alfalfa fields are normally used heavily during late winter months. Unharvested grainfields are also good places to start. Trails will be well-defined between bedding and feeding areas, and antlers are often dropped along them. Windbreaks and timbered creeks are also likely shedding areas.

Look everywhere within a buck's travel lanes. I've found antlers lying in deer beds, and lodged above ground in small trees and shrubs. I saw one monster antler that was pulled from a big bale of hay, where the buck apparently stuck it and simply backed away. Remember that some bucks may travel more than a mile to reach their bedding areas, so be prepared to do plenty of walking. A pair of binoculars is helpful in checking distant objects and for observing wildlife.

Kansas is envied nationwide for the huge bucks it produces. Each spring, the headgear of these animals drop to earth, useless to the deer that wore them, but valuable relics to those who hunt them. Many antlers are dropped in open country, where they're easy to find. And most everyone has hunting opportunities close to home. Public areas are freely accessible and typically offer good shed hunting. Private lands may see less competition, but remember to ask permission when entering private property.

Want to try something different this spring? Walk the trails of winter whitetails. You'll enjoy the exercise and early spring weather. With a little persistence, chances are good that you'll know the delight of finding some of nature's most interesting artworks. ♡

Editor's Note: Annual membership in the North American Shed Hunters Club is \$10. The first edition of the Shed Antler Record Book is \$29.95 plus shipping. For more information, contact NASHC, 19790 Dogwood St. NW, Cedar, MN 55011 (612) 434-9139.

Join Teaming With Wildlife

by Ken Brunson

Chickadee Checkoff Coordinator, Pratt

photos by Mike Blair

Teaming With Wildlife is a phrase coined to promote the Wildlife Diversity Funding Initiative. This fund would be similar to the programs that have raised millions for sportfish and game species and would benefit all wildlife, especially nongame species.



(Sometime in the near future)

Thelma and Louise pulled into a parking lot filled with about a dozen cars. The sun was just peeking over the horizon as several people were forming a line to go a special viewing blind. Taking their place quietly, the elderly ladies waited with binoculars in hand. Patiently, Thelma read the information sign at the trail head: "Eagle Marsh. Purchased and developed through the Wildlife Diversity Fund by the Kansas Department of

Wildlife and Parks." Eagle Marsh was an easy drive for the ladies and offered the kind of conveniences they had quickly grown to appreciate.

The two ladies had nurtured their birding interests as a team. A few years ago, Louise had called her best friend and excitedly related seeing a bald eagle near the river west of town. Since then, their interest had been cultured through the local Audubon chapter. Thelma felt proud that her local Audubon club had been among the earliest

supporters of this diversity thing and Eagle Marsh. For now, the ladies were about to be treated to one of the finest spectacles of nature.

"Shhh," whispered the interpreter who had organized the line of people. "We must be quiet as possible as we approach the blind. If you have to go to the bathroom, use the ones here in the parking lot. We will be gone for about an hour and a half."

The group started single file down the asphalt walkway following their uniformed guide. They only had a quarter of a mile to go and would be well hidden by the thick undergrowth along a small creek. The last hundred feet of trail was covered by a camouflage canopy so the eagles, nesting in a distant cottonwood, could not see the humans approach.

The blind blended with the surroundings. Constructed on stilts over moist soil, it resembled a swamp shanty house from the Louisiana delta. But it covered among the tall willows and cattails. The eagles didn't mind it. They had nested at this site for three years, and this was the second year the blind had been in place. The baldies had successfully fledged five eaglets and currently had three more in the nest.

Reaching the blind in just a few minutes, Thelma and Louise walked up a ramp to the blind with the 10 other observers and the interpreter. Now they peered through the various slits in the front and side walls of the blind.

"There they are!, Aren't they cute?" whispered Louise. Soft oohs and ahhs were traded among the watchers as they looked at the little fluff-ball eaglets. One adult was flying low above the nest and landed to another hushed chorus of ahhs from within the blind. The other adult was soaring high above the marsh as the interpreter provided facts and interesting anecdotes about the nesting eagles. The hour went by quickly for the excited group, several of whom had seen young eagles for the first time. For

one couple from Kansas City, these were the first bald eagles they had seen in the wild.

"Wow, we thought you had to go to Alaska to see this! they beamed.

Rounding out the program was a flock of sandhill cranes lazing their way north, a continual chorus of romantic red-winged blackbirds, and a number of sandpipers probing the distant mudflats. It was in invigorating morning for the whole group. They returned to the parking lot buzzing with excitement. Thelma questioned the interpreter about why this hadn't been available until recently.

"Well, bald eagles started nesting in Kansas again just 10 years ago. And, we only recently were able to purchase and develop this wetland because of money from the Wildlife Diversity Fund."

"Wildlife diversity. What is that?" asked Louise.

"It's sort of a complicated story," the interpreter began. "The Wildlife Diversity Fund was started sometime around 1994 by the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. Its purpose was to provide the nongame complement to the PR and DJ federal fund sources for sport species."

"What's that Pierre and Disco stuff!" quizzed Thelma.

"Oh," the interpreter answered. "PR stands for Pittman and Robertson and DJ for Dingell and Johnson. Those are the names of the



The Wildlife Diversity Fund would provide money to acquire and manage critical habitats, as well as provide viewing facilities, making sights like this more available.

respective congressmen who got these acts passed. The PR act collects an excise tax on hunting equipment that benefits game animals, and the DJ act collects an excise tax on fishing equipment that benefits sport fisheries. These programs have been so beneficial for game animals and fish, it was only natural to try something similar for nongame wildlife."

"I thought wildlife was managed through our taxes," Louise interjected.

"Not so," the interpreter explained. "It has never been that way in Kansas or anywhere else.

Until the Wildlife Diversity Fund, nearly all of our wildlife programs were being funded through fishing and hunting license dollars and PR/DJ federal funds. Even most of our nongame work has been funded this way. This includes the salaries of nongame biologists as well as our ecological specialist positions."

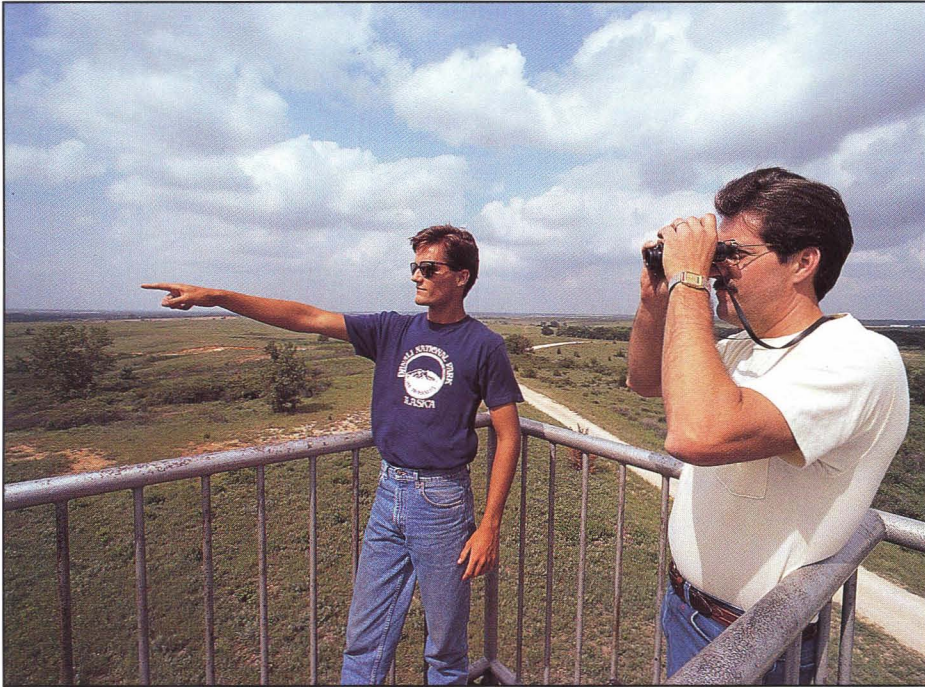
"But I thought the Chickadee Checkoff was created for nongame programs," barked a new voice in the crowd. "Sure," the interpreter answered. "But the Chickadee Checkoff in Kansas and most other states was woefully inadequate in providing funding for the kinds of projects we enjoy today because of the Wildlife Diversity Fund."

Thelma asked how the money was raised for the Wildlife Diversity Fund. "A user fee of from 0.25 percent up to 5 percent on the wholesale cost of certain outdoor items is assessed," the interpreter explained. "An example is that field guide in your pocket. Let's say the retail price was \$10 last year. The manufacturer's cost was probably around \$2.50. A five percent assessment added 13 cents, putting the cost of the book to you at \$10.13. Assessments on field guides, binoculars, film and bird seed add up."

"Just how much money are we talking about?" came another voice



Many Kansans who enjoy nongame wildlife donate to the Chickadee Checkoff Program, but this money falls short of providing the type of nongame projects needed.



Observation towers, trails, education centers and many other wildlife learning and viewing facilities could be reality if the Wildlife Diversity Fund Initiative is successful.

in the group. The interpreter continued. "Well, over the first year, it took in more than \$350 million nationally. Kansas was eligible for \$3 million, but since states must match 25 percent of the money provided, we weren't geared up to spend but about half of it. Now with our own state funding initiative about to pass, we'll easily be able to provide our \$1 million portion of the match requirement."

A man in the group who had been listening intently interjected, "Now, I'm a small businessman, and I'm wondering how you convinced the outdoor industry on this. Isn't everyone against new taxes."

"Actually, once they understood that the whole thing was an investment, they bought into it," the interpreter answered. "Of course, hearing from thousands of their customers in support of it didn't hurt either. But, mainly, we pointed out how well the PR/DJ system had worked for last 50 years."

The man was an avid hunter and knew the tremendous comeback stories of the wild turkey, pronghorn, wood duck, striped bass and other game species made possible by the PR/DJ program. "Well," he

exclaimed, "I reckon if it worked so well for the game species, a similar program for nongame makes sense as well." Everyone in the group nodded agreement . . .

While this episode is fantasy, it could be reality in the near future if the Wildlife Diversity Fund (WDF) is given a chance. Traditional hunters and anglers have always resented that the so-called "non-consumers" didn't pay their way. Hunting and fishing license buyers have paid for not only conservation



The chickadee is just one of many species of wildlife that will benefit.

measures necessary because of the public's consumption of resources but also environmental services and protection efforts for all wildlife. If hunters had not provided the funds to purchase the Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area back in the late 1940s, this critically important wetland would most likely have been drained and developed. Acquisition of areas such as Cheyenne Bottoms provides habitat for countless nongame wildlife, including endangered species, and the habitat management aimed at game species benefits nongame species as well. For the wildlife watcher, WDF would provide a vehicle to allow significant, direct financial participation. WDF would allow Wildlife and Parks to put significant dollars into wildlife viewing facilities and programs, including viewing blinds, handicap-accessible trails, full interpretive centers and more. Public surveys have shown that the public wants more of these facilities and programs. Perhaps even more important, WDF programs would help us avoid endangered species conflicts by preventing species from being listed in the first place.

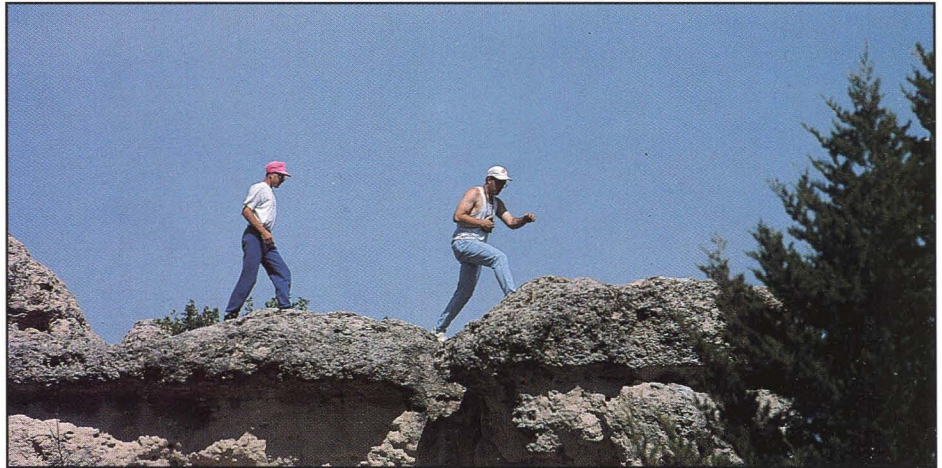
The annual budget of Kansas Wildlife and parks is about \$24 million. Two-thirds of the department's operations is paid for through the sale of various hunting and fishing license. Approximately 17 percent of the budget comes from the State General Fund, and it is primarily used for parks. The rest comes from an assortment of sources including the Park Fee Fund (\$1.5 million), federal aid from PR/DJ (\$5 million), and donations to Chickadee Checkoff Program (\$150,000).

Chickadee Checkoff funds are spent specifically on nongame wildlife projects, but several times that amount is needed to adequately fund programs. The WDF is anticipated to add \$3 million each year and would make up more than 10 percent of the department's budget. This money is critical to offset declines in the license fee fund.

The national coalition for the Teaming With Wildlife effort now

has more than 400 groups according to Naomi Edelson who is the Wildlife Diversity Director for the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. "It is really critical that industry recognizes the positive value and investment that this means for wildlife and for future industry markets. The outdoor industry needs to hear from their customers who support this initiative in order to be sold on it themselves. There are about a dozen top companies that play a pivotal role. Kansans who care about wildlife should relay their support and encouragement to Cabela's, Bushnell Sport Optics, and Remington Camping Products (see company list below). Legislation will soon be introduced, so it is important to let your Congressional delegation know your feelings as well," Edelson emphasized.

The Kansas Wildlife Federation was first on board to support Teaming With Wildlife in Kansas, and now there are a dozen organi-



Money will be generated through the sale of outdoor products such as hiking boots, camping gear, binoculars and others. Each state will get a share.

zations signed up as coalition members. The Kansas Audubon Council and its several chapters are avid supporters and have endorsed this concept for a long time. If you are a hiker, birdwatcher, squirrel feeder, camper who enjoys wildlife, or you just care about wildlife, you should support Teaming With Wildlife. For more information on how you can

get involved, contact the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, Fisheries and Wildlife Division, 512 SE 25th Ave., KS 67124; (316) 672-5911; or E-mail: uskanztn@ibm-mail.com. ♡

Communicate with the following companies to show your support for the Wildlife Diversity Fund.

