

KANSAS

Wildlife & Parks

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On Point

by Mike Hayden



The Amazing Journey Of Lewis And Clark

"I observed a great number of Parrot queets this evening."

William Clark, June 26, 1804
present-day Kansas City, Kansas

"There were many birds that are not here now . . . The most interesting bird of all was the parakeet, a species of parrot with beautiful plumage. They were of a bright green and their feathers shone like silk . . . In the winter they would come and light in some hickory trees and crack the nuts and eat the kernels . . . They were around for about two years and then all disappeared at once."

E. T. Wickersham
Greenwood County pioneer
Fall River Star newspaper, 1934

On July 4, a few days after reporting the "parrot queets," Clark wrote, ". . . Nature appears to have exerted herself to butify the Senery by the variety of flours Delicately and highly flavered raised above the Grass, which strikes & profumes the Sensation, and amuses the mind . . . so magnificent a Senery in a Country thus Situated far removed from the Sivilised world to be enjoyed by nothing but the Buffalo Elk Deer and Bear in which it abounds . . ."

In the course of their expedition, Lewis and Clark identified 122 animals and 178 trees and plants which had previously been unrecorded. However, their journey opened the West to the forces that would quickly deplete the bison, beavers, wolves, bears, elk, and antelope that inhabited the Great Plains. The immense herds of bison, numbering around 70 million, were gone from Kansas before 1880. Elk were eliminated from the state by about 1900; and by 1930 there were no deer, antelope, or turkeys. Great predators such as the grizzly, wolverine, cougar, and gray wolf were also eliminated from Kansas by about 1900. Careful management has brought some of these species back, but some, such as the colorful Carolina parakeet mentioned in the opening quotes, are lost forever. Of the 122 species of animals Lewis and Clark recorded, 20 are currently listed as a threatened or endangered.

This summer marks the 200th anniversary of Lewis and Clark's Corps of Discovery expedition, and I'd like to

encourage you to reflect on how much our natural resources have changed in those 200 years. No longer is Atchison "far removed from the civilized world," and no longer could we look out from that same place and see buffalo, elk and bear in abundance. The Missouri River would hardly be recognizable to Lewis and Clark.

Only a fraction of the tallgrass prairie Clark spoke of so eloquently remains. More than 90 percent of our native prairies has been lost to cultivation, and native prairie grasses and forbs have been replaced with brome, fescue, and grain crops. Trees have invaded the grasslands, changing this habitat to the detriment of species such as the greater prairie chicken. Most of the world's remaining tallgrass prairie is in Kansas' own Flint Hills.

The Missouri River, the highway of the Corps of Discovery, has been altered by damming and channelization so that it barely resembles the river Lewis and Clark saw. The river is now 127 miles shorter, one-third as wide, and much deeper and faster. Early maps and descriptions depict a wide river, flowing in multiple channels around many islands and sandbars. Its course was ever changing, creating a unique habitat for a multitude of plants and animals.

Although we regret what is lost, we can be heartened by what has been revitalized. Through modern resource management, many species have been restored, water quality of the Missouri River has been improved, and prairie is being preserved and restored. Reflecting on what has been lost and what has been regained should make us mindful of the impact our decisions have on natural resources. We, of course, can never return the land to the way it was in 1804, but we can continue to work to find a way to conserve our land, water, plants, and animals in a mutually beneficial way. Looking back to remember the courage of Lewis and Clark and the importance of their journey, strengthens my own resolve, as I hope it strengthens yours, to protect our natural resources.

Please contact the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission in Atchison for more information about the events going on this year to commemorate the 200th anniversary of Lewis and Clark's expedition. The Commission's phone numbers is 1-800-2KANSAS, or access them on the web at:

www.lewisandclarkinkansas.com

KANSAS

Wildlife & Parks

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Front Cover: A bass caught at sunset can be an unforgettable experience in the Kansas outdoors. Mike Blair filmed this scene with a 55 mm lens set at f/11 @ 1/125th sec. **Back:** A hiker learns about ancient trees while hiking in Crosstimbers State Park. Photographed by Mike Blair, 50mm lens, f/11 @ 1/125th sec.



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by **Bob Condia**
Manhattan

photos by **Mike Blair**
associate editor/photographer, Pratt

Barefoot on the front of a flats boat, casting flies to wary fish spotted from raised platform, and sizzling, drag-peeling runs – you’re still in Kansas, Toto, and you’re not dreaming. You’re catching golden bonefish, flatland style.



Catching a carp by any method, to those prejudiced by literature or ignorance as I was from youth, may sound paltry. Though the carp is a staple source of protein or even a delicacy in much of the world, we all know that carp aren't good to eat. Then again, I have never had a tasty crappie cut the surface in a 30-yard burst against the drag, either. So don't eat carp. Instead, catch them if you can. Like their distant

cousins of the saltwater flats, carp are sport fish to be challenged and released.

Fishing carp with fly rods is less unusual today, than say, when you were growing up. Even so, it is not that common. In spite of this, the splendor of carping is now on Saturday morning cable TV. Books are devoted to it. Written with reverence, *Carp On The Fly* by Reynolds, Befus and Berryman is an abundant guide to gear,

flies, behavior, and techniques. These authors consider carp the "last, great, underfished, overlooked fly fishing resource in North America." With media exposure, fly-rodding for carp has come of era.

But earlier, it was something best kept to yourself. My first fly rod carp, intentionally caught (with no one watching), was at Council Grove Reservoir. I was hunting the east shore rocks for spotted bass or anything else

Bonafish In Gold



that might chew a size 6 popper. It was an idyllic June day, when clean water reflected cerulean skies. Ahead of me, the brusque curve of a rock shelf looked fishy in a smallmouth sort of way, jagged with plenty of ambush lairs. I had no luck. Then, swimming into view came a pod of five or six good-sized carp mouthing the surface. I'd never seen that, and found it interesting.

The pod (not rightly a school)

came directly toward me. The fish drew within a 50-foot casting distance. Solitary on the bank, I scanned right and then left. I was alone. I cast the yellow cork a couple of feet ahead of the lead fish. He mouthed the surface, sucking here then there, in no specific hurry. I was mesmerized by the suspense as the big fish came to the popper. The carp sucked it down and ate it. We did the tug of battle (long fast runs and dogged sulking)

until I won and slid him onto the bank. Without touching the scaly brute (I really didn't want to,) I backed the popper out with my hemostats. The fish, now muddy, flipped back to the water and powered a silt cloud in departure. I had caught a carp on a popper. It felt a little funny, you know, joy tempered with a touch of – shame?

The pod stayed in range, so I followed them down the bank, casting to the others without



Poling a flats boat in shallow water may be unusual in Kansas, but the quiet approach is as effective on carp as it is for bonefish in the Florida Keys.

success. Shunned, I fought a certain indignation, then told myself they were merely carp, for trout's sake. Later, rationalizing to my friends, I suggested that if carp wanted to pretend to be trout, I could pretend they were, too. No one was awed.

A second fly rod carp came years later, and not without a touch of guilt for its pursuit.

Dick and I were in a cove near a long point in Milford Reservoir. The prairie grasses were flooded with water and mating golden fish. The shallows were stuffed with carp chasing one another for maybe an acre, many hundreds by conservative estimate. Normally, I am not one to disturb anything so engaged, but the fish were everywhere and

some were large, I mean big, and well, they were only carp. What would you have done?

We cast to the fish. Nearly all were preoccupied. Yet by presenting to a different fish with each cast, I got one to eat a size 8 dumbbell-headed woolly bugger. The carp wallowed for a few seconds, then ran for deep water and was into the backing, 75 to 80 yards out in a single surge. Using the leverage of a five-weight trout rod, I pumped the fish to shore in 10 minutes and change.

With naive pride I called out, "Hey Dick, look at this one!" Oddly, I wanted to show off a carp. As I reached down to grab the lure, I changed plans and seized at the tail (how do you land a carp anyway? Not by sticking your thumb in its mouth.) The fish kicked at my touch, surprising us both. In a continuous sprint, the carp ran off 50 yards of line. Admit it: that is impressive muscle for a played-out fish. Carp are fast and strong and eat a fly. We caught several more. After this day, I spoke openly, publicly, pluckily – if not evangelically – about the sporting values of carp.

Which brings us to fly-fishing carp with Captain Sodie: Dr. Paul Sodamann – Sodie to most – is a bona fide captain, outdoorsman, and a character in need of some explanation. Employed as a middle school science teacher in Manhattan, his vocation is the spirit of the journey. Captain Sodie has jumped out of planes, piloted aircraft (recently restoring an Aeronca Chief,) shot the spring rapids of the Colorado River,

dove, camped, hunted, and fished throughout his first half-century. Characteristically, he is a SCUBA instructor, a flight instructor, a whitewater rafting instructor, jumpmaster, and Coast Guard certified commercial (six pack) captain. To our topic at hand, Sodamann is one of less than 100 Master Casting Instructors certified by the Federation of Fly Fishers and teaches several sessions of fly fishing annually through the cooperation of the University of Man and Kansas State University. I met Sodie officially through the Flint Hill Fly Fishers (officially since, in retrospect, we fished several of the same spots, with a nod to our fly rods, for years before the club.) He is proprietor and head guide of Flats Lander Guide Service, St. George and the Florida Keys. This pedigree of instruction, certifications, and licensures clearly establishes a man who is serious about his play – a guide in the truest sense.