L.L. Bean, Inc.
1 Casco St.
Freeport, ME 04033
Attn. Mr. Leon A. Gorman, Pres.

Recreational Equipment, Inc. (REI)
6750 South 228th St.
Kent, WA 98032
Attn. Mr. Wally Smith, Pres.

Coleman Outdoor Products, Inc.
1526 Cole Blvd.
Golden, CO 80401
Attn. Mr. Michael Hammes, CEO

Johnson Camping
1236 Willow Rd.
Sturtevant, WI 53177
Attn. Mr. John Crabb, CEO

Bushnell Sports Optics Worldwide
9200 Cody
Overland Park, KS 66214
Attn. Mr. Joseph B. Messner, former Pres.

Eastman Kodak Co.
343 State St.
Rochester, NY 14650
Attn: Mr. George M.C. Fisher,
Chairman, CEO and Pres.

Nikon
1300 Walt Whitman Rd.
Melville, NY 11747
Attn. Mr. H. Nakayama, CEO

Pentax
35 Iverness Dr., East
Englewood, CO 80112
Attn. Mr. Masa Tanaka, CEO

The Nature Company
750 Hearst Ave.
Berkeley, CA 94710
Attn. Mr. Ed Strobin, CEO

Wild Birds Unlimited
11711 N. College Ave., Suite 146
Carmel, IN 46036
Attn. Mr. Jim Carpenter, CEO

Cabela's, Inc.
812 13th Ave.
Sidney, NE 69160-0001
Attn. Mr. Dick Cabela, CEO

Remington Camping Products
14760 Santa Fe Trail Drive
Lenexa, KS 66215

Fishing Guide To Kansas



Kansas Fishing: Have It Your Way

Fishing in Kansas can best be described by borrowing an old hamburger joint slogan: "Have it your way." It is likely that, aside from a rushing mountain stream, you'll find a spot, a fish and fishing method you like in Kansas.

Let's start at the top. The quantity of large federal reservoirs surprises most Kansas newcomers; 24 to be exact. They range in size from 1,200 to 16,000 acres, and vary from timber-filled, clear-water get-a-ways, to rich, crappie-infested, open-water lakes. The older reservoirs have gained a reputation for excellent crappie, white bass, walleye and channel catfish fishing. And there is variety for those with different tastes such as striped bass, smallmouth bass and wipers (white bass/striped bass hybrids).

Several of the more recently constructed reservoirs have substantial amounts of standing timber and offer good largemouth bass fishing. However, on the big lakes, crappie and walleye have taken over the spotlight. Crappie are prolific and grow fast in the fertile waters of northeast Kansas. Few states can boast of better crappie fishing than Kansas.

In northcentral Kansas, several reservoirs have emerged as premier walleye hotspots. And with implementation of length limits, the fishing is bound to improve. The walleye continues to be a favorite among anglers in spring and early summer.

If you like to catch big fish, you'll want to try for striped bass. Fresh-water stripers have been stocked in several lakes since the early 1970s, and fish weighing more than 30 pounds are caught each year. The state record, caught in Wilson Reservoir, weighed in at a whopping 43 1/2 pounds.

Another big fish attraction is the flathead catfish. The big cats swim in most larger rivers and streams across the state



and are also taken from most reservoirs, either from the lakes, the inlets or near the outlet structures. The state record, weighing in at 90 pounds was taken below the spillway at Pomona Reservoir in northeast Kansas. Most flatheads are caught on setlines or trot lines. Live bait is a necessity for these big predators, and for those with patience, catching them on rod and reel is a terrific challenge.

Channel catfish are perhaps the most widespread of the catfishes, and nearly every stream, reservoir and small lake has good numbers of channel catfish. Channel cats are popular with anglers in the smaller state and community lakes, and millions are raised in our state hatcheries and stocked into these waters each year. Reservoir channel cats maintain excellent populations without stocking, and they are often overlooked by anglers chasing crappie, walleye or white bass. As a result, good channel catfish fishing opportunities are available at many reservoirs, as well as the spillways below these reservoirs.

The state fishing and community lakes mentioned above are small jewels scattered across Kansas near smaller towns and cities. State fishing lakes are owned and managed by the department. They range in size from 50 to 200 acres and can be great places to take a family for a day of fishing. Community lakes are owned by local cities or communities and are usually managed by the

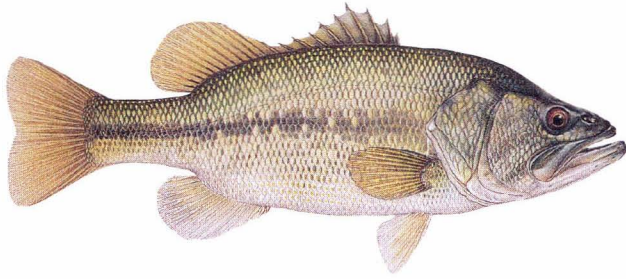
local district fisheries biologist. Hidden away, just out of town, many community lakes are real sleepers, providing outstanding fishing opportunities.

Kansas is fortunate to have more than 10,000 miles of fishable streams. Only the navigable rivers -- the Arkansas, Missouri and Kansas -- are open to public access, however, you must have landowner permission to access the river across private land. The rest of the state's rivers and streams, which range from wide, deep-flowing rivers of the east to meandering, sandy-bottomed prairie streams of the west, are privately owned. A little research and polite asking can open the doors to some great fishing on these streams. Huge flatheads and channel cats are caught on the larger rivers, and through a grassland region called the Flint Hills, the sparkling streams hold spotted bass for the angler looking to get away from it all.

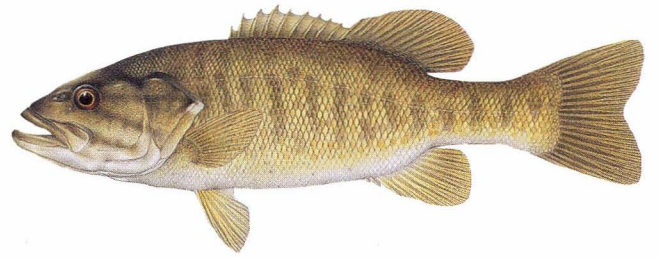
And last, but certainly not least, Kansas is blessed with more than 50,000 farm ponds. Most farm ponds are less than 10 acres, however, some of the large watersheds cover more than 100 acres. These privately owned waterholes require landowner permission, but the lack of fishing pressure makes them hotspots for largemouth bass, channel catfish and bluegill. Farm ponds account for most of the large bass and bluegill caught in Kansas each year.

For those anglers who just can't bear to put up their fishing gear in the winter, many waters across the state also offer trout fishing. At select department-owned lakes and reservoir spillways, trout are stocked beginning October 15. A special trout permit is required to fish for trout in these waters during the season, which ends April 15.

You can see that Kansas offers a wide variety of fishing opportunities. Use this guide to find just the kind of fishing you desire, and . . . have it your way in Kansas.



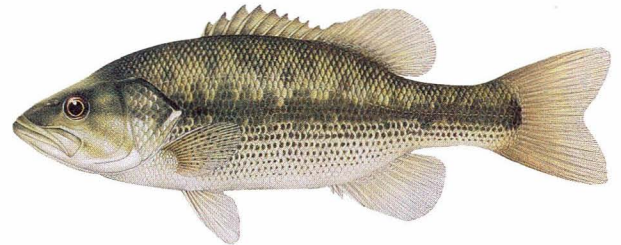
LARGEMOUTH BASS Part of a group known as the black basses, including the smallmouth and spotted bass, the largemouth is the largest. Common in farm ponds, the largemouth likes shallow, murky water and usually associates with structure such as weeds or submerged timber. Some of the newer reservoirs and 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.



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 larger reservoirs, the smallmouth has adapted well and attracts 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.

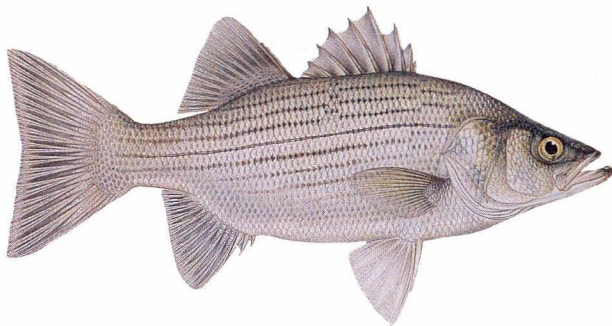


STRIPED BASS A saltwater native, the striped bass has adapted well to freshwater existence and has prospered in several Kansas lakes. They don't reproduce in Kansas waters, however, so populations are maintained through stocking programs. Stripers are legendary for their hard fighting nature and long,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

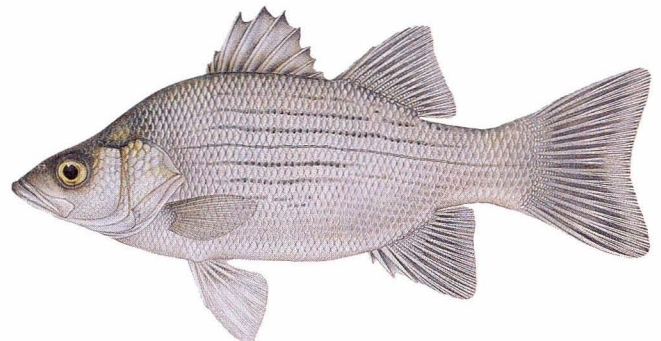


SPOTTED BASS Also known as the Kentucky bass, the spotted is native to eastern Kansas streams, mainly those that flow over limestone bottoms in the Flint Hills. It resembles the largemouth in coloration, with a more pronounced horizontal blotching and spots along the belly. The spotted bass acts more 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 8 pounds, 15 ounces.

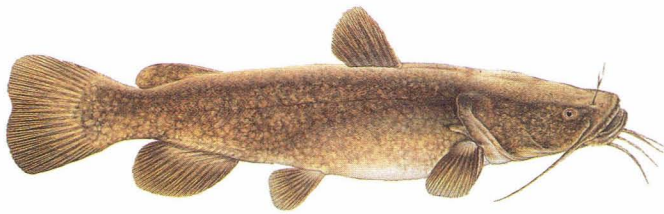
Illustrations by Joseph R. Tomelleri



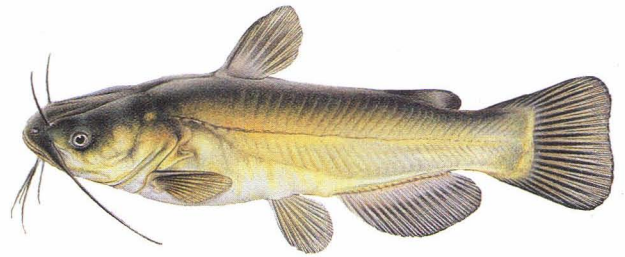
WIPER Perhaps the meanest fish in Kansas waters, the wiper is the cross between a white bass and a striped bass. Wipers grow fast, aggressively hit lures and fight like no other fish. It's no wonder Kansas anglers love them. The wiper, like its striper parent, has two rows of teeth near the rear of the tongue. The white bass has a single tooth patch on its tongue. The state record wiper weighed 22 pounds. The world record wiper is listed at 23 pounds, 2 ounces.



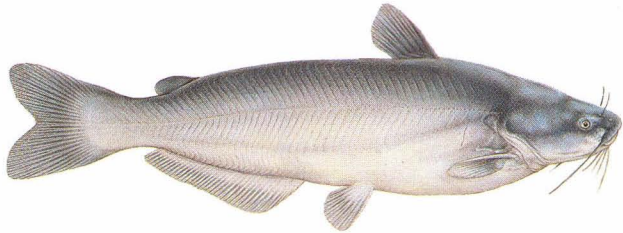
WHITE BASS Common in most Kansas' reservoirs, white bass are prolific and are generally found in large schools. While popular any time of the year, white bass are known for their spawning runs, which may take them miles upriver above the reservoir. Fishermen gather along the streams near the deeper pools and cast jigs and spinners 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, 7 ounces.



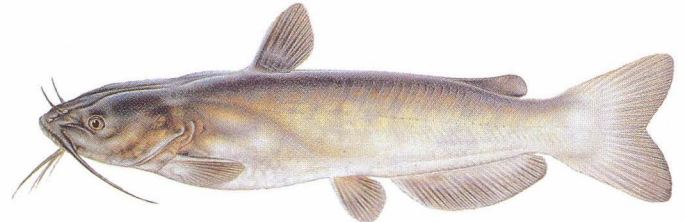
FLATHEAD CATFISH Just as the name implies, this catfish has a broad, flat head with a lower jaw that juts out. Also called the calico cat, the flathead is a mottled brown to nearly yellow in color. Strictly predatory, the flathead is caught with live bait and occasionally lures, usually at night. Common in rivers and reservoirs across Kansas, the state record weighed 90 pounds. The world record stands at 91 pounds, 4 ounces.



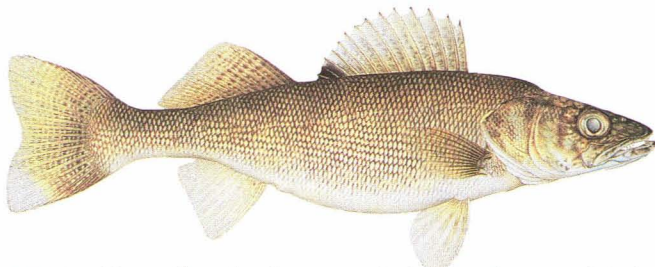
BLACK BULLHEAD Smaller than the other, more sought after catfishes, the bullhead is brown/green in color and doesn't have the forked tail like the channel cat. Common in nearly all streams, lakes and ponds, the bullhead bites worms and stink bait readily and delights youngsters learning to fish. The state record is 7 pounds, 5 ounces. The world record is 8 pounds, 15 ounces.



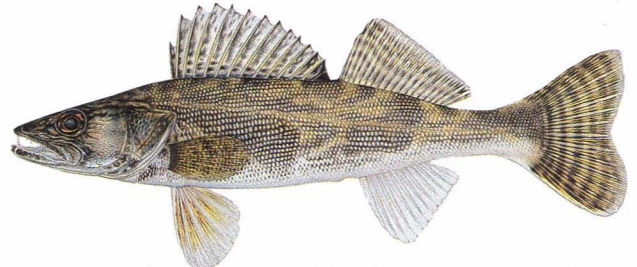
BLUE CATFISH The blue catfish looks much like the channel cat, except the blue has a humped back, a longer anal fin and gets bigger. Blues are native to several rivers in northeast Kansas including the Kansas and Missouri. Blues are seldom caught on the concoctions used for channel cats, preferring cut or live bait. The largest blue cat on record weighed 109 pounds, 4 ounces. The Kansas record weighed 82 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 34 pounds, 11 ounces. The world record is 58 pounds.

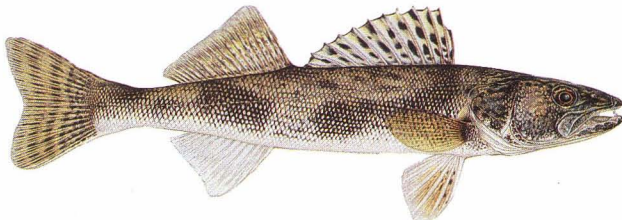


WALLEYE The walleye has become a highly sought game fish for Kansas anglers and has been stocked in most federal reservoirs and some larger state and community lakes. To help maintain these fisheries, millions of young walleye are collected and stocked each spring by department biologists and culturists.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

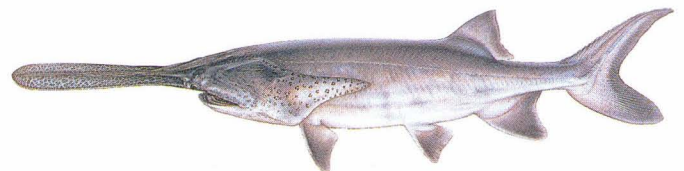


SAUGEYE Another promising hybrid, the saugeye is the cross between a walleye and a sauger. Biologists hope the saugeye exhibits traits of both parents and survives better in less desirable reservoir conditions. Early results look promising. Difficult to distinguish from the parents, the saugeye will grow faster than either but probably won't get as big as the walleye. The world record saugeye weighed 15 pounds, 10 ounces. The state record weighed 5 pounds 12 ounces

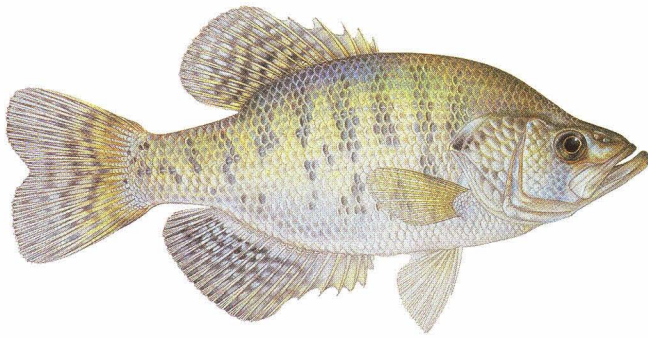
Illustrations by Joseph R. Tomelleri



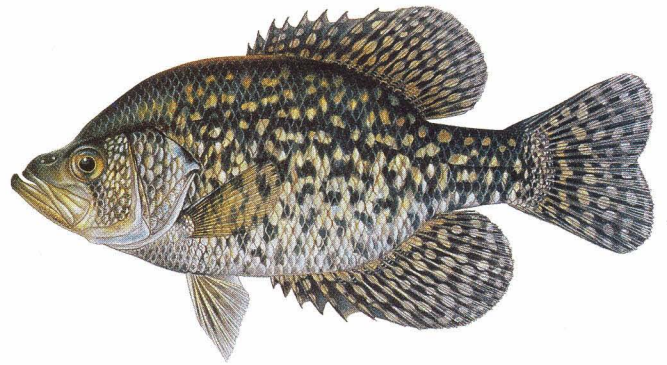
SAUGER This close cousin to the walleye loves murky water and current. Sauger are being stocked in several northeast Kansas reservoirs where walleye haven't done well because of high flow-through and murky water conditions. Sauger have been shown to be less vulnerable to be flushed out of a reservoir. Smaller than the walleye, the world record sauger weighed 8 pounds, 12 ounces. The state record is 3 pounds, 9 ounces.



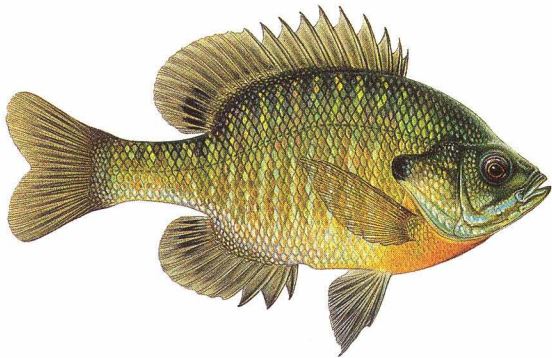
PADDLEFISH The paddlefish is a toothless plankton eater that resembles what one might think prehistoric fishes looked like. Common only in two rivers in Kansas, the Marais des Cygnes and the Neosho, the paddlefish is taken by fishermen only during the spring spawning runs, and then only during the special 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 record weighed 142 pounds, 8 ounces. The Kansas record weighed 81 pounds.



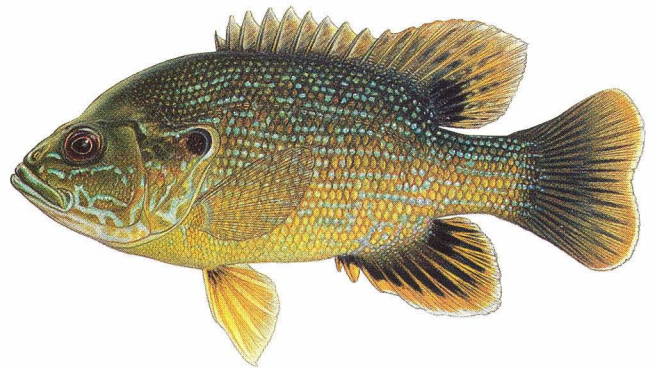
WHITE CRAPPIE The white crappie is abundant across Kansas, and ideally suited to the large federal reservoirs. Known for its prolific numbers and delicious white meat, the white crappie is one of the most popular sportfish in the state. The rich waters of northeast Kansas reservoirs produce some of the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



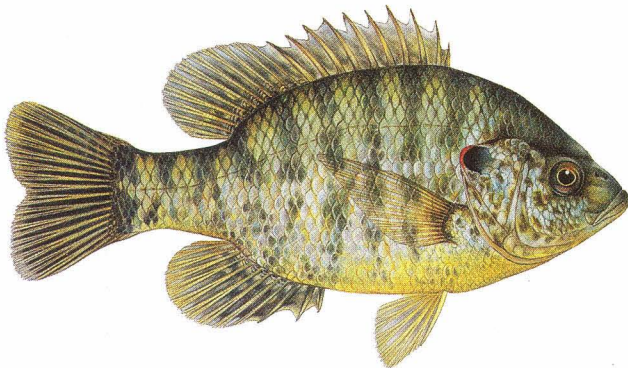
BLACK CRAPPIE The black crappie is not as widespread in Kansas as the white crappie. The black is more suited for clear-water and small impoundments such as farm ponds. Black crappie are distinguished by a uniform dark flecking, with no visible barring as seen on the white crappie. The world record black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



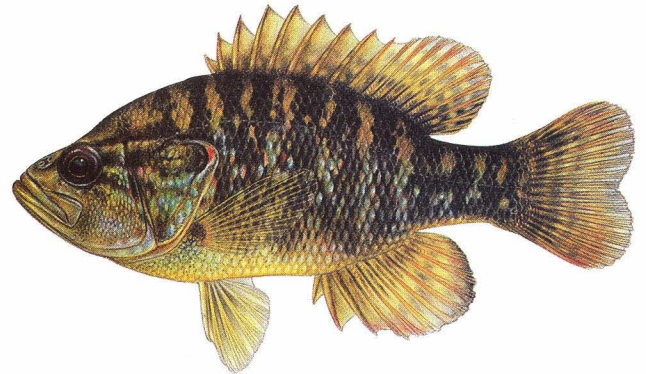
BLUEGILL The bluegill is one of the most common panfish in Kansas, and it provides many youngsters with their first fishing thrill. Although it doesn't grow to enormous weights, the tenacious, saucer-shaped fish makes up for size with a scrappy fight. Common in most farm ponds and smaller community and 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, 6 ounces. The largest greenie on record weighed 2 pounds, 7 ounces.



REDEAR SUNFISH The redear sunfish has been stocked into select lakes and reservoirs. Although the redear resembles the bluegill, it usually prefers deeper water 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 1 pound, 11 ounces. The world record tipped the scales at 5 pounds, 4 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.

Reg 1 Cont'

	boat ramps	boat rental	camping	drinking water	dump station	electric hookups	marina	picnic areas	swimming	trailer pads	blue gill	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	●		●	●	●	●		●			●			●	●			●	●									
Belleville (Rocky Pond) Lake - 27 acres, Bellville City Park			●	●				●					●	●	●			●	●									
Ellis City Lake - 100 acres, Ellis	●		●					●						●	●			●	●									
Keller Lake - 3 acres, 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 - 8 acres, Salina	●			●				●			●		●	●	●			●	●		●					●		
Smoky Hill Gardens - 11 acres, 10 miles S, 2 miles W of Goodland			●	●	●			●			●		●	●	●			●	●									
Villa High Lake - 2 acres, Colby			●										●															

	boat ramps	boat rental	camping	drinking water	dump station	electric hookups	marina	picnic areas	swimming	trailer pads	blue gill	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
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 - Low-water dam at Minneapolis													●	●		●												



Gene Brehm Photo

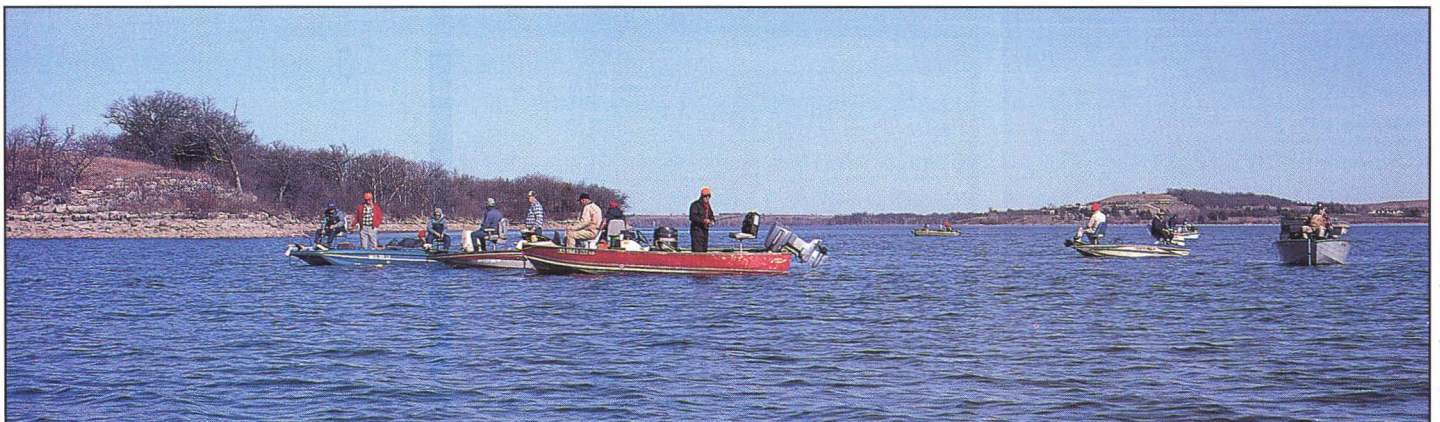
Reg 2 Cont'

COMMUNITY LAKES Cont.

	boat ramps	boat rental	camping	drinking water	dump station	electric hookups	marina	picnic areas	swimming	trailer pads	blue gill	buffalo	bullhead	channel catfish	crappie	flathead catfish	green sunfish	largemouth bass	redecor sunfish	sauger	saugeye	smallmouth bass	spotted bass	striped bass	trout	walleye	white bass	wiper
Shawnee Lake -- 416 acres, 3139 SE 29th St., Topeka	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Shawnee JR. -- 2 acres, W side of Lake Shawnee, 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 Creek Lake --- 7 acres, 1.2 miles S, 11/2 miles E of Baldwin	●		●					●			●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●									
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								●			●			●			●	●	●									
Tomahawk Creek Parkway Ponds (3) -- 3 acres, Leawood								●			●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●									
Troy 4-H Lake -- 5 acres, 1/2 mile SW of Troy											●			●			●	●	●									
Tuttle Creek Seep Stream -- Tuttle Creek State Park River Pond Area			●	●	●	●		●	●																●			
Lake Wabaunsee -- 216 acres, 4 miles W of Eskridge													●	●	●	●	●	●	●									
Wamego City lake -- 1/2 acre, Wamego City Park											●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●									
Waterville City Lake -- 8 acres, 1 mile N, 1 mile W of Harveyville											●			●	●	●	●	●	●									
Waterworks Lake -- 6 acres, Sheridan & Curtis St. Olathe								●			●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●									
West Lake -- 6 acres, Gage Park, Topeka								●			●			●	●	●	●	●	●									
Wyandotte Co. Lake -- 330 acres, Wyandotte County Park	●	●	●	●				●	●		●			●	●	●	●	●	●						●	●	●	●