Captain Sodie first legitimized to me the idea of carp as a sport fish. He compared the attributes of Kansas' "golden bone" to the bonefish of the tropics. There are many favorable comparisons between the two species: they are fast, strong, skittish, enjoy shallow water in the 80s, and no one in particular wants to eat them – at least in these



Casting is done from the forward deck, paying constant attention to coils of fly line. If the line fouls when a fish is caught, powerful carp will instantly break the leader.

parts. Sodie tows Flats Lander, a fifteen-foot Mitzi (made in Jacksonville, Florida) with a 40-horse, four-stroke Mercury, to the Florida Keys each June and July to pole clients on the salt

flats. Back home, he guides similar excursions for carp in the shallows of Milford Reservoir.

So here we were on a calm August afternoon, fly-fishing the golden bones from a tropical boat along Milford's shoreline. We drew some looks, but hey, it's carping.

When fly fishing off a flats boat, things happen fast. It works like this. A fisherman stands barefoot on the front deck while the captain controls the drift with 20-plus feet of graphite stuck into the water and mud from a poling deck above the outboard (I tried poling. You need a superb sense of balance;



Carp will readily take a fly and are great fighters. However, casts must be soft and accurate to avoid spooking wary fish.



Hooking a large carp on a fly rod is one of angling's greatest thrills. A fly must be placed directly in front of a feeding fish and stripped at the right moment for a carp to see it. Flies that imitate aquatic insects or minnows are effective. The author used a leech pattern tied on a barbless circle hook to catch most of the fish for this story.



short guys prevail.) Photographers and cameras are relegated to the center deck, wary to duck and cover in defense of a hasty fling. You, the fisherman – poised, scanning, alert – are ready to shoot a 40 to 60-foot cast almost instantly at sighting.

It is a position play, like being a shortstop for a knuckle ball pitcher. You hold the hook by the bend in your off-hand, along with the looped monofilament leader. Coil as much fly line as possible (20 feet or so) on the deck, while keeping the rod tip down to avoid spooking carp. When you or the captain spot a fish, your move is a smooth accelerating swing of the rod tip towards a flip that rolls the line off the deck into the backcast;

then make a forward false cast and shoot a little line; then, double haul the back cast, releasing a little more line. Wait on the loop to unroll; don't get excited. Double haul the forward cast out over the target and with just the right lead ahead of the fish. Bare feet are so you can feel the line tangling under your toes – which can make for some graceful casting experiences.

Like phantom bonefish of the salt flats, carp appear out of shadows or iridescent reflection – heading this way or that – and you are obliged to place the fly on them before the boat or you are spotted. Normally, you get just one throw. Either you spook the fish, drift by too quickly, or else the carp eats the fly. It all

takes teamwork.

To begin, we spotted few fish, and those were cruising as if they had somewhere important to go; if not a fire, maybe a date. Given the circumstances, there was stress on my part. If Mike Blair (photographer) is taking the pictures, and Sodie (guide) is driving the boat, then it occurred to me that it wasn't going to be much of a fishing story without some fish. I was to catch fish in a command performance, and me an amateur. I don't know about you, but I find it easier to catch fish when no one is watching. But I was running lucky.

As happens to three men in a boat, a shore break became

important. Mike took advantage of the situation, taking his cameras to shore for wider shots of the boat and us catching fish. As the planets and Sodie would have it, there were a number of nice-sized carp tailing in this very cove, working a break at the edge of the limestone drop in some weeds. Sodamann, from his poling perch, called out fish at 10 o'clock, 30 feet out. I focused on the form of a waving tail between the weeds and a tree trunk. A quick, yet mediocre cast dropped to the weed side, apparently close enough.

Captain Sodamann: "Let it sit. Wait." I wait. "Strip. Stop!" I pulled six inches. Stop. "Strip. He sees it!" Strip. "He's got it!"

The carp ate it and ducked into the weeds below the log. After some stern tugging with the nine-weight boat rod, the fish about-faced, changed tactics, and sped for the mouth of the cove, requiring me to earnestly strip line onto the deck for several seconds. Then, just as hastily, it was necessary to clear the slack to the reel, which then spun into the backing with an amiable coronus of the drag. Thinking fast, and making a couple of strong pushes with the pole, Captain Sodie spun the Mitzi end-to-end and followed the carp toward open water, allowing extra space to play the fish. After the initial run, the fish settled into a broadside resis-


tance. It is in such a fight that you learn the strength and stamina of these oversized minnows.

If this skirmish was generally uneventful in the telling, it took many minutes to convince the fish to join us at the boat. Enough time anyway, for a couple of guys in a bass boat to work the opposite point and join us in the cove.

The guy in the baseball cap asked with informed perplexity, "Are you guys really fishing for carp?"

Captain Sodie, confidently: "Yes."

"I have heard of people catching carp on flies. It looks like fun."

"Yes it is." 





Pond Management Basics

by Leonard Jirak
*district fisheries
biologist, Hartford*

photos by
Mike Blair

Kansas ponds can provide years of enjoyment if they are well-planned and managed properly. By following some basic rules, you can have the pond of your dreams.

Some of the finest fishing in the Midwest can be found in Kansas ponds — small bodies of water built to catch runoff and occasionally, springs. In the past, most Kansas ponds were referred to as farm ponds, since the most were built for livestock. In recent years though, many ponds have been built for fishing, hunting, water recreation, and just plain aesthetics. Kansas ponds range in size from less than a quarter of an acre to a dozen acres or more.

Whatever the purpose, a pond should be designed and managed to produce the desired results for as long as possible. Nearly all Kansas ponds contain a fish population, whether intentional or not. Most ponds are stocked, but

even when they are not, fish get in. Sometimes unwelcome stockings can come from neighbors, friends, and fishermen. But Mother Nature also provides ways for fish to get into ponds. Flooding provides a highway for fish to pioneer into new areas. Some of the most aggressive movers are the least desirable, including bullheads, green sunfish, carp and other minnow species.

Pond construction should be well-planned. Considerations include primary uses, size and location, surrounding habitat, water source, costs, and necessary permits.

Primary use is perhaps the most important consideration. Will the pond be used for

watering livestock, as a water supply for people, for recreation, or for other reasons? A pond should be built to accommodate as many options as possible to get full value for the money spent.

The location of a pond is also important. It should be built to receive adequate runoff to maintain the water level but not so much that large overflows flush fish over the spillway. The site should have soils suitable to hold water. One of the best ways to determine a good pond location is to contact the nearest Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office. The NRCS has the latest technology that can help determine pond location and size in relation to the drainage area, average available run-off, and soil

types. If your needs do not fall under the NRCS program, a private engineer should be consulted. Never turn a bulldozer operator loose without some kind of organized plan. Primary uses should dictate how a pond is constructed.

If there is no place to build a dam or if groundwater is shallow, a pit pond can be constructed. This is simply a hole in the ground that fills with runoff or groundwater. Quarries and coal mine strip pits are examples of pit ponds, which tend to have very clear water and are good candidates for establishing fish populations. They are normally not very fertile because the topsoil and its nutrients have been stripped away, so pit pond fisheries can benefit greatly from feeding or light fertilization. Kansas soils are normally quite fertile, so it is not necessary to fertilize ponds that flood good topsoil.

Permits may be required before pond construction begins. If the pond holds more than 30 acres of water to the top of the dam, a permit must be issued by the Kansas Water Office. If the pond floods an adjoining landowner or restricts downstream water flow, a permit may also be required. The Corps of Engineers has jurisdiction on damming streams, and Kansas Wildlife and Parks may require permits when certain fish or wildlife species are affected. City or county zoning restrictions may also require additional permits.

It is always desirable to have a pond with clear water. Soils in many parts of Kansas tend to stay in suspension and keep pond water muddy. Turbidity describes water with suspended soil parti-



Have plans designed by professionals before the dirt work begins. A good plan will ensure years of enjoyment.

cles. Turbid water has poor visibility for sight feeding fish and blocks out the sunlight needed for photosynthesis, the process of sunlight being absorbed by green plants and converted into plant energy. It is the basis for the food chain. Fish production goes down as turbidity increases. Flooding can cause turbidity but should clear up after a few days. Long-term turbidity is normally due to clay particles which are slow to settle. Clay exposed during pond construction should be covered with topsoil and then grass

should be planted. This will prevent the clay from affecting water clarity. Clay may also be washed in with runoff from crop fields, quarries, gullies in pastures, or road ditches. And livestock wading and watering in a pond can expose clay and increase turbidity. Whatever the source, turbidity is a serious problem in Kansas and severely reduces fish productivity in ponds.

Livestock should always be fenced out of ponds to protect the dam and shoreline. Ponds may be ruined or damaged when live-



Exposed clay can cause turbid water, reducing the pond's fishing production potential. Clay should be covered with topsoil and grass should be planted



Turbidity can be caused by sediment washed in from upstream, but it should settle out in a few days. Livestock can cause long-term turbidity and may also damage the dam, as well as shoreline vegetation.

plan for what type of fishery you want. Do you want trophy bass, big panfish, just catfish, or a good mix of everything? Each strategy calls for a different type of management.

stock trample the shoreline, keeping the water turbid and destroying shoreline vegetation important to young fish. Watering livestock also shorten the life of the pond.