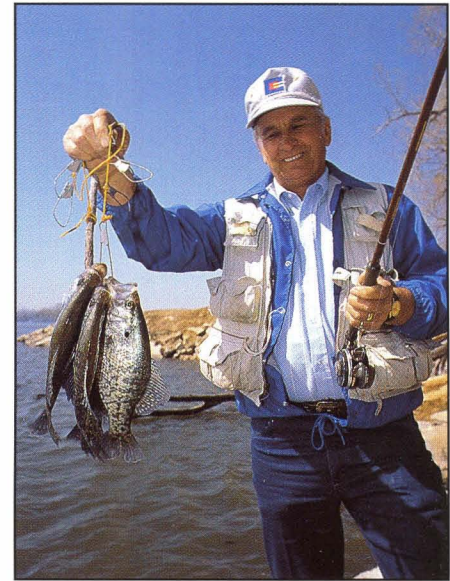
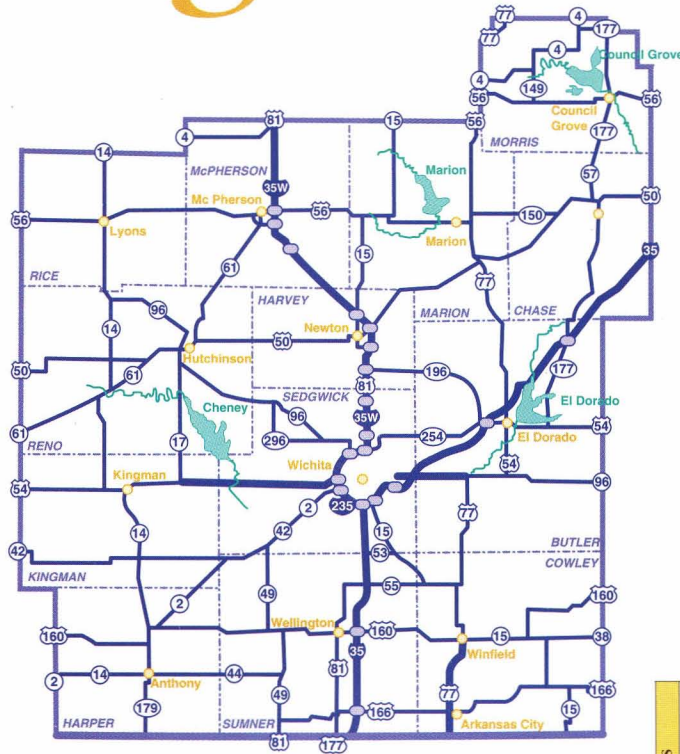
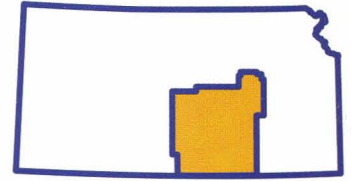
RIVER ACCESS

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 (2)	●		●	●				●	●					●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●					●	●	●
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 at Osawatomie											●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●					●	●	●
Marias des Cygnes River low-water dam at Ottawa											●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●					●	●	●
Missouri River at Atchison	●										●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●					●	●	●
Missouri River -- city parks in Doniphan, 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 4



Mike Blair Photo

RESERVOIRS

- Cheney -- 9,550 acres, 20 miles W of Wichita
- Council Grove -- 3,280, 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 NW of Marion

boat ramps	boat rental	camping	drinking water	dump station	electric hookups	marina	picnic areas	swimming	trailer pads	blue gill	buffalo	bullhead	channel catfish	crappie	flathead catfish	green sunfish	largemouth bass	redecor sunfish	sauger	saugeye	smallmouth bass	spotted bass	striped bass	trout	walleye	white bass	wiper
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●				●	●	●	●	●	●					●	●	●	●	●
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●		●	●	●	●	●	●		●			●	●	●	●	●
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●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●				●	●	●	●	●	●					●	●	●	●	●

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
- Kaw WA -- 14 acres, 1 mile SE of Arkansas City
- Kingman -- 144 acres, 7 miles W of Kingman
- McPherson - 46 acres, 6 miles N, 2 1/2 miles W of Canton

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COMMUNITY LAKES

- Afton -- 258 acres, 25 miles SW of Wichita
- Anthony City Lake -- 156 acres, 1 mile N, 1/2 mile W of Anthony
- Carey Park Pond -- 1 acre, S end of Hutchinson
- Chisholm Creek Park -- 3 acres, NE 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
- Kahola Lake -- 405 acres, 11 miles W, 8 miles N of Emporia
- 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

●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●							●	●	●
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Reg 4 Cont'

COMMUNITY LAKES Cont.		boat ramps	boat rental	camping	drinking water	dump station	electric hookups	marina	picnic areas	swimming	trailer pads	blue gill	buffalo	bullhead	channel catfish	crappie	flathead catfish	green sunfish	largemouth bass	redear sunfish	sauger	saugye	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		boat ramps	boat rental	camping	drinking water	dump station	electric hookups	marina	picnic areas	swimming	trailer pads	blue gill	buffalo	bullhead	channel catfish	crappie	flathead catfish	green sunfish	largemouth bass	redear sunfish	sauger	saugye	smallmouth bass	spotted bass	striped bass	trout	walleye	white bass	wiper
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 Photo



Reg 5 Cont'

COMMUNITY LAKES											boat ramps	boat rental	camping	drinking water	dump station	electric hookups	marina	picnic areas	swimming	trailer pads	blue gill	buffalo	bullhead	channel catfish	crappie	flathead catfish	green sunfish	largemouth bass	redecar sunfish	sauger	saugeye	smallmouth bass	spotted bass	striped bass	trout	walleye	white bass	wiper
Allen City Lake -- 59 acres, 1 mile E, 1/2 mile N of Allen	●	●					●				👤		👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤																			
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 -- 11 acres, 1.4 miles S of Cherryvale	●	●					●				👤		👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤																		
Coffeyville State Park & Pfister Park Lakes -- 10 acres Coffeyville								●			👤		👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤					👤													
Empire Lake -- 800 acres, SE of Riverton	●	●									👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤				👤				👤										
Emporia Jones Park -- 3 acres, Emporia				●			●				👤		👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤																		
Emporia Peter Pan Park -- 3 acres, Emporia				●			●				👤		👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤																		
Edna City Lake -- 10 acres, 2 miles W, 1 mile S of Edna	●	●	●				●				👤		👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤				👤														
Eureka City Lake -- 259 acres, 4 miles N of Eureka	●	●					●	●	●		👤		👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤				👤		👤		👤										
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 or Gridley	●	●	●				●				👤		👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤					👤	👤	👤	👤										
Lebo Lake -- 70 acres, 2 miles E, 1/ mile N or 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 Parson	●	●	●				●	●	●		👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤			👤			👤	👤	👤										
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	●	●					●				👤		👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤						👤		👤										
Severy City Lake -- 10 acres, 2 1/2 miles E of Severy	●	●					●				👤		👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤																		
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	●										👤		👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤	👤						👤		👤										

Reg 5 Cont'

RIVER ACCESS	boat ramps	boat rental	camping	drinking water	dump station	electric hookups	marina	picnic areas	swimming	trailer pads	blue gill	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
	Caney River - Federal Land above Hula Reservoir																											
Cottonwood River -- Emporia Peter Pan Park								●																				
Elk River -- Elk City Reservoir Wildlife Area								●																				
Fall River -- low-water dam at Fredonia																												
Fall River -- Fall River Reservoir Wildlife Area	●		●																									
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 Hartford			●					●																				
Neosho River -- low-water dam at Iola																												
Neosho River -- low-water dam at Neosho Falls			●																									
Neosho River on the Neosho Wildlife Area			●																									
Neosho River -- John Redmond Reservoir Wildlife Area																												
110 Mile Creek above Pomona Reservoir			●																									
Shoal Creek at Galena			●					●																				
Soden Park at Emporia								●																				
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			●																									

Department Offices

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

900 SW Jackson, Suite 502
Topeka, KS 66612-1233
(913) 296-2281

REGION 2

3300 SW 29th
Topeka, KS 66614-2053
(913) 273-6740

REGION 5

1500 W. 7th
P.O. Box 777
Chanute, KS 66720-0777
(316) 431-0380

OPERATIONS OFFICE

512 SE 25th Avenue
Pratt, KS 67124-8174
(316) 672-5911

REGION 3

808 McArtor Rd,
Dodge City, KS 67801-6024
(316) 227-8609

KANSAS CITY OFFICE

9539 Alden
Lenexa, KS 66215-1164
(913) 894-9113

REGION 1

P.O. Box 338
U.S. 183 Bypass
Hays, KS 67601-0338
(913) 628-8614

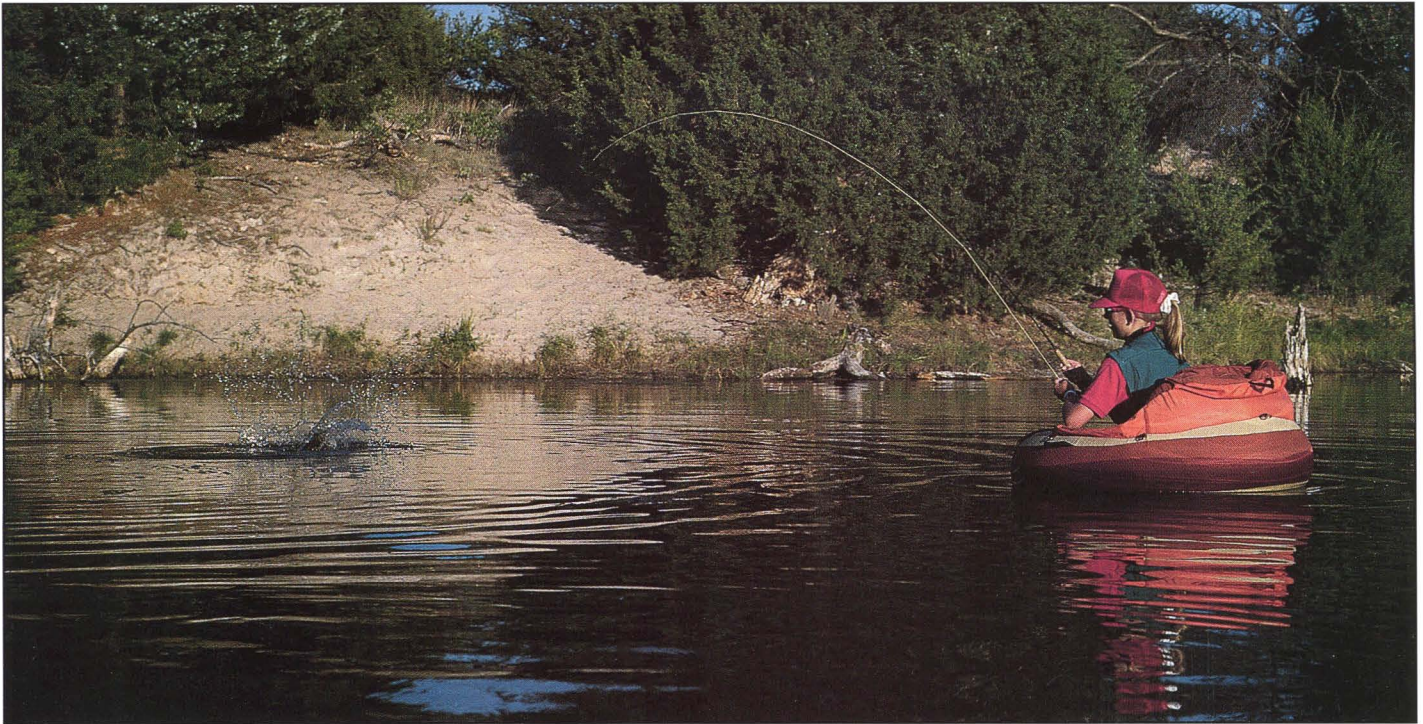
REGION 4

6232 E. 29th N.
Wichita, KS 67202
(316) 683-8069

EMPORIA INVESTIGATIONS OFFICE

1830 Merchant
Emporia, KS 66801-1525
(316) 342-0658

Catch & Release: An Investment In Fishing's Future



Mike Blair photo

Catch and release fishing is nothing new. Bass fishermen have been promoting its benefits for years. But tradition dies hard, and Kansans have traditionally fished for food. It's inconceivable to some why you would want to throw a fish back.

Today, however, our state lakes, reservoirs and farm ponds receive a great deal of fishing pressure, and many more fishermen have boats, electronics and other equipment that makes them more efficient. The department enforces creel and length limits to protect fisheries, but some fishermen go a step further. They release some of the larger fish they catch, thereby investing in fishing's future.

It's not a sin to keep fish to eat. In

fact, we encourage it. However, keep only what you can use, and throw the rest back. And if you like to eat fish, concentrate on the more prolific species such as crappie, white bass or bluegill. These species can withstand heavy pressure and can quickly replace fish kept by fishermen.

Small farm ponds and state lakes can be especially vulnerable to overfishing. The smaller waters can only support so many fish, and within the population, a small number of those fish will be lunker sized. However, those lunkers are important to the population structure. The larger predators keep the smaller, more prolific species such as crappie and bluegill from overpopulating. If you remove too many of

these larger predators, the panfish species can easily overpopulate, creating an unbalanced population that may eventually become stunted.

Everyone likes to catch big fish, and it's fun to show them off to your fishing buddies. But you'll get a charge out of releasing a 7-pound bass, knowing it will be there another day, perhaps for another fisherman. For evidence of your fishing fortune, carry an automatic 35mm camera. Take a snapshot of that big fish, then quickly release it. You can show your buddies the photo, and they might look forward to catching that fish. And if you send us a photo of your lunker and it meets or exceeds the minimum length standards listed below, we'll

send you an embroidered Catch And Release patch. If your fish is the largest entry of the year in its category, we'll send you a year's subscription to Kansas Wildlife & Parks magazine — FREE! Each spring, the magazine will feature photos of some of the largest entries, so try and take an attractive photo. Just remember: Measure, Photo and Release when you catch your next big fish. Catch and release fishing is not only fun — it's an investment in fishing's future. Invest on your next fishing trip. ♡

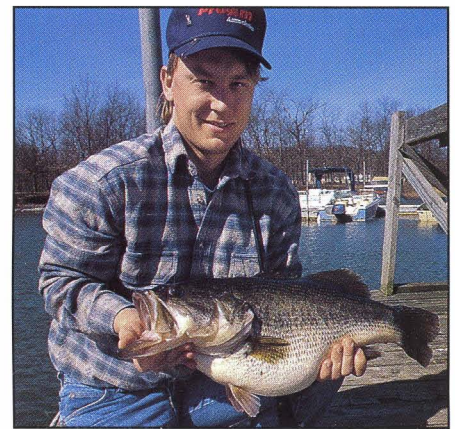
(Check the 1996 Kansas Fishing Regulation brochures for additional entry forms.)