For best productivity, shape and depth of a pond is important. A portion should be less than 3 feet deep so that aquatic vegetation will grow and provide nursery cover for small fish. However, more than 20 percent of a pond this shallow could allow too much vegetation. The pond bottom should be irregular to increase fish habitat. The shoreline should slope gradually, dropping 1 foot for every four feet away from shore, which allows a ring of aquatic vegetation to grow. Sudden drop-offs could be dangerous to waders, especially children and should be avoided. Rock piles and brush should be strategically placed on the pond bottom to provide places for fish to concentrate and hide. A drain structure should also be included during construction. Without a drain, water must be pumped or the dam must be cut.

Once a pond is built, proper fish stocking is important. Many new pond fisheries are damaged

when fish move in from upper drainage or someone tries to “help” by bringing in fish on their own. Stocking should take place as soon as the pond has 5 or 6 feet of water. I always recommend starting the pond with five to ten pounds of adult fathead minnows per acre. Fatheads are very prolific and provide a great starter food for predator fish. However, it is useless to stock fatheads after the predator fish population is established.

There are several ways to establish a fish population, depending on the desires of the pond owner. The most reliable and popular Kansas pond species are largemouth bass, bluegill and channel catfish. Other species such as walleye, striped bass hybrids, blue catfish, redear sunfish, and crappie can also be stocked. Species such as carp, bullheads, green sunfish, and flathead catfish are discouraged, since they are hard to manage, compete with game fish, and are seldom desirable to anglers.

Keep in mind that a pond can produce only so many pounds of fish. Stocking more than recommended may lead to stunted fish. Again, it is important to have a

For the most popular combination, Kansas Wildlife and Parks recommends stocking 100 fingerling bass, 500 fingerling bluegills, and 100 fingerling channel catfish per acre. It is assumed there will be moderate mortality before fingerlings reach adult size. With this stocking, it will take about three years for the fish to reach quality size. Several things can help shorten this time span such as stocking larger fish, stocking fewer fish, and feeding the fish a supplemental diet. Stocking larger fish is more expensive but fewer fish are needed and fishing can take place much sooner.

Crappie are not usually recommended since they tend to overpopulate in small ponds. Yet some ponds produce very good crappie fisheries. They are usually clear ponds with good bass populations to control crappie numbers. If you decided to include crappie, black crappie should be stocked only after bass have been established for a year. For the addition of other species, it is best to consult a fisheries biologist for proper stocking rates.

New ponds can be fished as soon as the fish are big enough to take a hook. This is a good way to

sample and check growth rates. Catch-and-release fishing will not hurt the fish population as long as fish are handled gently. Once the pond has a mature fish population, angling has the biggest impact on that population. It is certainly okay to harvest fish from the pond, and it is a good source of protein for the table.

For many generations we were told to keep the big fish and let the little ones grow. For largemouth bass, that is probably the most detrimental thing you can do to a pond. It is usually just a few bigger bass that keep the pond in balance. They are the most aggressive fish and the easiest to catch if they have not been fished often. Over-harvesting larger bass ruins many ponds. It is okay to keep an exceptionally large bass to have it mounted, but to maintain a good bass fishery, take the smaller bass and release those longer than 15 inches.

A common pond problem is having many small bass but no large ones. This results when too many bass compete for space and food. In this case, I recommend that 20 bass be caught and measured to the nearest quarter-inch. Arrange the 20 measurements from smallest to largest, then count up 10 from the bottom. The length of the eleventh fish becomes a maximum length limit. Now, make an effort to harvest all the fish below this length and release all those over that length. The following year, measure another 20 bass and repeat the procedure. This will reduce the number of bass in the pond and protect those larger, faster growing fish.

Moderate amounts of aquatic vegetation are welcome in a

pond. Vegetation harbors many aquatic insects that fish feed on. Dragonflies, mosquitoes, and mayflies are just a few of the insects that spend a large part of their lives as immature insects underwater. They are important to the aquatic food chain and are dependent on aquatic vegetation. Small fish, frogs, crayfish, and salamanders also need cover in the water. Too many pond owners want to stock grass carp or spray herbicides at the first sign of vegetation. This should be done only as a last resort. Too much aquatic vegetation may be the result of too much shallow water, or fertilizer or manure washing in and making the water too nutrient-rich.

If grass carp are stocked for weed control, they should be stocked at a rate of at least 10 fish per acre of weeds. And stocked fish should be at least 12 inches long so they are safe from bass and fish-eating birds. Stocking too many grass carp is a waste of money, but too few will fail to remove the vegetation and result in a few really big grass carp. Grass carp are one of the first species to leave when a pond overflows. Screening the outlet and overflow spillway can keep them and other fish in a pond. Make sure the screen is big enough to let grass and leaves go through without blocking the outflow.

There are many concerns when building and managing a pond.

This article touches only on the subject of pond management. I've learned in 30 years of experience that about half the time, I won't receive a call until a pond is finished. It's no fun to tell a landowner a pond will not produce very well, or that more money will be needed to make it fish- and wildlife-friendly.

A good reference for pond owners is *Producing Fish and Wildlife from Kansas Ponds*, available through KDWP. Other helpful magazines include *Pond Boss* and *Pond Harvest*. Take advantage of agency experts with KDWP and the NRCS. Plan carefully, be informed, and a pond will give you a lifetime of enjoyment. ♡



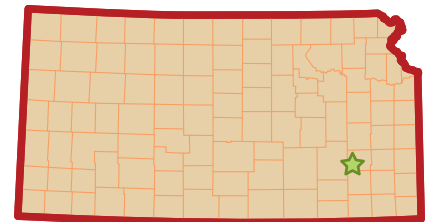
With proper planning and construction, as well as a basic harvest management plan, Kansas ponds can provide many years of recreation and enjoyment.

Cross Timbers STATE PARK AT TORONTO LAKE

by Doyle Niemeyer
park manager, Cross Timbers State Park

photos by Mike Blair

Along the Verdigris River at the northern edge of the Chautauqua Hills, lies an area of unique beauty, diversity, and history: Cross Timbers.





The Verdigris River intersects the northern reaches of the Chautauqua Hills in a place long ago favored as hunting grounds by Native Americans. These lands, now known as Cross Timbers State Park, surround the waters of Toronto Reservoir in Woodson and Greenwood counties. Blackjack and post oaks dominate the forest, born on the nutrient-limiting sandstone that

underlies this region of the state. Gnarly, twisted trunks and limbs evidence their ability to withstand the limiting substrate and harsh climate of this land.

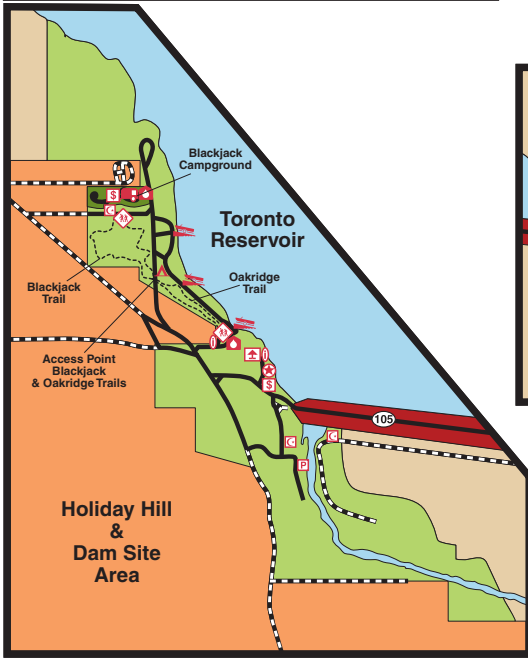
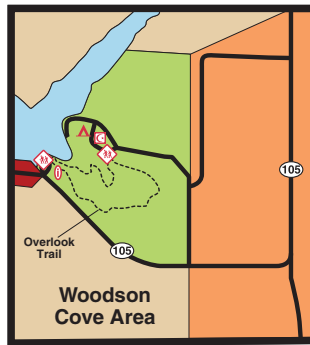
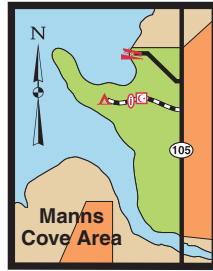
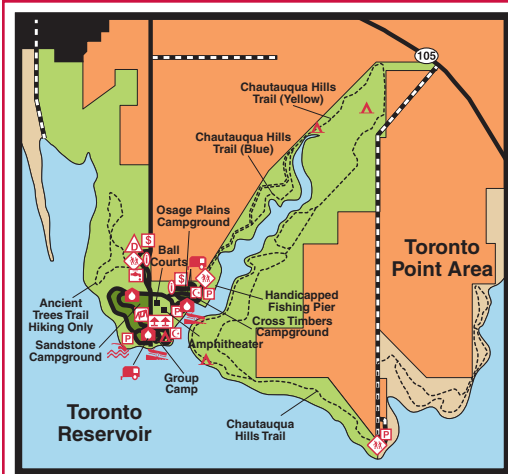
This mix of forest and native prairie is an impressive natural area and one of Kansas' true wild places. The park is located within a unique ecological zone at the margins of the western prairie and the eastern woodlands. It lies

at the northern limits of an ecosystem known as the Cross Timbers. This unique ecosystem sweeps some 350 miles along a north-south line from the town of Toronto, adjacent to the park, through eastern Oklahoma to northcentral Texas.

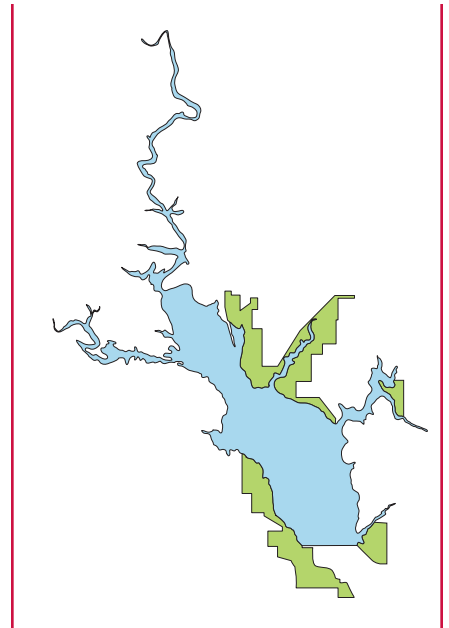
Variations in the vegetation found in the park and this region are the result of natural conditions, such as fire and climate. Natural and intentional fires have gradually transformed dense forest to more open land, now more characteristic of an oak savannah-type forest. Open oak savannahs are prevalent throughout the Cross Timbers region.

Cross Timbers State Park is located in the Kansas physiographic province known as the Chautauqua Hills, a small part of the Cross Timbers region estimated to cover more than 11 million acres. In Kansas, the Cross Timbers region is roughly 60 miles long by 10 miles wide and includes parts of Woodson, Wilson, Elk, Chautauqua, and Montgomery counties.

Vegetation found in the park is some of the most diverse in the state. Studies by the Kansas Biological Survey and others have found that one-third of all Kansas vascular plant species reside within the Cross Timbers region. In addition, several species of lower plant forms such as lichens, mosses, and liverworts are found only in this part of the state. Interestingly, the lichens and mosses encountered on some of the park's trails are so prolific



KANSAS STATE PARK LEGEND					
Park Area		Information Center		Dumpster	
Camping Area		Pay Stations		Concessions	
Other Public Lands		Potable Water		Playground	
Water		Shower/Toilet		Shelter	
Dam or levee		Modern Toilet		Shelter Group	
Private Lands		Vault Toilet		Cabin Modern	
Paved Roads		Trailer Dump Station		Cabin Primitive	
Gravel Roads		Boat Ramps		Camping Improved	
Unimproved Roads		Dock/Pier		Camping Primitive	
Park Entrance		Fish Cleaning Station		Trail/Trailhead Hike	
Park Office		Swimming Area		Trail/Trailhead Bike	
Parking Area		Marina		Trail/Trailhead Equestrian	



they give the appearance of a green carpet spread upon the ground.

The diverse plant life and unique location provide prime wildlife viewing opportunities. A variety of wildlife are found within the park's boundaries, from five-lined skinks to bobcats. And more than 200 species of birds have been documented in the park and around Toronto Reservoir. Visitors to the park or hiking trails might witness white pelicans foraging in the lake,

thrusting their bills into the water to feed in synchrony. Or one of the many songbird species, like the wood thrush, might be heard



Hardwood timber along the shoreline provides stunning beauty in the fall. Anglers enjoy outstanding crappie and white bass fishing in the 2,800-acre Toronto Reservoir.

in the forested areas of the park during the summer. Some of the most brilliantly colored birds found in North America, such as the scarlet tanager and the indigo bunting, nest in and around the park. The reservoir and wetlands attract migrating waterfowl and shorebirds. Dowitchers and a variety of sandpipers are just some of these birds that frequent the area.

The Cross Timbers ecosystem has been recognized as perhaps the least disturbed forest system surviving in the eastern United States. Visitors to Cross Timbers State Park can hike a trail and view some of the oldest living trees in the central U.S.

During the 1980s, the University of Arkansas Tree Ring Laboratory conducted field studies on the park's old growth post oaks and found many trees older than 250 years. Hikers can witness plants that have been alive since before America became a nation.

Kansas Wildlife and Parks recognized this unique heritage through legislation that renamed the park. Formerly known as Toronto State Park, it was officially rededicated in September 2002 as Cross Timbers State Park. This event marked the first public area in the Cross Timbers ecosystem to be recognized this way.

The new name reaffirms the park staff's emphasis on maintaining and preserving this significant area for Kansans to appreciate and enjoy. Development and programming efforts within the park feature recreational opportunities commensurate with the resources. Special events and naturalist programs are focused on this goal and are available weekly throughout the summer.

The park maintains many miles of trails that provide hikers



Cross Timbers offers more than 100 improved campsites, as well as 74 sites with up to three utility hook-ups. Backcountry camping is allowed by special permit.

and mountain bikers access to scenic vistas. Cross Timbers State Park has five trails totaling 17 miles. One of the newest is Trees of the Ancient Cross Timbers Trail. This trail takes the visitor on a self-guided, one-mile hike, and through the use of permanent interpretative signs, features trees that date back to 1727. Other trails offer visitors as many as 12 miles of hiking or mountain biking through spectacular scenery. Trails offer visitors the opportunity to enjoy the beauty

of the park's geological formations and a multitude of wildflowers from the forested, riparian, and grassland habitats. Fall color in the Cross Timbers forest is breathtaking.

Toronto Reservoir offers outstanding fishing opportunities. Crappie fishing is currently rated as excellent, and white bass, channel catfish, and flathead catfish also offer good fishing. Some of the best views of the sandstone outcroppings and the forested ridges that surround Toronto



The best way to experience the beauty and diversity of Cross Timbers may be from the trails. Five trails take hikers and bikers more than 17 miles to see and learn about the area's ancient trees, geological formations, forested riparian areas, and prairie.

Reservoir are found from boats.

Many Kansans and most from outside the state associate Kansas with prairie and agricultural wealth. However, the lesser-known Kansas forested region of Cross Timbers State Park offers some unique camping and outdoor recreation opportunities.

Whether you prefer pack-it-in backcountry camping, or asphalt-surfaced camping pads, Cross Timbers can accommodate your needs. The park has 74 camping sites that offer one to three utilities. Most sites have a minimum of electrical and water hookups. More than 100 improved sites are nestled under shade trees and close enough to the water to feel the lake breeze. Except for backcountry sites, all sites are near one of the five modern toilets and shower facilities. Several of the camp sites will accommodate campers with physical disabilities. And some of the sites and group camp areas can be reserved in advance.

Group camping areas are a recent addition to the park. One is a lakeside area designed to accommodate trailers and RVs. A new cathedral-style group shelter adds style and elegance, plus the needed room for families or large gatherings. The other group camping site is a six-unit area



Cross Timbers offers wonderful fishing, sightseeing, and wildlife viewing opportunities. Or, if they choose, visitors can just sit back, relax and enjoy the natural beauty.

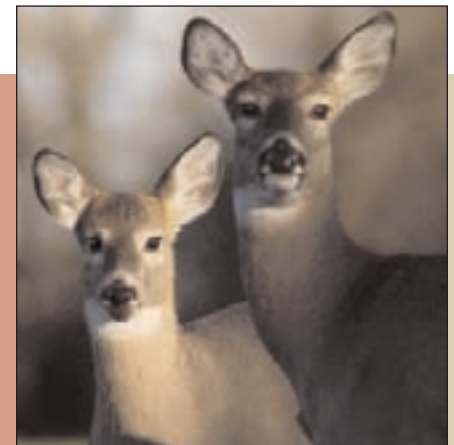
designed for tent or smaller camping units that don't need utility hookups. A nearby gazebo is settled under a canopy of post oak trees and is part of this camping arrangement.

Limited hunting is allowed within park boundaries. Deer and smallgame may be hunted with archery equipment only on approximately 400 acres of park land. Hunters must obtain free permits to hunt in state park areas. In addition, more than 4,700 acres of land and water on the adjacent wildlife area and reservoir are open to public hunting for a wide variety of game. The reservoir and surrounding wetlands can provide excellent waterfowl hunting.

The park also includes a wildlife rehabilitation facility,

which helps injured birds of prey, as well as other wildlife. The primary focus of the rehab center is to release these animals back to nature. However, birds that cannot be released due to injuries may be used in educational park interpretive programs and community-based programming.

Cross Timbers State Park provides wonderful opportunities for solitude and reflection. It is an under-utilized resource located within one-and-half hours of Wichita, and two hours from Kansas City. If you enjoy the deep emotional attraction of the trees and still appreciate the beauty of prairies, this park will appeal to you. At Cross Timbers State Park you can really get away from it all and enjoy the best of natural Kansas. 🌿





text and photos by J. Mark Shoup
associate editor, Pratt

*Branches they bore of that enchanted stem,
Laden with flower and fruit.*

— Lord Alfred Tennyson, “The Lotus Eaters”

I have always been fascinated by what aboriginal peoples throughout time have taken for granted but pampered modern man calls “survival skills:” primitive tool-making, hunting, and fishing, for example.