Mike Blair photos

Catch and Release Award Minimum Length Requirements

Largemouth bass	24 inches	Channel catfish	35 inches
Smallmouth bass	18 inches	Flathead catfish	50 inches
Spotted bass	18 inches	Blue catfish	50 inches
White bass	17 inches	Crappie, black	15 inches
Striped bass	36 inches	Crappie, white	15 inches
Wiper	25 inches	Trout	20 inches
Warmouth	10 inches	Walleye	24 inches
Bluegill	10 inches	Sauger	20 inches
Green sunfish	10 inches	Saugeye	24 inches
Redear sunfish	10 inches	Longnose gar	50 inches
Drum	30 inches	Common carp	30 inches
Bullhead catfish	16 inches		



Send a color photo of your fish.

Catch and Release Award Form

Name of angler _____

address _____

Species of fish: _____ Length of fish: _____

Method of take: _____

Date _____ Time _____

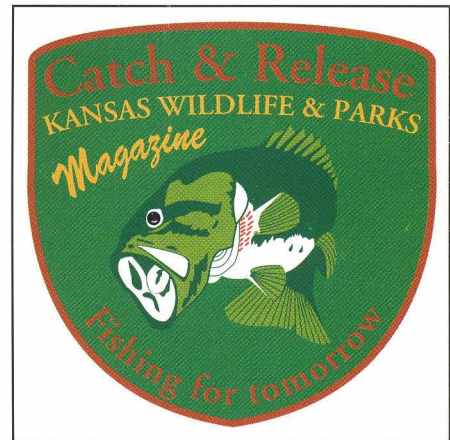
Bait or lure used _____

Phone No. _____

signature _____

Check box if you will allow your photo to be published.

Send this form and a color photograph of your fish to: Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, Public Information, 512 SE 25th Ave., Pratt, KS 67124-8174



Edited by Mark Shoup

WEAR BLAZE ORANGE

Editor:

I would like to share a story. It was the second and final weekend of deer season. A cold front had swept through the Glen Elder Reservoir area on Friday, sending temperatures to near zero and the wind chill to 8 degrees below. Saturday evening, I had just completed a still-hunt of some weedbeds near the lake and walked a lane back to my truck in the dark. A couple stopped their truck to talk. The disabled hunter and his wife asked if I knew that a small doe was within 30 yards of my truck while I was stalking the weeds.

I told them that I knew about the doe but wasn't interested in her. I had hoped that she was the indicator of a large group of does and bucks that I knew were in the area. Our conversation led to the fact that the couple was frustrated at not being able to take a deer with only one day of the season left. I liked them and suggested we try a spot I knew the next morning. I would still-hunt a canyon with my muzzleloader, and the couple could take position at the end of it with their high-powered rifles. Eagerly, they accepted my offer, and a dawn meeting place was arranged.

At dawn on Sunday morning, I pulled into the meeting area to find the couple standing thirty yards in front of their truck. The man had his scoped 7mm-08 trained on the flats below. I walked to them.

The woman was standing next to him, looking into the flats, shaking her head. "I don't know, honey," she said. "I think it might be a deer."

"About 300 yards out, there is a deer grazing. I think," the hunter said as he continued his aim. I looked with my low-powered binoculars. There was a strange humped form, as though it might be grazing in the tall grass. "I don't know," I said. "It almost looks like the back of a hog."

"If it would just raise its head," the

hunter said as he readjusted his rifle.

I took another look with my binoculars. The humped form became the figure of a man with a hunting knife as he raised to a standing position. "Hold it!" I said. "Lord, it's a man."

The man in the flats was dressed in dark green insulated coveralls with a dark green cap. He was field dressing a deer.

The hunter lowered his rifle and trembled and looked as if he were going to be ill. "You don't know how close I came to pulling the trigger. If anyone had said 'shoot,' I would have."

We went to the valley and tried our hunting strategy without success. As we parted company, I could tell the two were still upset over the events at dawn. I was too. While I had stalked the canyon, I couldn't get my thoughts off the hunter we had almost shot. What kind of fool would be out in such an area without blaze orange? Had he removed it because he had taken his deer? Had the cold weather caused him to put on heavy coveralls over his blaze orange without realizing what he had done?

I wanted to go back and tell him off, call him an idiot, even punch the guy out. I settled for a short prayer. Thank God I didn't shoot. Thank God the rifleman and his wife were cautious.

Randy Smith
Garden City

Dear Mr. Smith:

Thanks for your story, which clearly illustrates the need for blaze orange. However, I must point out that this near-accident was not only the fault of the negligent hunter who didn't wear blaze orange. The would-be shooter violated two very basic rules of hunting safety taught in every hunter education course: 1) never even consider shooting at something that you can't positively identify and 2) never use a rifle scope as binoculars.

Again, thanks for your story. It is relevant to the upcoming turkey season, as well as to deer hunting.

-Shoup

QUAIL, GUIDES, LAND LOSS

Editor:

Your March/April 1995 issue hit on two very timely topics. One was the article on modern quail research that spoke of declining quail populations (Page 26, "New Concern for an Old Friend"). The other item was Mr. Peterson's letter regarding the loss of hunting opportunities in our state due to leasing arrangements made by for-profit businesses (Page 33, "Down Side of Leases").

It seems we are now at the point where we must see a relationship between resource management and the trend towards pay-to-hunt. What Mr. Peterson encountered is the proverbial tip of the iceberg.

Obviously, landowners have the right to lease their property for hunting or any other legal activity. My concerns are with the game resource and with the future for Kansas hunters who have neither the finances or the connections to lease hunting privileges, or to pay for a membership in one of the for-profit organizations now operating in Kansas.

I have another question or concern. What regulatory authority does KDWP have over the for-profit organizations involved in leasing lands in Kansas for hunting and fishing? Are these businesses licensed? Do they come under KDWP's definition of "guide" if all they provide members is a map of leased lands? I assume they do not come under the regulations of shooting preserves.

How many out-of-state for-profit leasing organizations are currently operating in Kansas?

With regard to quail populations and the future of quail hunting in Kansas, is it the best use of Kansas sportsmen's funds to have KDWP spending scarce dollars to advertise Kansas' quail hunting in national publications? I am sure many Kansas hunters would be interested in seeing the figures on just how much was spent in 1994 and what is budgeted for this purpose.

I know the standard argument has been that revenue from non-resident

license sales helps sustain wildlife and fisheries programs. It is the concern of many sportsmen that these monies are not landing on the head of a single bobwhite but are being used up for salaries and administrative costs (or possibly parks).

There seems to be a logical sequence of events. As Kansas gets more and more quail hunters from states where they have lost their quail hunting lands and quail, we will begin to experience similar losses. As more Kansas quail habitat goes over to for-profit organizations and wealthy individuals, we will see a further decline in the sale of resident licenses. We will soon reach the point, if not already, that the loss of revenue from resident license sales will exceed the amount taken in from non-resident upland hunters.

As more Kansas fathers experience the difficulties of finding a place to take their sons and daughters hunting, we lose future generations of hunters. In my opinion, this makes the practice of continued expenditure of funds by KDWP to advertise and indirectly sell our quail resource to the highest bidder unacceptable.

Minuscule purchases of new public hunting lands could do more harm than good. Non-resident hunters who are drawn here by promises of abundant hunting opportunities on public hunting lands are attracted to private property, once they experience the crowds and declining quail populations on public land. These hunters are currently seeking to lease or make pay-to-hunt arrangements with private landowners.

So, should KDWP be spending scarce funds to attract more non-resident hunters? I think not. The economics don't work to the advantage of resident hunters.

A few years ago in ads to attract hunters, KDWP said our hunting was one of our "best kept secrets." I am sure Kansas quail hunters would attest to the fact that this is no longer the case.

Obviously, we will have non-resident quail hunters as long as there is a hunt-able resource. However, I do not believe that money that could be used for resource enhancement should be used to advertise that resource in national publi-

cations. The declining resident license sales resulting from the reduced access is bad policy and bad resource management.

Milton T. Rawlings
Junction City

Dear Mr. Rawlings:

The Department of Wildlife and Parks licenses guides and outfitters in Kansas. By definition, a guide is a person who guides hunters or fishermen more than five days a year or receives more than \$500 for such services in a calendar year. Under most circumstances, a group of hunters leasing land would not be considered a commercial guide business. As a result, we don't know how many such outfits are operating in Kansas.

We also share your concern for future hunting opportunities. Maintaining public hunting areas and providing access through the new Walk-In Hunting Area program (land leased from private landowners and opened to public hunting) are ways the department is attempting to ensure that all hunters have a place to hunt.

As a natural resource agency, one of our first priorities is the wildlife resource. Nearly all of our efforts are directed toward managing and protecting these resources through regulation, enforcement, habitat management, and research. We also promote the enjoyment of these resources through public information media such as this magazine, statewide new releases, videos, brochures, and individual contacts. However, we do very little promotion outside Kansas.

The department does not spend money to advertise our hunting in national publications, and there is no money budgeted for such expenditures. Most of our national exposure comes from freelance writers who hunt in Kansas and write about it in national publications. We do not pay for this.

Over the years, a trend has become apparent: when bird numbers are high, we have more non-resident hunters; when bird numbers are low, we have fewer hunters. Rest assured, the department would never attempt to over-promote bird hunting. It would not be in

anyone's best interest to endanger bird populations or burden private landowners with excess hunters.

Our 1995 upland bird hunting forecast is a good example of our approach. According to survey data, bird numbers were generally down across the Kansas. The forecast, which we sent to every inquiring non-resident hunter and every newspaper in Kansas, as well as many out-of-state news contacts, strongly emphasized the forecast.

In fact, the title of the news release we sent out on the 1995 bird season was "Upland Outlook Gloomy."

--Miller

KUDOS

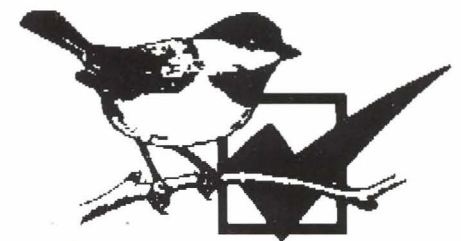
Editor:

I want to thank you for the special photo issue (*Kansas Wildlife and Parks*, Jan./Feb. 1996). It was such a treat to devour the photos you put in that magazine. I have to say "devour" because you can't just skim over a Mike Blair photo.

For nine years, I have subscribed to your magazine, and I have not seen a bad photo in any of the 108 magazines I have received. When you look at the wildlife photos, you sometimes have to wonder how he could get such beautiful photos of the animals he shoots. Well, I know how he does it. He is a shape-changer and can change into any animal he wants to, so he can get up close to take its picture. Heck, it's the only way I can explain it. Mike Blair is the best wildlife photographer I have ever seen.

I also enjoy Mike Miller's and Mark Shoup's articles. They are both excellent writers and story tellers. Thanks for the pure satisfaction and enjoyment your magazine gives me each month.

Tom Beauchesne
Wichita



SURVIVAL LESSON

Last winter, three duck hunters learned that simple survival skills can come in mighty handy, even in Kansas. The three spent a cold, stormy night on an island in Toronto Reservoir when a fast-approaching storm made crossing the lake by boat impossible.

Pat Porter, Neodesha; his son Mike, Tallahassee, Fla.; and friend John Gunter, Auburn, Ala., were duck hunting on Toronto Reservoir. The trio had boated across the lake to their hunting spot and had just put out their decoys when the wind began to blow, signalling the arrival of the cold front. They picked up and headed back to the boat ramp, but rough water made boating treacherous. As they passed near an island, they decided to stop and reassess the situation. When they beached the boat on the island's north side, waves flooded over the stern and swamped the boat.

Fortunately, the men were well-equipped with cold-weather gear, including a backpack belonging to Gunter with supplies that may have saved their lives. The men retrieved their gear from the swamped boat, secured it to shore, and then looked for a way off the island. They tried to wade to the nearest shore, but the water was too deep for their chest waders. It was going to be a long, cold night.

Pat Porter has taught hunter education for 23 years and knows well the lessons of survival. The men erected a distress signal near the boat, sticking three oars in the sand (three of anything is an international signal of distress). Then they sought shelter on the south, downwind side of the island. The backpack contained a wool blanket, a small propane stove, dehydrated food, flares, and 150 hurricane matches. Unfortunately, the flares wouldn't light, but the men started a fire and settled in for the night.

Pat's wife contacted the Wilson County Sheriff's office about 1:30 a.m. The sheriff's dispatcher sent out teletypes to surrounding agencies asking for their help in locating the hunters' vehi-

SMOKING GUN

Poaching on opening day of the 1995 Kansas firearms deer season proved costly to some Gove County landowners and individuals with them. Two large fires, started by suspects chasing deer through dry grass and stubble, burned an estimated 1,500 acres of CRP (Conservation Reserve Program) grass, wheat stubble, and pasture.

The largest fire, sighted shortly after 1 p.m. by Gove County Sheriff Ron Achilles and Deputy Mark Montage, was located south and west of Gove. Fire units from Gove, Healy, Dighton, Shields, and Amy, plus several tractors with discs and a motor grader, worked more than three hours to bring the fast-moving blaze under control. By the time the fire was out, it had traveled nearly 5 miles and burned more than 1,200 acres. Eye-witnesses reported that a yellow and white utility vehicle chasing a deer started the fire.

Earlier in the day, a poacher chasing a deer through CRP grass started another fire farther south and east of Gove. Fire units from Healy, Dighton, and Shields were able to extinguish this fire after it had burned about 150 acres of grass.

The hunters responsible for this fire were lucky enough to get away from the scene, but the 1995 four-wheel drive pickup being used to chase deer caught fire in the tall grass and was destroyed. The pickup was valued at more than \$20,000.

Conservation Officer Benny Young, Colby, was called to the scene and determined that the men involved were hunting illegally. Three of the four deer they had were seized because the person whose name was on the permit was not present and had not been present when the deer were shot.

The persons involved in the incident had their rifles seized. The poachers will have their hunting privileges revoked for one year. Fines leveled against the three people total \$2,635.