Not the least among these skills is gathering edible plants, berries, fruit, and roots. I’ve experimented with some of this stuff over the years, but what I knew was mostly common knowledge, the obvious, tasty stuff. Mulberries, currants, wild grapes, sandhill plums, and other berries are easy to identify and quite good. And many people enjoy wild asparagus and morel mushrooms.

However, when I tried to venture into more esoteric edibles, I found the dining not so pleasant. Purple poppy mallow root, commonly called Indian bread, is rather tasteless, and its texture closely resembles low-quality rope. Orange hips, I find, will make one pucker like a monkey sucking a lemon.

It was with this limited knowledge that I eagerly accepted the opportunity to interview — and “graze” with — naturalist Gary Weisenberger of Toronto. I first talked with him in the fall of 2002, when he was working as a biologist on the prairie passage/integrated roadside vegetation program for the Kansas Department of Transportation.

But the interview actually occurred on two trips to the Cross Timbers region south and west of Yates Center — one that fall and another the following spring. This exposed me to a variety of wild foods available at different times of the year.

Weisenberger is a transplanted Kansan who left while young and returned in middle age to Toronto. His family had settled the Yates Center/Toronto area generations earlier and still has ranch land near Woodson State Fishing Lake, a place he remembers visiting as a child. It was during these visits that Weisenberger developed a love for the Kansas prairie.

“This is the area where I used

to spend time with my grandfather when I was a boy," he said. "I think the Woodson Lake area is the best in the state for biodiversity. This Cross Timbers area of the state just has a little of everything."

Although every area of Kansas has endemic plants not found elsewhere in the state, several biological systems intersect the Cross Timbers area, including forested flood plains surrounded by open prairie, hills of oak savannah, and forests. This convergence, and the resulting diversity of plant life, makes the region an ideal place to search for wild edibles.

"Spring and early summer are the best times for edibles," Weisenberger explained. "In later summer, many plants are still good to eat between the root and the foliage, but June is the peak. There are essentially three good periods: spring, early summer, and fall. Pickin's are slimmer in fall although there are major items then, too, but some are too



rare to eat." This last statement reflects Weisenberger's abiding respect for the natural resource.

On my first trip, my sons Logan and Will and I met Weisenberger at Woodson State Fishing Lake. He led us down the bank, where he talked for a half hour about his love for the area and the need to respect the land. It was important that he clarify this relationship between man and nature rather than just charging into the woods and pulling up plants. It's an ethic very much like that young-



The American lotus produces seeds that can be eaten raw in summer, above left. In the fall, the banana-sized tuber can be collected and eaten.

sters are taught in Hunter Education classes: respect for the resource.

Weisenberger rattled off a laundry list of plants that we would be sampling, either on this trip or the one planned for the next spring. "This area has all kinds of good stuff to eat at different times of the year," he said, "Oaks, Jerusalem artichoke, persimmons, cattails, and American lotus."

This latter, known to most folks as the lily pad, reminded me of a story in Homer's *The Odyssey of the Lotus Eaters* — those seductive island inhabitants whose "food was such that those who partook of it lost all thought of home and wished to remain in that country."

"Yeah," he replied. "I have a son who will not come near American lotus because of a poem he read about them as a kid. Too bad. Lotus was a great source of food for the Indians in these parts."

First, Weisenberger gave some essential advice to the boys and me: Many wild plants are toxic,



Gary Weisenberger has spent a lifetime learning which plants are edible. What started as a casual inquiry about a few edibles, turned into a passion to learn about them all.

and some are deadly. He explained that some plants are only safe at certain times of the year and that only parts of otherwise poisonous plants may be edible. Do not start gathering and eating wild plants without instruction from an expert. Then buy good books on the subject and study them.

That said, we had an expert this day, so we began gathering. Weisenberger led, pointing out this plant and that. Many we would sample, others we passed over — whether out of season, non-edible, rare, or plain toxic — but not without explanation. We searched the area around Woodson and travelled the county, searching out plants in places he knew them to grow.



Sandhill plums are a common wild fruit that many Kansans use to make delicious jelly.

Smooth sumac was the first edible plant nearby, and we collected a bundle of the fuzzy red berries. “Middle Easterners use this for seasoning,” he explained. “You can also make a sour aid drink out of it. Sour warms the body.”

Next on the platter was the white seed of the pepper knotweed, which grows in moist areas. Used for spice also, this did not give us much sustenance, but it was hot.

What followed, however, was a substantial food source — persimmons. I had heard of this plant all my life, but I had never seen it before. About the size of a half-dollar, persimmons grow on trees. Pale peach in color, they should be gathered when they fall or are easily shaken from the tree. Otherwise, their astringent properties will make you pucker like, well, an orange-hip eater.

“This is the ultimate puckerer,” Weisenberger joked as the boys tested this theory, and its truth became evident on their wrinkled expressions. When ripe, however, this large fruit is quite sweet. It is excellent for jam, pies, and cookies.

Next, we rubbed bee balm mint, which is used for tea, between our fingers to get that distinctive mint aroma. A marshy area yielded the familiar arrowhead, with its namesake leaf. The tuber of this plant has a toxic sap, but cooked, it tastes like a good potato. Incidental to this find,

Weisenberger picked a stem of mountain mint, which “makes a tasty tea and is great as a spice added to foil campfire cooking.”

The next substantial food source was the acorn. I had always wondered why people didn’t eat this large nut. The reason is the nut’s concentration of the toxin tannin. However, when ground, boiled, and dried to leach out the tannin, they are good baking material that can be kept for long periods. Burr oak yields the largest acorns while white oak fruit has less tannin. Red oak acorns are small and high in tannin, but they, too, can be eaten in this way.

While scrounging for acorns, Weisenberger came across a small, three-leaved legume called hog peanut or pea vine. While not ripe at the time we were there, this plant bears an edible underground fruit, like a peanut.

Thirty miles from our start was our last stop. It was a private pond covered with American lotus — water lilies. Because it was autumn, the large, hardened seed pods of this plant — looking and sounding very much like Mardi Gras instruments — littered the bank. In August, these seeds can be eaten raw or when dried, roasted until they pop open, making a very tasty “meal,” like cornmeal.

The American lotus tuber is tough to get, burying itself deep in the mud under water, but it is a prize. Growing as large as a banana, this tuber can provide a very substantial source of carbohydrates. When cooked in stew, boiled, or baked with other food, it has a “unique, addictive taste,” according to Weisenberger. In addition, the large leaf — or



Pale poppy mallow is related to okra. The whole plant may be eaten, but as with its cousin, the purple poppy mallow, the yam-like root is most commonly eaten.

“pad” — of the lotus may be steamed and used as a wrap for various dishes.

While most of the plant is out of season in fall, cattails were also on Weisenberger’s mind. If found this time of year, the roots of this versatile plant may be baked and eaten. In spring, the male plant’s pollen can be used for flour, and head of the female plant may be boiled like corn-on-the-cob. The white centers of new shoots are tasty items to collect in spring and eat raw, add to salads, or cook.

Throughout this trip, Weisenberger never missed the opportunity to point out dangerous plants he noticed. Poison hemlock, a beautiful fern-like non-native plant found throughout much of the state, is deadly in every part. (This is the plant that was used to poison the ancient Greek philosopher Socrates when he was sentenced to death for criticizing the government and rejecting the existence of the Greek gods.) A close relative one should also take care to avoid is water hemlock, a

native plant that might be growing in cattails. This advice is especially important when digging for cattail roots.

Death camas is a beautiful but deadly prairie flower that looks so much like the harmless wild blue hyacinth that only experts can tell for sure. Immature indigoes look like asparagus, and dogbane looks like immature milkweed. Both indigo and dogbane are toxic, while milkweed is only toxic prior to cooking.

In addition, some people have allergic reactions to certain plants. “Each individual must be careful,” Weisenberger cautions. “Monitor yourself. Each person’s physiology is different.”

The following spring, my wife, Rose,

accompanied the boys and me to our second rendezvous with Weisenberger. Rose is an ornamental gardening junkie, so this was her cup of tea. We met Weisenberger again at Woodson and from there ventured to the prairie regions of the Cross Timbers.

As we strolled across the rolling hills, Weisenberger stopped every few feet to study this plant or that, often referring to them affectionately as “he” or “this little guy” and noting that they grow well in limestone.

It was springtime, and this would be a day to cover a smorgasbord of edible — and otherwise functional — plants. To describe each in detail would



Fall cornucopia: The author’s son, Will, poses with a basket full of persimmons and sumac berries.