-Gove County Advocate

cles and boat trailer. At 3 a.m., Mrs. Porter contacted conservation officer Dennis Knuth of Independence, asking that he check Elk City Reservoir, since the men often hunted there.

Shortly before 5 a.m., the Toronto City Marshall located the vehicles and the boat trailer at the south boat ramp at Toronto Point, Toronto State Park. The sheriff's dispatcher then contacted me (CO Bob Funke, Fredonia) and asked me to help with the search.

As I drove across Toronto dam, I could see the campfire on the island. I drove to a nearby garage where I stored my patrol boat. Area wildlife manager John Bills had overheard the radio broadcasts and responded to help, as did park manager Doyle Neimeyer.

Bills and I launched the boat, and after breaking ice half way to the island, we finally reached the stranded hunters. The hunters used their shotguns to fire three shots into the air to help the us locate them. The three relieved men were in good spirits and -- because of their

preparation and common sense -- had survived the minus 10-degree windchill with no frostbite or injuries.

Survival skills are taught in all department-sponsored hunter education courses. Students sometimes take that portion of the course lightly, assuming that survival skills are only necessary in the vast wilderness areas of the mountain states. However, these skills, a few easily obtained items stored in the backpack, and the common sense to stay put and stay off the rough water may have saved these hunters' lives.

-CO Bob Funke, Fredonia

**SEEN POACHERS?
POLLUTERS?**

Phone **Outdoor Alert**
1-800-228-4263

RECYCLING DIRECTORY

The Kansas Business and Industry Recycling Program (BIRP) has announced the publication of the third edition of the Directory of Recycling Centers and Programs. The directory provides a listing of recycling centers and programs across the state, with locations and materials accepted, as well as recycling information and a national resource list.

In 1990, when the first directory was published, only 317 centers were listed. The new edition boasts 821 listings.

In addition to publishing the recycling directory, Kansas BIRP provides information on educational programs and presentations, market data, state and nationwide resources, and recycling equipment. The organization assists in setting up buy-back centers, drop off and curbside collection programs for communities, and waste reduction/recycling programs for business and industry. These services are available to private citizens, community organizations, business, industry, and local and state government.

The Directory of Recycling Centers and Programs was prepared with the support of the Kansas Corporation Commission and the U.S. Department of Energy. For more information or a free copy of the directory, contact Kansas BIRP, 2933 SW Woodside Drive, Suite C, Topeka, KS 66614 or phone (913) 273-6808.

—Shoup

Kansas LAND TRUST

The Kansas Land Trust was founded in 1990 as a nonprofit organization to work with landowners who are interested in protecting lands of ecological, historic, scenic, agricultural, or recreational significance in Kansas. The primary mechanism used to provide long-term protection and stewardship of the land is conservation easements.

What are these conservation easements? They are voluntary legal agreements between a landowner and the Land Trust that restrict the kind and amount of development that can occur on the property. For example, prairies will be designated to stay as prairies, farmland will continue to be farmed, wildlife habitat will remain intact, and scenic areas will be uncluttered by visual intrusions.

Other than the right to develop the land, owners retain all other rights and responsibilities. Because the value of the development right is donated to a nonprofit group, easements have potential tax benefits. A major advantage to the Land Trust is being able to preserve land without the burden of raising enormous amounts of money to purchase property.

One of our most frequently-asked questions is this: If I grant an easement, do I have to open my land for public use? The answer is "no." The landowner, however, must permit the easement holder (in our case, the Kansas Land Trust) to have access to the property for annual inspection to ensure that its management adheres to the easement agreement. If there is a violation of the easement agreement, the holder of the easement has the obligation to seek remediation.

However, Mr. Tom Akin, the grantor of Kansas' first easement to a nonprofit group, welcomes visitors to his prairie. He donated an easement on prairie east of Lawrence in memory of his wife. A sign at the entrance to the tract reads, "Welcome to the Dorothy Akin Memorial Prairie, protected in perpetuity by a conservation easement granted to the Kansas

Land Trust. Please respect." Visitors have come with reverential care and appreciation for his generosity in opening this lovely site that abounds with wildflowers each summer.

I think it would be wonderful to have several prairie tracts protected so that they become a sort of "string of pearls." I envision them being along a route open occasionally to wildflower enthusiasts, who would cherish the opportunity to enjoy the lush profusion of blooms. Tallgrass prairies are a unique heartland heritage. The Land Trust is eager to work with prairie owners who wish to preserve this irreplaceable facet of our landscape.

Recognizing that few places like the Dorothy Akin Prairie remain in the Kaw Valley, Kansas Land Trust has launched what it calls the Kaw Valley Heritage Project. Its goals and proposals include fostering partnerships among citizens and organizations to identify and preserve the natural and cultural heritage of the valley; avoiding or resolving conflicts by building bridges between various interests; promoting responsible use of air, water, and land while supporting a healthy economy; and attracting financial support and volunteers for various activities.

The Kansas Land Trust has been working closely with the Kansas Rural Center to establish these partnerships. Preliminary meetings have been held with representatives of the educational, business, agricultural, and environmental communities, as well as municipal, state, and federal governments. By bringing together both private and public sectors to initiate projects that will meld economic, social, cultural, and environmental goals, the Heritage Project hopes to protect open space and promote preservation of existing landscapes, ensuring that the Kaw Valley will remain a desirable place to live for many years to come.

—Joyce Wolf, Kansas Land Trust

Note: For more information on easements with the Kansas Land Trust, contact Joyce Wolf, KLT, 2535 Arkansas Street, Lawrence, KS 66046-4533, or phone (913) 749-3203.

MINING LAW IN ACTION

Last September, Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt reluctantly signed away title to 218 acres in Idaho and Nevada for \$815. That's

\$3.74 per acre. Under archaic provisions of the 1872 Mining Law, which are still in effect, the new owners, Faxe Kalk, Inc., a Danish company, and Newmont Gold Co. got the

land and more than \$1 billion in travertine and gold.

Said Babbitt, "How can a public official give away a billion dollars without going to jail?"

—Common Ground

NET TAKINGS

The American Resources Information Network, which includes 3,000 people and organizations fighting the "property rights" movement, has a home page on the World Wide Web (<http://worldweb.net/%7earin/index.html>) that tracks the status of takings legislation in Congress and all 50 states. You can learn how to contact your senator electronically to share your views. Or you can download the 46-page booklet, "Takings Law in Plain English."

Over at <http://www.ewg.org>, the Environmental Working Group, a "computer-powered" environmental research group in Washington, DC, has offered up its hard-hitting research on federal farm policy and tainted drinking water. Among the tidbits: 2 percent of federal farm subsidy recipients got 27 percent (\$29 billion) of all the payments over the last decade.

Also posted: "A Clear View," the monthly newsletter from the group's Clearinghouse for Environmental Advocacy and Research. Coming: an environmental data bank broken down by state and community.

-Common Ground

GOVERNOR'S WATER PLAN

The following article, written by Governor Bill Graves, appeared in "Hydrogram," a newsletter of the Kansas Water Office, and was taken from the weekly column of the Office of the Governor, Oct. 29, 1995.

Sometimes, things have to get pretty bad before they can get better. That's the situation we're seeing with our state's water. Over the past few years, tests have identified traces of certain herbicides, bacteria, and other contaminants - only part of which stem from contaminated water that flows in from

other states. The rest originates in Kansas.

Water contamination is a reality - there's no way around it. But, if we're to make things better, steps must be taken to rectify the situation. To that end, we've devised a Water Quality Improvement Plan.

The first part of our plan is to gather current pollutant-level data and lay the groundwork for long-term trend analysis. Our targets will be three of the most serious pollutants: sediments, the crop herbicide atrazine, and fecal coliform bacteria, which is found in human and animal waste. To help determine the sources of these pollutants, we'll also step up our regular water-quality monitoring activities and conduct baseline surveys of land-use practices.

We'll start this process with the Kansas-Lower Republican

River Basin. Not only does this basin service about one-third of the state's population, but also it provides a comprehensive cross-section that includes large urban areas, extensive agricultural activity, and a significant industrial presence. Watersheds within the basin include the Big Blue River/Tuttle Creek Lake, the Delaware River/Perry Lake, and the Kansas River mainstem corridor.

Once we've made progress with the Kaw/Republican River Basin, we'll implement similar clean-up efforts in each of the state's dozen river basins. Much of our success, however, will depend on education and participation. By educating everyone from farmers, ranchers, and business owners to children, parents, and outdoor enthusiasts, we're convinced we can achieve voluntary participation

rather than more intrusive regulatory compliance.

However, we're not so naive as to believe a totally voluntary program without incentives can achieve widespread success. Both technical and financial assistance will be made available to property owners, in addition to cost-share programs designed to address various environmental management practices. We're convinced this can be accomplished through existing funds.

Water is something that has a daily impact on all our lives. The quality of the state's water can be improved. Rather than allowing current pollution to become a crisis, it's important we take steps now to clean up and protect one of this state's most valuable and irreplaceable resources - our water.

-Gov. Bill Graves

KILLER KATZ

Studies have long confirmed what wildlife managers worldwide believe: free-roaming house cats pose a worldwide threat to wildlife. And there is no doubt that cats impact heavily on U.S. wildlife. Consider the following:

- 1915 - The Massachusetts Agricultural Bulletin warned that cats caused "an enormous decimation of birds."
- 1940 - The Missouri Game Commission claimed "cats in Missouri kill more game each year than do hunters."
- 1949 - The New Yorker estimated that cats "probably kill 100 million birds a year."
- 1956 - The Massachusetts Commission of Fisheries and Game attributed two million bird deaths a year to cats in that state.
- 1960s - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service researchers found that 226 cats under study killed 2.7 birds and small mammals daily per cat. One Michigan study found a single cat killed 1,660 mammals and birds in 18 months, even though it was fed at home.

Cats are enormously abundant in North America. In 1966, the U.S. cat population was estimated to be about 35 million. By 1987, the figure had leapt to 56 million. At present, there are believed to be close to 70 million cats in the U.S.

-Critter Control



DEFENSIVE TURKEY TIPS

*Never wear red, white, or blue (colors that appear on the head of a turkey).

*If you wear camouflage, cover your entire body, including face and hands.

*If you see another hunter approaching, remain still. Never wave, stand, or sound a turkey call. Use your voice or whistle.

*Always call in terrain that is fairly open with a visibility of at least 50 yards in every direction. This allows you to see any hunters approach.

*If you bag a bird, carry it wrapped in hunter orange.

*Don't gobble during spring hunting season.

*If you use a decoy, place it so that you are not in danger of being shot.

*When setting up to call, make sure your back is protected by a tree wider than your shoulders.

*When walking in the woods in the dark, always use a flashlight.

*If you are on land where you have sole permission to hunt, do not assume there are no other hunters.

*-NRA's "Turkey
Hunting Safety"*

CALLING ALL TURKEYS

It's a magical time of year when winter loosens its frigid grip and robins sing songs of a new season. Daylight lengthens and trees show signs of waking from a deep winter nap. Many species of wildlife sense these changes and likely welcome the relief of a warming sun on a clear spring day. Man is no different. Turkey hunters recognize these signs because their first encounter

with a wild turkey gobbler is just around the corner -- Kansas turkey season opens April 10 and runs through May 5.

Turkey hunting strategy is simple. Spring signals the breeding season for the two species of turkeys present in Kansas -- the Rio Grande and Eastern. A hunter need only sound like a love-sick hen looking for the gobbler of her dreams. Hunters can stack the odds in their favor by scouting prime turkey haunts before the season. Pre-dawn or early evening trips will often reveal the roosting locations of several gobblers as they announce their presence to the world.

Hunters position themselves near these roosted gobblers well before the sun reaches the horizon. Many use

decoys of various sexes. A good combination is a jake and hen (see "Defensive Turkey Tips"). Dominant gobblers will see the jake and confront the immature intruder face-to-face to run him off, offering an easy opportunity for a well-hidden hunter.

Camouflage is essential to avoiding the keen eyes of a mature gobbler. Patterns should blend with natural surroundings and allow slight movements to go undetected.

Calls used to lure gobblers into range are as varied as hunters. Slate calls work well for excited cutting or quiet calling, especially on calm days. Box calls tend to be louder and are popular as locator calls on windy days. Diaphragms, or mouth calls, offer the hunter hands-free operation while also being ver-

satile. Whichever you choose, practice is the key to increasing your chances for success.

You don't have to be a world-class turkey calling champion to call birds into gun range. Observe what works and try to duplicate the natural sounds you hear as turkeys feed and jockey for position.

The best teacher for turkey hunting is experience itself. Even veteran turkey hunters learn new things with each trip to the woods. The reward of a good turkey hunt doesn't have to be a filled tag. Many enjoyable hunts end with nothing more than several heart-pounding close encounters and stories of the one that got away. These near-misses are what bring you back again and again.

-Murrell

WALK-IN-PROGRESS

In an effort to provide more outdoor recreation opportunities, Wildlife and Parks established a new Walk-In Hunting Area program last hunting season. The program is based on lease agreements between the department and private landowners to allow public hunting on private lands.

The program is modeled after a similar effort employed in South Dakota for the past seven years. Primary components of the program include the following:

- a modest fee is provided to landowners who allow public hunting on their enrolled lands;
- Wildlife and Parks is responsible for posting the enrolled properties, patrolling those properties to ensure compliance with the law, and publishing a site atlas for those hunting on these areas;
- only foot traffic will be allowed in these areas;
- lands that have been entered in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) are being targeted for enrollment, but other lands will be considered;
- to be considered, tracts must comprise at least 80 contiguous acres; and
- by state law, landowners who participate are NOT subject to normal liability that may result from injuries to persons on the enrolled acres.

The program is currently in pilot stage. In 1995, limited areas were enrolled in Harper, Kingman, McPherson, Reno, Rice, and Stafford counties. However, lease agreements in nearby counties may be considered. First-year requests for enrollment in the program were considered through September, and nearly 10,000 acres were enrolled.

By all accounts, the program was a success in the 1995-96 hunting season, and expansion to other parts of the state is tentatively planned for the fall of 1996.

**For additional information, contact
Brent Konen, 4207 E. 56th Ave.,
Hutchinson, KS 67502, (316) 665-7417.**

*-Brent Konen, wildlife biologist
technician, Hutchinson*

TURKEY SUCCESS

Since the first spring turkey season in 1974, the number of tags issued – and the number of birds killed -- has risen steadily, reflecting the healthy growth of a species that had at one time disappeared from the state. In 1974, 400 tags were

issued, and 123 turkeys were taken, a 39.9 percent success rate.

In 1995, 27,782 tags were issued, and 14,953 birds were taken – a 48 percent success rate.

Because the success rate has also increased, it might appear that not only are turkey

numbers growing, they are getting easier to hunt. Not so. In 1974, hunters spent 7.37 man-days per bird. By 1995, it took 9.9 man-days to take a single turkey. So much for the misconception that modern equipment makes hunting wild game like “shooting fish in a barrel.”

–Shoup

BOWHUNTER EDUCATION

May 25, Pratt, Kansas
Contact Jerry Burkhart
(316) 672-5641, ext. 188 or
(316) 672-2035

UNDER CURRENTS

Today's Forecast: FAIR TO MIDDLIN'



–Everybody talks about the weather, but nobody does anything about it.

–Charles Dudley Warner, 1897

by Mark Shoup

January 18 was a bad hair day in southcentral Kansas.

About 6 p.m. the night before, it was balmy, about 60 degrees with a warm southern breeze blowing over streets and lawns that had been sprinkled on throughout the day. At 6:30, the wind suddenly turned with vengeance out of the north, hurling garbage cans down alleys as hapless walkers scurried for cover, light jackets wrapped about their heads. In minutes, ice formed on windshields; the temperature dropped into the teens, and a north wind blew 50 mph. By 7:30, the windchill was 40 below.

The next morning, the wind had not let up and the temperature was about zero. The moist air of the previous day had transformed to a ghostly, dust-filled pall. The pond in front of our office looked as if it had been drained, exposing a dry, sandy bottom. In reality, it was frozen over, the water mixed with topsoil from Nebraska and points north.

The last good rain I could remember was in late July. Since that time, we had had less than one-half inch of precipitation. In September, there had still been enough water for a mediocre dove season. Cheyenne Bottoms had held enough for a decent early teal season. But come

November, upland bird hunting was a droughty affair. Ironically, a cool, rainy nesting season in late May and early June had produced a poor crop of birds, and now the dry weather made finding any birds difficult at best.

By the time firearms deer season rolled around, pale, brownish-green winter wheat clung feebly to bone-dry powder. A blanket of invisible western ragweed dust hovered about three feet over every pasture. Just sitting in it made breathing difficult. The deer I killed fell, literally, in a cloud of dust.

A week before Christmas, about 5 inches of snow blanketed the plains and brightened up the landscape. Cold weather held this illusion of moisture for about three or four weeks. Then we had a weekend in the 70s, a few days of cool but mild temperatures, and the light sprinkle that preceded our biscuit-dry inland hurricane.

It wasn't until about 6 p.m. on January 18th – 24 hours after the wind had shifted – that calm returned to the mummified landscape. Those who keep track of such things claim that this event carried with it the lowest barometer in recorded history. Perhaps the months-long weather pattern that preceded it was also an anomaly. I hope so. With luck, the drought will be broken by the time this issue of *Kansas Wildlife and Parks* has reached your doorstep.

Kansans may fret about the weather more than most folks, but I doubt it. Yes, we're still a farm state, and the weather

directly or indirectly affects most of our livelihoods. And those of us who hunt, fish, hike, camp, or birdwatch also have a stake in the weather, which can be nourishing or deadly to wildlife. But Mark Twain described, perhaps unintentionally, the universal nature of human fascination with weather in a speech to the New England Society in 1876. While his subject was New England weather, he could have been speaking of Kansas:

“The weather is always doing something there; always getting up new designs and trying them on people to see how they will go. . . In the spring, I have counted one hundred and thirty-six different kinds of weather inside of twenty-four hours.”

For Twain, a typical New England weather forecast should read something like this: “Probable nor'east to sou'west winds, varying to the southard and westard and eastard and points between; high and low barometer, sweeping round from place to place; probable areas of rain, snow, hail, and drought, succeeded or preceded by earthquakes with thunder and lightning.”

This was more than 100 years ago, so I guess things haven't changed all that much yet. The stressful weather patterns we're experiencing may have nothing to do with deteriorating ozone layers, global warming, or any of the other catastrophes predicted as a result of mankind's 20th century legacy. Still, at times like this, I have to remind myself that the old saw, “If you don't like the weather here, wait an hour,” has been common to all parts of the country for generations.

Next time you get worried about the weather, check out some of those late 19th century photographs of your ancestors. Seems like every day was a bad hair day back then.

WINTER'S END *Walleyes*

Walleye fishing usually brings to mind the first really warm days of late April or early May in Kansas. The walleye have recovered from the exhaustive effort of spawning and, perhaps just as importantly, the water has warmed enough to allow aquatic insect larvae hatches. The walleye move into shallow, warm water to feed on the larvae.

Flotillas of fishing boats bob across the mud-bottomed flats, driven by the brisk spring wind. Anglers drift brightly-colored jigs dressed with nightcrawlers, trying to catch these overgrown, glassy-eyed perch.

While the spring bite is probably when most Kansas walleyes are caught, it's not the only time to catch them. There is an early season; however, it requires a different breed of fisherman - one who can stand the cold winds and fickle weather of March, and one who is more interested in big fish than limpets.

Walleye may begin gathering near traditional spawning sites as early as late winter, but when the water reaches the 40-degree mark, the fish, usually the males first, will move into the rocky shallows. Walleye will begin spawning as the water warms to the mid- to high 40s. Although they don't bite aggressively then, they are concentrated in large numbers, so fishermen count on putting their offerings in front of lots of fish.

Most spawning activity takes place at night, so that's when the fish will be closest to the bank, and easiest to reach. Overcast, windy days can also put the walleyes shallow. Anglers cast jigs, spinners, and floating minnow crankbaits to tempt the otherwise preoccupied fish into biting. It's not a very dependable bite, but when the larger females are present, catches of 6- to 8-pound fish aren't uncommon.

Most Kansas reservoirs have rip-rap or concrete dams, and walleye will congregate along these areas. Rocky, gently sloping shorelines and rocky points are also good places to find spawning walleyes. When the spawning gets going, it is usually in water less than 3 feet deep, and these fish are easily spooked. It's wise to carry a flashlight when fishing at night, but passing the beam across the water will scare fish away. Move away from the water before turning on the light to tie on a lure.

Don't overlook the outlets of most reservoirs. These areas can be real sleepers for early-season walleyes, especially if there is some water being released. Fish the slack water along the rocky banks or any other current break over a gravel or rock bottom. Retrieve the lure slowly, keeping it within the strike zone as long as possible.

If you're game, the fishing can be fun, and your chances of catching a trophy-sized walleye might never be better. Make sure to read the *1996 Kansas Fishing Regulations Summary* and know the length limits in the water you fish. Many lakes have 18- or 15-inch minimum length limits. The daily limit is five fish.

-Miller

HALL-OF-FAME BIOLOGIST

Born in 1908, Seth Way worked for the Kansas Fish and Game Commission for 46 years. From 1922-1926, he was the agency's fish culturist. From 1926-1968, he was manager at the Pratt Fish Hatchery. He died in 1978.

Way's name was synonymous with fishing in Kansas from the 1940s until his retirement in 1968. He was one of the most widely known Fish and Game employees in the history of the organization. His fame spread not only throughout Kansas but through the entire warmwater fish culture community as a person who was instrumental in establishing fishing as a recreational activity.

Way's professional career focused on the culture of channel catfish. His observations and mechanical ingenuity led to his development in 1926 of the channel catfish incubation system as we know it today. The Kansas Fish and Game Commission Biannual Report for 1926-28 contains an account of the success of the channel catfish culture program, as well as a sketch of the water-powered incubation equipment. The sketch reveals that little has changed in basic design, even though almost 70 years have passed since the first channel catfish fry were hatched with his equipment.

The same biannual report also recognized the need for a source of nourishment for the newly-hatched fry and indicated that the hatchery started experimenting with a variety of feeds, including "dried buttermilk, cod-liver meal, clabber, oatmeal, shorts, clam meal, larvae of may fly, daphnia, fish meal, liver, lungs and heart of beef, and blood of chicken and cattle." Many modern-day fish culturists will recognize that several of these products have been used in recent years.

Seth Way was a dedicated warmwater fish culturist who helped untold numbers of beginning and advanced fish growers understand the demands of imitating and assisting with Mother Nature's process. He certainly left his mark on the channel catfish industry as we know it today. He also help organize the Kansas Fish Growers Association, and in 1966, he was named "Wildlife Conservationist of the Year" by the Kansas Wildlife Federation.

On June 16, Seth Way will be inducted into the National Fish Culture Hall of Fame at the D.C. Booth Historic Fish Hatchery in Spearfish, South Dakota. His induction chiefly recognizes him for developing the first practical method of artificially hatching channel catfish eggs, which opened the door for commercial catfish farming.

-Don Patton, Pratt
Hatchery manager

STATE RECORD WALLEYE

13 pounds, 1 ounce
David Watson, Manhattan
Rocky Ford Fishing Area, 1972

BUTTERFLY MARVEL

There is little that brings such pleasure so effortlessly as watching the dance-like flight of colorful butterflies fluttering amidst flower gardens, searching for sweet nectar on a sun-dappled day. Observe a group of children as they marvel at the concept of metamorphosis or listen to anyone who has experienced first hand the migration of the monarch, and you can't help but reconnect with the wonder of the natural world.

There are about 200,000 species of butterflies on Earth; in North America, there are about as many species of butterflies as there are of birds. More and more, these fragile creatures are being appreciated not only for beauty's sake, but for the delicate intricacies, interconnections, and balances in nature that they so vividly represent.

Consider the family Lycaenida, which comprises approximately 40 percent of all butterfly species. As with all butterflies, females of the species search for the specific foodplants that meet the nutritional needs of their larvae before laying eggs. Several of the lycaenids go one step further, looking not only for the essential species of foodplant, but for those that are frequented by a particular species of ant. Eggs are laid and when hatched, the larvae produce secretions that attract and appease the desirable ant. The ants, in return for the amino acid-rich secretion of the larvae, do not prey upon the larvae or the pupae -- despite the fact that they could be a prime food source. The ants tend the larvae so closely that they actually act as guardians against other predators such as wasps, spiders, and other species of ants.

While rare large birds and mammals receive most of the attention in controversies surrounding environmental protection, several times the number of insects, plants, and micro-organisms may be in just as much peril -- and are as critical to the ecosystems they inhabit -- as the better known large species like the northern spotted owl.

--Know Your Environment

HOUSE FINCH DISEASE

In early 1994, birdwatchers throughout much of the East noticed house finches with red, swollen, crusty eyes. Over the winter of 1994-95, the affliction spread north to Quebec, south to Georgia, and west to Iowa and Missouri. Last winter, finches with these same symptoms were reported to Salina City Parks officials.

The birds were plagued by a respiratory disease caused by *Mycoplasma gallisepticum*, a bacterium that usually affects poultry. While the disease poses no risks to humans, it can be fatal to finches. In fact, the seriousness of the disease is so far undetermined. Many individual birds will certainly die, but the species as a whole is not likely to be affected. The total extent of this outbreak, how the disease is transmitted, whether species other than house finches in the wild may be affected, and whether infected birds can recover and survive is not yet known.

The Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology is conducting a house finch disease survey to help answer these questions. While house finches are not endangered, other birds are. By tracking the outbreak, officials hope to learn how to respond if declining species are ever threatened by the disease.

If you see an infected bird in your yard, do not become alarmed. The disease is not a threat to humans, and it's safe to continue feeding birds. To help keep the disease from spreading, clean bird feeders regularly -- at least once at the start and again at the end of the feeding season -- with a solution of one part bleach to nine parts water. Dry the feeders well before filling them. Prevent overcrowding by adding extra feeders to your yard; the disease spreads when birds are in close contact.

Report sick birds to the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, (316) 672-5911.

--from the Cornell Lab Information & Education Services

KANOPOLIS DOG

Severe flooding in 1993 completely destroyed the prairie dog town at Kanopolis State Park. Now, in a cooperative effort with the Sedgwick County Zoo, visitors to Kanopolis will once again be able to view and photograph prairie dogs.

Zoo officials were delighted to have an area to send surplus prairie dogs that had escaped their compound at the zoo and set up residence on neighboring private land. The first release of 10 prairie dogs -- five males and five females -- has gone very well. They seem to be adapted to their new surroundings. Kanopolis staff are supplementing their feed temporarily until they get fully established. More capture and releases are scheduled for this spring.

Soon, Kanopolis State Park will again have a thriving prairie dog town, which will no doubt bring considerable pleasure to park visitors.

--Rick Martin, Kanopolis State Park manager



**HLAVACHICK
RETIRES**

An estimated crowd of 150 attended Bill Hlavachick's retirement party Dec. 16 at the Fincham Barn in Pratt. Originally from Colorado, Hlavachick joined the Kansas Forestry, Fish, and Game Commission in July 1962 as a game biologist and was assigned to work on the newly-developing deer project at Hays. In March of 1973, he replaced Bob Wood as game biologist II and moved to Pratt. He became wildlife program administrator in 1982, and was promoted to program specialist in 1987. Since 1989, he has worked as wildlife management supervisor for the Fisheries and Wildlife Division.

After 33 years of dedicated service to the natural resources of Kansas, Bill will be missed by all who appreciate those resources.

-Joe Kramer, Fisheries and Wildlife Division director

**K-STATE
OFFERS TREES**

More than 2 dozen species of trees and shrubs are now available from Kansas State and Extension Forestry for use in conservation plantings. Buyers can order immediately for spring planting.

Bare-root shrubs, bare-root deciduous trees, bare-root evergreen trees, container-grown evergreen trees, and stratified seed may be purchased. In addition, a songbird bundle -- a special bundle of plants selected for their appeal to songbirds and containing 20 plants, includ-

ing redcedar, Peking cotoneaster, gray dogwood, fragrant sumac, and golden currant -- may be purchased. These plants may be used in the backyard or other restricted area.