A PARTIAL LIST OF PLANTS EXAMINED OR SAMPLED IN THE CROSSTIMBERS AREA:

- **pale purple coneflower (echinacea)** — snakebite treatment, immune system booster, treatment of wounds;
- **pale poppy mallow** — related to okra, the whole plant is edible. Leaves make a soup thickener;
- **spiderwort** — leaves and flowers may be eaten;
- **smooth sumac** — discussed earlier, the stems may also be used as a toothbrush;
- **biscuitroot (wild parsley)** — leaves may be used as seasoning and the root eaten;
- **prairie turnip** — this was perhaps the most important wild edible to plains Indians. The taproot is very high in carbohydrates and may be used in breads or stews or eaten fresh. Lewis and Clark would trade for ropes of prairie turnips braided together by natives;
- **New Jersey tea** — leaves may be used for tea, and flowers make a mild soap;
- **lead plant** — tea;
- **purple wood sorrel** — this clover-looking “lemon grass” may be used as a seasoning in fish. Both leaf and flower may be used;
- **purple prairie clover** — tea, root may be chewed for a sweet, gum-like taste;
- **yarrow** — astringent, may also be used as an antibiotic when applied on wounds;
- **dogbane** — called “Indian hemp,” old stems may be twisted and braided into rope;
- **stinging nettle** — hunters and other naturalists may find this plant annoying, but the fresh tops can be plucked and steamed for a fine vegetable. Wear long sleeves and take care not to rub into the lower “stinging” parts of the plant;
- **grape leaves** — may be used for wrapping foods to be cooked, and eaten;
- **goose berry** — leaves may be used like grape leaves for wrapping foods;
- **wild blue hyacinth** — edible bulb is much like an onion. Warning: for experts only. Looks very much like deadly death camas;
- **water willow** — young tops may be plucked and steamed;
- **common milkweed** — picked when very young, stems, leaves, buds, flowers, and pods may be boiled separately. Tastes much like green beans;
- **bee balm (wild bergamot)** — another mint, dry tops may be used as seasoning, tea, or “gum.” Good for sore throat. Sap may be used as insect repellent;
- **tall thistle** — leaves may be peeled off and the stem eaten like celery;
- **redbud tree** — flowers may be eaten raw, and young beans may be cooked just like green beans;
- **common plantain** — young plant may be steamed. Leaves may be chewed into a poultice that is good for insect bites and other skin problems;
- **Jerusalem artichoke** — a staple of the plains Indians and cultivated today, bulbs may be eaten raw or cooked; and
- **polk** — last but certainly not least, this versatile plant known to most may be eaten in spring and early summer. Leaves and other soft parts are good after cooking, but when the stalk turns red, it becomes toxic and should be avoided. Its berries have been used for ink.

take a good guidebook, which many readers may want to purchase. (*One, Edible Wild Plants of the Prairie*, by Kelly Kindscher, is available from the KDWP Outdoor Store. Call (620) 672-5911 to order.)

The list above is far from a comprehensive list of wild Kansas edibles, but it illustrates the abundance of the Earth we have been provided. It’s there waiting for the ambitious natu-

ralist to explore, but beware: not only are poisonous plants out there, but exploring the good ones may become addictive. As Weisenberger explains:

“I didn’t really intend to get into it this deeply. At first, I was just interested in the edibles, but once I learned about one, I realized I had to learn about another. You’ve got to learn what’s what, but that’s the fun part.”

While legends are enter-

taining, nature’s enchanting abundance nurtures our most basic needs, both physical and spiritual. Homer’s alluring lotus may connect us to the past, but the true lotus binds us to all Creation. Laden with flower and fruit, the earth yields her treasure to all who seek with eyes to see. And tongues to taste. ♡

Lewis & Clark's Corps of Discovery



Bill Stephens photo.

The American Outdoor Epic

by Jeffrey Bender
park manager, Pomona State Park

2004 marks the 200th anniversary of Lewis and Clark's amazing journey.

On the evening of June 26, 1804, three vessels carrying 48 men came ashore from the Missouri River on a point of land at the mouth of the Kansas River. The vessels included a 55-foot keelboat, 8 feet wide with large sails, as well as two smaller wood boats called pirogues. The nearest white settlement, La Charette, was about 294 miles downstream on the Missouri River. There could have been a Kanza Indian watching the group as they secured their boats at a site we know today as Kansas City.

While French explorers and trappers had known this region since 1713, this group surely

looked different to any Kanza Indian watching. And they were. They flew a flag with red and white stripes and a small field of blue. And while some of the men were indeed speaking French, those who wore uniforms, spoke English. Several were giving orders. They were well-armed with muskets, rifles, tomahawks, large guns on each of the small boats (blunderbusses), and even a small cannon on the large boat.

The group seemed unfriendly. While several stood guard, most were chopping down trees and building a 6-foot-tall pile of wood across the point. (The redoubt of logs was built to protect against attack, and trees were cleared to

allow celestial readings to obtain latitude and longitude.) The group might have appeared like a well-organized war party.

But if Kanza Indians were watching, they did not to meet the strangers then, nor two years later when the expedition returned downstream in large dugout canoes. This group was in fact a unit of the Army of the United States of America, a country only 28 years old. And while they had some of the most advanced weapons of the day — flintlock rifles, muskets, and even an air rifle — their intentions were not aggressive.

The group was the expedition under the command of Captain Meriwether Lewis and William Clark: the "Corps of Volunteers for Northwestern Discovery". They were traveling under orders from President Thomas Jefferson, which, first and foremost, included extending U.S. foreign trade and finding the best route to the Pacific Ocean via the Missouri River. The fabled Northwest Passage was thought to include an easy hike over Appalachian-like mountains to the great river of the west that flowed to the ocean. The group would discover that the "easy hike" was a misconception.

Lewis's orders also included establishing commercial alliances with native people. The political motive was to keep the Europeans from becoming established in the potential new lands of the U.S. The business to be done was the fur trade. Beaver and other fur were in great demand in Europe and Asia.

Another reason to meet the

inhabitants of the West was to inform them that, from the European view, the land they lived on was now part of the United States. The recent Louisiana Purchase had doubled the size of the U.S., adding 800,000 square miles. The area involved stretched from the Mississippi to the Rocky Mountains and was home to thousands of Native Americans. To the men of the expedition, though, the most essential reason to meet the natives was to get their help, which would be necessary to the expedition's success and survival.

A third objective was to examine and report on the land and its "productions." Being a man of Enlightenment Science, President Jefferson wanted Lewis to collect information on everything — geography, rocks, minerals, soils, climate, fossils, plants, animals, and the native people.

Lewis left Pittsburgh with the keelboat in August 1803, maneuvered it down the Ohio River, and hired men along the

way. He met Clark near Louisville, Ky. They enlisted more men, and preceded to St. Louis, picking up soldiers from military posts.

Forty-eight men started out from their 1803-1804 winter camp, across the Mississippi River from St. Louis. The crew was a microcosm of America, including men with various ethnic backgrounds. Among the regular soldiers from the Army were Irish-Americans and German-Americans. Lewis and Clark were stock from Virginia planters. "Recruits," hired mostly from the Louisville area, were rugged young frontiersmen mustered in as Privates. French boatmen were hired to help get the vessels up the river the first year. One of them, Pierre Cruzate, was French-Omaha, and a fiddle player who often entertained the crew. George Droulliard, a French-Canadian-Shawnee was hired as an interpreter. Clark took along his slave, York, who worked with the enlisted men, hunted, and mystified the



Jeffrey Bender photos

The horizon looked much different when the men of the "Corps of Discovery" landed at the mouth of the Kansas River in 1804. The top photo shows today's view of Kansas City. The right photo shows reenactors in a camp that may look very much like Lewis and Clark's camp 200 years ago.



Indians. Another “member” of the expedition was Lewis’s Newfoundland dog, Seaman.

The first year, the group moved upriver to the Mandan-Hidatsa Indian villages. The following spring, some of the soldiers and most of the Frenchmen returned to St. Louis with the keelboat. The expedition continued west with 33 people, including French-Canadian interpreter Toussaint Charbonaue, his young Shoshone Indian wife, Sacagawea, and their infant son John Baptiste. This group traveled to the Pacific and back.

Throughout their journey, the Corps met more than 50 Indian tribes, and they were surprised to learn, at the time, that the natives were “as numerous on the Columbia, [river] . . . as the whites are in any part of the United States.” With few exceptions, they found the Indian people to be friendly and generous, and Lewis knew the expedition likely would not have gone further than the Rocky Mountains without their help.

The people of the Corps made a journey of epic proportions for their time, covering about 8,000 miles in three years. They went west and came back, 40 years before masses migrated west via the Oregon Trail. The extreme conditions and danger they overcame are popular heroic aspects of the expedition. Hardships included everything from mosquitoes and grizzly bears to starvation and hunting accidents. They were self-reliant and adept in survival skills, such as hunting, fishing, carpentry, hide tanning, cooking, butchering, camping, blacksmithing, and woodsmanship.

They took along tons of equipment, food, presents and trade goods, but mostly lived off

the land and what they received from Native Americans. They traveled by manufactured boats, dugout canoes, horseback, and on foot. The work of travel at times was almost unimaginable. In Montana they portaged heavy dugout canoes, food, and equipment 18 miles at the Great Falls area. There were numerous near misses that could have ended the expedition or resulted in severe injury or death. Only one member died — Sergeant Charles Floyd. It is generally accepted that he died of appendicitis and in 1804, nothing could have been done anywhere to save him. Two other deaths attributed to the expedition included two Blackfoot Indians, killed while attempting to steal guns and horses after misunderstanding the Corps’ intentions.

The Corps of Discovery experienced the raw, wild American West unlike anyone who followed. They encountered huge herds of buffalo, elk, deer, and pronghorn. At the mouth of the Kansas River, they saw “emence numbers” of Carolina Parakeets, the only North American parrot, and a bird none of us will ever see alive.

The journey would take three years to complete, instead of two as Lewis had planned. They were the first from the United

States to learn first-hand of the vastness of the West and the extremes of geography — the Great Plains and the Rocky Mountains. Lewis collected hundreds of plant and animal specimens, rocks and minerals, wrote hundreds of pages of descriptions, noted daily temperatures and other climate factors, and wrote page after page about the ethnography of the native people. Lewis and Clark were among the first to describe common western plants and animals, including much of our Kansas wildlife.

The story of Lewis and Clark’s expedition is so big and encompassing, it is difficult to



Bill Stephens photo

Many of the men were soldiers, picked up from military posts or recruited in Louisville, Ky. While their intentions were peaceful, the group was well-armed.



Jeffrey Bender photo

Above are some of the tools used to navigate unknown lands, including a sextant, octant, compass, chronometer, surveyor's chain and artificial horizon.

know where to start telling or learning. It involves so many aspects of history, humanities, science, and even technology. However, some of the more important lessons are perhaps those of human values such as courage, patriotism, friendship, teamwork, and understanding of cultures, as well as respect for the land and its resources. The 200-year anniversary of this expedition provides an opportunity to reflect on those things.

Events and exhibits commemorating the Expedition will occur across the U.S., especially along the Corps' trail. Events started in January 2003, and will run through 2006. There are 15 "National Signature Events" along the route. Along with the events, the National Park Service is sponsoring a traveling exhibit called "Corps of Discovery II," which includes two exhibit tents and the Tent of Many Voices for multi-media presentations and speakers. Kansas is privileged to have the biggest holiday event. July 3 and 4, 2004 will be the primary dates of "A Journey Fourth" to

commemorate the expedition's observance of the first 4th of July celebration west of the Mississippi. Various activities will take place for about two weeks around those dates. (See the web sites below)

Legacy projects are occurring all over the country. New museums, exhibits, education programs, and trails are in the works or completed. In Kansas, projects include interpretive signs at trail sites, new Lewis and Clark trail highway signage, interpretive pavilions with touch-screen kiosks at four locations, and the development of Lewis and Clark Commemorative Historic Park at Kaw Point in Kansas City. In Leavenworth, a statue of "Lewis the Botanist" will be featured. Atchison's projects include riverfront revitalization and new park facilities, boat ramps, and a hiking/biking trail. The exhibit "Beyond Lewis and Clark: Army Exploration in the West" will be at the Kansas Historical Society starting November 2004 and will return, permanently, in 2006 to Fort

Leavenworth (see the lewisandclarkinkansas website).

Another unique opportunity is the National Lewis and Clark Exhibition, which will visit five cities through 2006. The exhibition will bring together, for the first time, many remaining expedition items including journals, specimens, maps, Indian artifacts, and members' personal items. This highly acclaimed exhibition is open in St. Louis through September 6, 2004, and it will be in Denver during the summer of 2005.

Long-accepted theories and opinions about the expedition are occasionally revised when new historic materials are found. There are still mysteries various professional and amateur historians continue to study such as: Where did the iron boat frame end up? Was a buffalo jump really that, as reported by Lewis and Clark, or was it a place where drowned buffalo washed up on the shore at the base of a cliff? And the list goes on.

Looking back 200 years, modern opinions of whether the expedition was a success or a failure vary as much as the people who reflect on them. Maybe that variety of cultures and beliefs is what really makes the Bicentennial of the Corps of Discovery a worthy commemoration. It is a tribute to American democracy and freedoms, and to the land. ♡

For a "keelboat full" of information about the Lewis and Clark Expedition see the following web sites (there are more):

*Kansas Lewis Clark Commission:
www.lewisandclarkinkansas.org
 National Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commemoration:
www.lewisandclark200.org
 A Journey Fourth Signature Event:
www.journey4th.org
 Kaw Point Park Projects:
www.lewisandclarkwyco.org*

The First Turkey

by Jennifer Ramshaw

Toronto



The cool wind blew through my hair as I sat motionless against a massive tree.

Dad sat behind my right shoulder, positioned so he could not be seen through the clearing in the brush. My gun rested on my knee and despite the chill in the air, I was alert to all my surroundings.

Daylight approached, and we began to hear turkeys as they started to wake in their roost only 100 yards away. I shivered as I usually do in the spring turkey season, partly from cold, partly from excitement. Then came a massive flutter of beating wings, which signified that the birds had flown down and were now on the ground. Dad and I looked at each other and pulled down our face nets to complete our camouflage. I repositioned my gun and placed my finger on the safety. It was time to sit perfectly still to avoid detection.

Dad called to the turkeys for 15 or 20 minutes and finally convinced them to visit our arranged decoys. Soft answers told us they were headed our way. The forest was calm and unexpected. As they grew closer, my adrenaline started pumping and I was sure my pounding heart could be heard from a distance.

Suddenly, footsteps sounded in the nearby leaves. A moment later, three hens walked out in front, pecking at the ground and making their familiar putting noises. They were alert and very cautious, constantly glancing up to check their surroundings. After a minute or two of my dad's experienced calling, the big tom made its appearance. Feathers puffed up, it emerged from the brush, strutting royally. This was it: the moment my dad and I had

been waiting for all season had finally come.

As instructed, I silently switched off my safety.

Proud and dominant, my quarry took its last step. The tom bellowed a final loud gobble and dad whispered, "Take him." My breath stood still, my hands shook, and my mind went blank. I could hardly hold my gun straight. But somehow, I managed to aim the bead at the base of the tom's neck, and before I was totally aware of the situation, I squeezed the trigger. The mighty tom fell flat and fast; with my precisely aimed shot, it died instantly.

I jumped up screaming and hollering, tears of joy and accomplishment in my eyes. I turned to look at my dad. With pride and a huge smile painted on his face, he gave me a big hug and said, "Well done, kiddo." I'll never forget my first turkey.

FISHING FORECAST 2004

Use this handy guide to find the kind of fishing you desire. The 2004 Fishing Forecast is available in brochure form from the department's Pratt office, or you can access it from the department's webpage: www.kdwp.state.ks.us.

Here's how it works. Data is collected by fisheries biologists through annual test netting, electroshocking and creel surveys. (Not every lake is sampled each year, so some may not be included in the tables.) The data is separated into two categories — reservoirs (water bodies larger than 1,000 acres) and lakes (water bodies smaller than 1,000 acres) — because sampling methods on small lakes may not be comparable with those on larger reservoirs.

The forecast includes tables for 13 popular game fish species. Each is given a **Density Rating**, a **Preferred Rating**, a **Lunker Rating**, a **Largest Fish** and a **Biologist's Rating**. The last column is the size of the water body in acres.

The **Density Rating** is the number of fish, quality-sized or larger, per



Mike Blair photo

unit of sampling effort. Quality size, listed in parentheses at the top of the column, is the length of fish generally considered acceptable by most anglers. It is different, of course, for each species. For example, a crappie longer than 8 inches is considered quality-sized, while a walleye must be 15 inches to be considered quality-sized. Theoretically, a lake with a **Density Rating** of 30 would have twice as many quality-sized fish per surface acre as one with a **Density Rating** of 15.

The **Preferred Rating** identifies how many above-average-sized fish a lake contains. Anglers looking for big fish should be more concerned with this rating.

The **Lunker Rating** goes a step further, indicating how many lunker-sized fish were sampled in each body of water. The size of a lunker fish is determined by the length of fish most anglers would consider a trophy. Some lakes may have a **Lunker Rating** of 0, which simply means that no fish of that particular size were sampled. There may be lunker-sized fish in that lake, but they are less abundant than in a lake with a positive rating.

Use these ratings together to find water that provides the kind of fishing you're looking for. If it's numbers fish, use the **Density Rating**, if you're after big fish, look at the **Lunker Rating**. However, a lake that ranks high in both ratings might be the best choice.

The **Biggest Fish** column lists the weight of the largest fish caught during sampling. This rating simply gives the angler confidence that truly big fish are present.

The **Biologist's Rating** adds the human touch. Each biologist reviews the data from annual sampling, then considers environmental

conditions that may have affected the results. They also consider last year's data, then provide an opinion of the quality of the angling opportunity with a P (poor), F (fair), G (good), or E (excellent) rating. Occasionally, the **Density Rating** will not agree with the **Biologist's Rating**. This means the **Density**

Rating doesn't reflect the biologist's opinion of the fishery.

Don't forget your copy of the *2004 Fishing Regulations Summary*, available at all department offices or wherever licenses are sold. Consult the regulation summary for length and creel limits at each of the reservoirs and lakes listed in this fore-

cast. And pick up a copy of the *2004 Kansas Fishing Atlas*. This booklet contains county maps showing all reservoirs, state fishing lakes, and FISH waters (private ponds and streams leased for public fishing).