A larger bundle of plants for wildlife, called the wildlife bundle, will occupy an area of about 1/4 acre and includes five bur oak and 25 each redcedar, American plum, fragrant sumac, choke cherry, and golden currant.

The ground rules are simple for purchasing these plants: all plants must be used for conservation planting, not landscaping or resale for landscaping. Approved uses are wildlife habitat, windbreaks, woodlots, erosion control, and Christmas trees.

The prices are nominal. For example, plants for a three-row, 300-foot windbreak may cost as little as \$50.00.

Order forms are available at offices of the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, county extension agents, county conservation districts, or Kansas State and Extension Forestry, (913) 537-7050.

-Shoup

**FT. HAYS REQUESTS
WILDLIFE ART**

The Wildlife Art Council, based at Fort Hays State University, is inviting artists to submit entries for its annual competition, this year featuring the sandhill crane. The winning artist will receive \$3,000. Contest submissions are due June 7, 1996. All artwork except the winning entry will be returned to the artists. For

submission guidelines, contact Greg Liggett, Sternberg Museum of Natural History, FHSU, 600 Park Street, Hays, KS 67601, or call (913) 628-5684.

-Shoup

**TRAIL MANAGER
NAMED**

Trent McCown, formerly a state park ranger at Toronto and Fall River state parks, has been promoted to the position of wildlife/park manager for the Prairie Spirit Rail-Trail, effective Jan. 28.

A northeast Kansas native and 1994 graduate of Kansas State University, McCown has worked as a wildland firefighter, resource protection specialist, outdoor equipment salesman, emergency medical technician, and police officer before becoming a park ranger in May 1995.

-Ed Alvis, Region 5 parks supervisor

**GAYLORD
MAPLES DIES**

Kansas wildlife interests lost a strong supporter with the recent passing of Gaylord I. Maples, a Wichita attorney.

Maples, 58, was an active sportsman who had spent most of his life in Harvey, Marion, and Sedgwick counties. He became active in organized conservation circles in 1981 when he served as the founding chairman of the Marion County Ducks Unlimited chapter. Following a two-year stint in this volunteer position, he served successively as DU zone chairman for Harvey, Marion, and McPherson counties; as

southcentral district chairman; as state council chairman; and as state chairman during 1989 and 1990. He later served three years as regional vice president for Kansas and Oklahoma, simultaneously serving on the National Board of Directors for Ducks Unlimited, Inc.

Well known for abilities as a problem solver, Maples always managed to make something positive out of confrontational issues. He was extremely active in the 1987 effort to get legislative approval of the Kansas Waterfowl Habitat Stamp Program, and he served on the Matching Aid to Restore States Habitat (MARSH) Committee, which helped direct the use of both DU MARSH funds and the matching Habitat Stamp monies. At the time of his death, he was an active member of the Cheyenne Bottoms Advisory Board.

Maples died in Wichita on Jan. 5 following complications associated with heart surgery.

-Lee Queal, former DU region director, Pratt

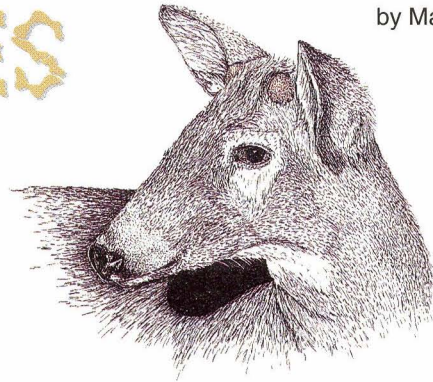
**STAMP DESTROY
DATE**

The Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks has announced that all 1992 Kansas Waterfowl Habitat Stamps will be destroyed on July 1, 1996. Collectors who would like to obtain 1992 stamps before they are destroyed should contact Linda Austin or Deb Simon at the department's Pratt Operations Office, (316) 672-5911.

-Shoup

BAFFLING BONES

by Mark Shoup



Unlike animals with horns - such as bison, sheep, and pronghorns -- deer have antlers. Horns are made of keratin, the same stuff that makes hair and fingernails. Horns are retained throughout the life of the animal. Antlers, on the other

hand, are pure bone. Amazingly, these bones grow, fall off, and grow again every year. They look the same each year, except that they grow bigger until the animal gets old. No bone on earth grows so rapidly.

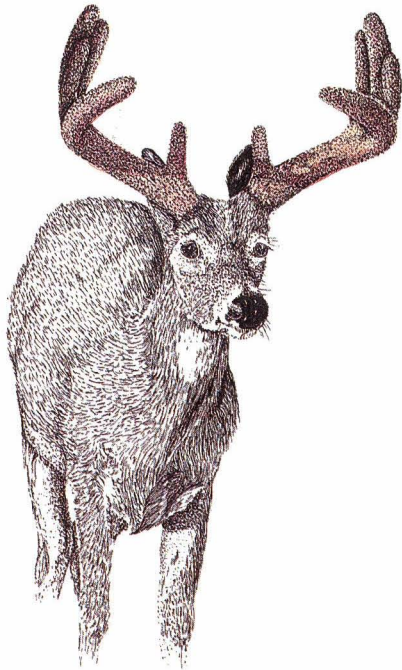
It all starts with pedicels, bumps on the top of the male deer's head. The pedicel is living bone tissue that will connect the antler to the skull. Sometime in early May, antlers begin to press up from the pedicels. Scientists think this new antler growth is triggered by longer days.

The new antlers are covered with a soft mass of blood vessels and nerve endings called the "velvet." The rapidly-growing antlers receive blood through the velvet, and through the core of the antler as it grows. During summer, while the velvet is intact, the antlers are very delicate. They bruise or bleed easily if injured. Sometimes, injuries to antlers in velvet will cause a deformity in the fully-developed antler. Strangely, such deformities may be "remembered" by

the deer's body, and the same deformity may show up year after year, even if the antlers are not injured again.

While in velvet, bucks are timid and careful to avoid conflict. If they can't avoid a scuffle, they may use their front feet rather than their antlers, much like a doe does.

As the days shorten in late summer, the velvet dies and the antlers harden. The velvet will bleed slightly as it peels away. During this time, bucks get much more aggressive. As they ready themselves for fall combat, they rub their antlers on tree trunks to strengthen



As they ready themselves for fall combat, they rub their antlers on tree trunks to strengthen

the deer's body, and the same deformity may show up year after year, even if the antlers are not injured again.



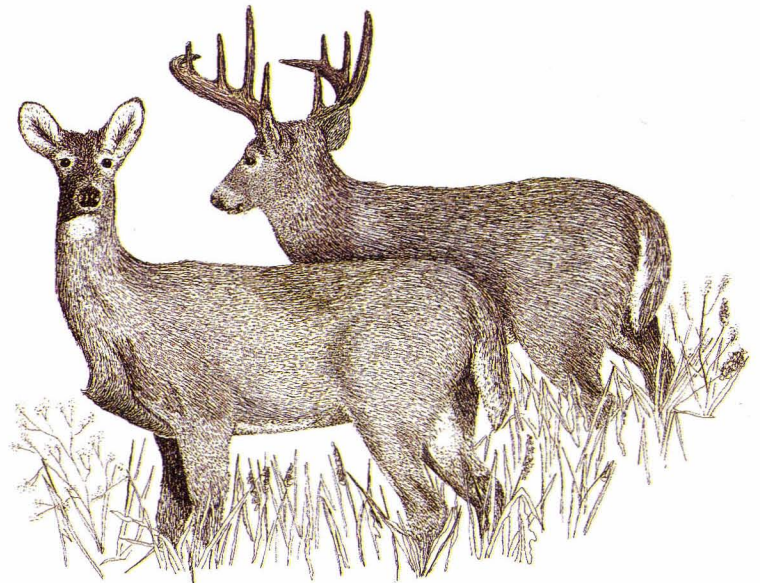
their neck muscles. As the rut -- or breeding season -- approaches, the buck deer's neck muscles swell. Now they are ready to compete for breeding does.

The most aggressive bucks -- usually but not always the ones with the biggest antlers -- breed most often. Dominating other bucks, then, would seem to be the reason deer have antlers. But there are other possible reasons. One suggestion is that does are the ones that make the breeding decisions, and they may be attracted to bucks with larger antlers. Another suggestion is that bucks actually use antlers to avoid fights. It is known that once two deer fight and one establishes dominance, the two will seldom if ever fight again. During each breeding season, bucks will recognize and avoid those sets of antlers that have beaten them in the past.

Contrary to popular belief, deer seldom use their antlers to defend themselves against predators. The best defense seems to be their powerful legs and sharp hooves.

In Kansas, the rut peaks in November and is, for the most part, over by mid- or late December. From January to late March, pedicels lose their grip on these amazing bones, and the antlers fall off. For a short time, bloody dents remain on the deer's head, but this soon heals. Within a month or two, new antlers begin to grow.

Late winter and early spring

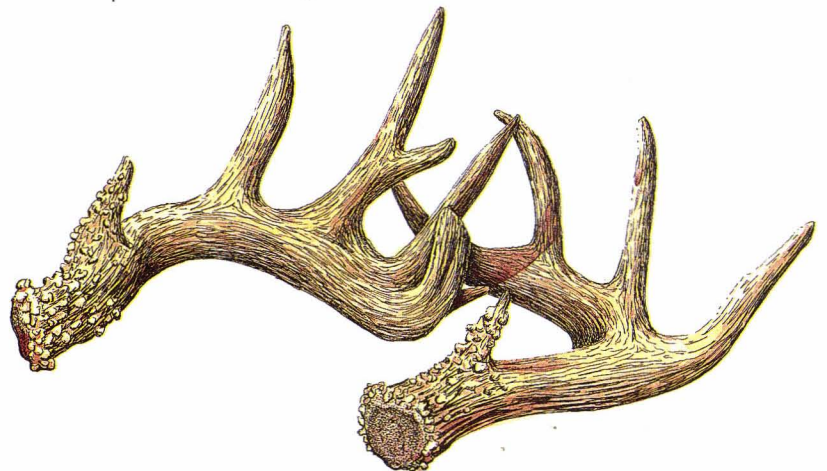


are great times to hunt for fallen antlers, called "shed" or "drop" antlers. But don't wait too long to look. The reason we don't see deer antlers everywhere is that, like everything else in nature, they are not wasted. These magic bones are rich in calcium, and squirrels, rabbits, mice, rats, and other animals devour them quickly. It is not uncommon to find a shed antler that has been gnawed by some small critter.

Look for shed antlers in shelterbelts or woodlands wherever deer trails can be found. When driving through the country, make note of places where you

have seen deer. Look in the those places. If you know a landowner, ask where to look for sheds. If you think you know a good spot but don't know the landowner, be sure to get permission before looking.

An antler lying in the woods is one of Nature's rare gifts. It's a magical moment when you look past a tree trunk and see an ivory point sticking up through fallen leaves. Imagine, where has it been? Where is the deer that dropped it? What does the deer look like now? How much bigger will the antlers be next year?





Grapevine Of Wrath

"Stub and Mac limited out on crappie yesterday," Lennie matter-of-factly told me on the phone the other night. His tone was intentional, even though he was as excited as I would be. He would make me pry every last detail from him, knowing that by the end of our conversation, I would be ready to leave that night. And since I have a boat and Lennie doesn't, he would offer to go along and show me where they were fishing.

"Where?" I asked impatiently. "Glen Elder. . . I think," he hesitated.

"You mean you didn't find out which lake they were fishing?"

"Yes, I'm sure it was Glen Elder. They didn't get back 'till late at night, so it had to be Glen Elder," he concluded vaguely.

"How big?" I continued to pry.

"Big! Rocky saw some of the heads after they cleaned 'em and there were some monsters — eyes as big as quarters."

Questions then begin to flood from my mouth, even though I knew Lennie had failed to get this critical information. "How deep were they fishing? Were they using jigs or minnows, or jigs and minnows? What color jigs? On the creek channel or in the brush?"

Lennie offered some answers that sounded more like guesses, "I didn't ask how deep, but I'll bet they were fishing under the causeway. They always fish under the causeway. Jigs, I think. I don't know if they were fishing in brush. We'll just have to run up there and find 'em."

"I can't believe you didn't ask more questions, Lennie," I said frustrated.

"I didn't even talk to Mac and Stub," Lennie confided defensively. "Roy told me he talked to Rocky who saw Mac and Stub cleaning fish. Blame Roy. Want to go to tomorrow?"

I was silent. We both knew we'd leave tomorrow, but I was mad, so I let him wonder. "I don't know if I can get away this soon."

"The weather supposed to be perfect — warm and calm," Lennie offered knowing that a good weather report would do it.

"Did you see the forecast tonight?" I asked, wise to his ploy.

"I haven't watched the weather tonight, but Monday they said Saturday would be *gorgeous*," he added even though we both know the long-range weather forecast is rarely, if ever, accurate.

"I'll pick you up at six," I finally gave in.

Such is life on the fishermen's grapevine. I should know better, but I always put way too much stock in the exagger-



Illustration by Mike Miller

ated and fragmented information that circulates through the vine. However, as inaccurate as it is, the grapevine is as fast or faster than the computer world's internet. You simply pick up the phone and call an area fisherman who's been fishing or has talked to someone who's fished recently. (Or you just call Lennie. He has always talked to someone who's just returned from a fishing trip.)

While the grapevine is fast, the biggest problem is that it relies on fishermen for information, and anyone who knows anything knows that fishermen can't tell a fish story the same way twice. Shady politicians or even used-car salesmen would be more dependable, but then the information would probably get expensive.

I guess I'm stuck between a rock and a wild fish story. Living in southcentral Kansas, miles from the nearest reservoir, I depend on the grapevine. I've heard "you should have been here yesterday" too many times, so I continue to follow grapevine leads, trying to arrive just once on yesterday.

The obvious answer to my problem would be to quit listening to Lennie's fishing reports, but I can't. Lennie knows how to get my goat with a good story, and he's a pretty dependable fishing partner (you can depend on him wanting to go, anytime, anywhere). Besides, Lennie's kind of like a human internet web site. He spends a good portion of every day on the phone, talking to fishermen from all over the area. So, I guess I'll keep trying to beat the odds, relying on questionable information. One of these days, we'll hit it right, and I'll guarantee you that Lennie's phone line will be buzzing with excitement . . . and wild fishing stories.