CHANNEL CATFISH

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>16")	Preferred Rating (>24")	Lunker Rating (>28")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio. Rating	Acres of Water
RESERVOIR						
SEBELIUS	7.24	3.90	1.57	11.95	E	1500
COFFEY CO. LAKE	7.00	0.40	0.30	14.10	G	5000
LA CYGNE	6.75	0.00	0.00	6.21	G	2600
TUTTLE CREEK	5.80	2.00	0.00	7.70	G	15800
KIRWIN	5.65	3.67	2.00	25.35	E	4000
WEBSTER	5.47	0.99	0.57	12.15	G	3500
CHENEY	5.30	1.00	0.20	9.40	G	9550
CLINTON	5.25	1.00	0.25	17.09	G	7000
PERRY	4.50	1.00	0.25	12.13	G	12600
TORONTO	4.00	1.00	0.00	5.40	G	2800
CEDAR BLUFF	4.00	1.25	0.50	10.08	E	6500
COUNCIL GROVE	4.00	0.00	0.00	3.70	G	3280
GLEN ELDER	3.40	0.30	0.00	5.45	G	12586
MARION	3.33	1.17	0.50	13.08	G	6160
KANOPOLIS	3.25	0.25	0.00	5.42	G	3550
WILSON	3.22	0.33	0.00	8.79	G	9040
HILLSDALE	3.20	1.00	0.00	7.05	F	4580
LAKES						
SABETHA - PONY CREEK LAKE	50.00	12.00	1.00	13.45	G	171
MIAMI SFL	38.00	0.00	0.00	4.82	G	118
PLEASANTON EAST LAKE	35.00	11.00	0.00	8.30	E	127
PLEASANTON WEST LAKE	35.00	1.00	0.00	5.50	E	20
MADISON CITY LAKE	26.00	0.00	0.00	4.85	G	114
CENTRALIA CITY LAKE	25.50	8.50	4.00	10.60	E	400
BONE CREEK LAKE	24.00	4.50	0.00	9.60	G	540
MOUND CITY LAKE	23.00	3.00	1.00	9.66	G	148
OLATHE-CEDAR LAKE	21.00	0.00	0.00	5.18	F	56
OVERBROOK CITY LAKE	19.00	7.00	2.00	13.40	E	8

KINGMAN SFL	18.00	2.00	0.00	6.20	G	144
HORTON-MISSION LAKE	18.00	2.00	0.00	6.17	F	154
CARBONDALE CITY LAKE - EAST	17.00	2.00	0.00	7.70	G	265
BUTLER SFL	16.00	5.00	0.00	7.20	G	124
HOLTON - BANNER CREEK LAKE	16.00	4.50	1.50	12.57	F	535
BOURBON SFL	16.00	3.00	1.00	13.23	E	103
SEDAN CITY LAKE-OLD	14.00	5.00	0.00	9.48	G	55
EUREKA CITY LAKE	14.00	4.00	0.00	9.48	G	135
WILSON SFL	13.00	0.00	0.00	4.40	G	110
PRATT CO. LAKE	13.00	0.00	0.00	3.93	E	51
MCPHERSON SFL	12.50	1.50	0.50	11.10	G	46
BLACK KETTLE SFL	12.00	0.00	0.00	3.30	P	8
GRIDLEY CITY LAKE	11.50	2.50	1.50	16.20	E	33
FORT SCOTT CITY LAKE	11.00	2.00	0.50	13.90	G	350
SCOTT STATE LAKE	10.00	0.00	0.00	3.66	F	115
GARDNER CITY LAKE	10.00	1.00	0.00	10.36	F	100
OSAGE SFL	10.00	1.50	0.50	12.20	G	140
MELVERN RIVER POND	9.00	0.00	0.00	4.90	E	100
CHASE SFL	9.00	1.00	0.00	6.26	G	109
LEAVENWORTH SFL	8.50	0.50	0.00	6.52	G	175
JEFFREY EC-AUX. MAKEUP LK	8.00	1.00	0.00	8.30	G	460
YATES CENTER CITY LAKE-NEW	7.50	4.00	2.00	19.60	E	205
WELLINGTON CITY LAKE	7.00	0.00	0.00	1.19	F	700
CRAWFORD SFL	7.00	0.50	0.50	12.40	G	150
ATCHISON CO. LAKE	7.00	1.00	0.00	5.56	F	60
LEBO CITY LAKE	7.00	3.00	0.50	13.90	E	70
BARBER SFL-LOWER	7.00	0.00	0.00	4.23	G	51
WASHINGTON SFL	7.00	5.00	2.00	15.30	G	65
NEBO SFL	7.00	1.00	1.00	11.24	F	38
SHAWNEE CO.-LAKE SHAWNEE	6.50	1.00	0.50	10.01	G	416
MOLINE NEW CITY LAKE	6.00	0.00	0.00	3.09	F	185
ATCHISON SFL	6.00	0.00	0.00	1.75	F	66
DOUGLAS CO.-LONESTAR LAKE	6.00	0.50	0.00	6.54	F	195



Mike Blair photo

WHITE CRAPPIE

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>8")	Preferred Rating (>10")	Lunker Rating (>12")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	Acres of Water
RESERVOIR						
LOVEWELL	34.50	5.67	0.00	0.96	G	2986
BIG HILL	21.60	0.60	0.30	0.90	G	1240
PERRY	19.54	5.25	0.29	1.31	G	12600
COUNCIL GROVE	18.86	8.57	1.00	1.32	G	3280
KANOPOLIS	15.93	9.20	0.33	1.29	G	3550
FALL RIVER	14.00	12.00	3.00	2.43	E	2500
HILLSDALE	13.25	3.56	0.06	0.90	F	4580
CLINTON	12.58	3.75	0.58	1.28	F	7000
POMONA	9.25	6.88	0.69	1.13	G	4000
MARION	7.63	5.25	0.13	1.20	F	6160
TORONTO	6.00	2.00	1.00	2.54	G	2800
COFFEY CO. LAKE	6.00	3.10	1.40	2.30	G	5000
LA CYGNE	4.75	2.00	0.13	0.80	G	2600
MILFORD	2.30	1.10	0.20	1.00	F	16020
KIRWIN	2.00	0.81	0.13	1.52	F	4000
TUTTLE CREEK	1.80	0.80	0.20	1.30	F	15800
SEBELIUS	1.13	0.88	0.25	0.98	F	1500
MELVERN	1.10	0.80	0.00	0.60	E	7000
CHENEY	1.00	0.30	0.00	0.70	P	9550
EL DORADO	1.00	0.67	0.00	0.78	F	8000
CEDAR BLUFF	0.35	0.35	0.15	0.95	P	6500
LAKES						
EUREKA CITY LAKE	83.00	2.00	0.00	0.74	G	135
SCOTT STATE LAKE	39.75	1.00	0.00	0.58	G	115
MEADE STATE LAKE	31.25	15.75	1.25	1.03	E	80
MOUND CITY LAKE	29.00	11.00	1.00	0.77	G	148
PLAINVILLE LAKE	28.00	25.67	13.33	1.61	E	100
CARBONDALE CITY LAKE - E	26.50	11.00	1.00	0.90	G	265
SEDAN CITY LAKE-NEW	26.00	8.00	1.00	1.98	G	70
OTTAWA SFL	21.75	5.13	2.38	1.95	G	138
SEDAN CITY LAKE-OLD	19.00	6.00	0.00	0.90	G	55
NEOSHO WA	17.50	6.30	1.30	1.00	G	800
HORTON-MISSION LAKE	14.00	4.00	2.75	1.49	F	154
NEBO SFL	13.75	1.50	1.00	1.50	F	38
OLATHE-CEDAR LAKE	13.00	3.67	1.33	1.33	F	56
JEFFREY EC - MAKEUP LK	11.80	4.80	0.30	1.10	G	125
PLEASANTON WEST LAKE	11.25	1.25	0.00	0.57	G	20
LAWRENCE-MARY'S LAKE	10.50	0.50	0.00	0.53	P	3
MARION CO. LAKE	8.25	5.50	3.50	1.45	G	153
ATCHISON CITY LAKE #3	7.50	5.50	0.50	0.95	F	4
HERINGTON CITY LAKE-OLD	7.30	3.00	0.00	0.80	G	367
BOURBON SFL	7.25	2.25	0.75	1.77	G	103
FORT SCOTT CITY LAKE	6.25	5.38	0.75	1.40	G	350
PLEASANTON EAST LAKE	6.25	3.25	0.50	0.84	G	127
WELLINGTON-HARGIS CREEK LK	6.00	2.75	1.25	0.99	F	67
ATCHISON CO. LAKE	6.00	2.50	1.00	1.32	F	60
HORTON-LITTLE LAKE	5.50	1.50	1.00	0.94	F	10
MADISON CITY LAKE	5.00	1.00	0.00	1.13	F	114
BLACK KETTLE SFL	5.00	3.50	2.00	1.10	F	8
OLATHE-LAKE OLATHE	4.33	0.83	0.33	1.02	F	172
JEWELL SFL	4.17	1.83	1.67	1.70	F	57
SEDGWICK CO.-LAKE AFTON	4.00	0.50	0.00	2.38	F	240
PARSONS CITY LAKE	4.00	1.00	0.50	1.50	G	980
SHERIDAN SFL	3.75	0.75	0.00	0.66	F	67
ANTHONY CITY LAKE	3.50	1.00	0.00	0.80	P	156
CRAWFORD SFL	3.50	1.50	0.00	0.70	G	150
KINGMAN SFL	3.50	2.00	0.00	0.90	F	144
ATCHISON CITY LAKE #1	3.00	1.50	0.00	0.51	F	6
GEARY SFL	3.00	0.50	0.00	0.60	G	97
MOLINE NEW CITY LAKE	3.00	2.00	1.00	1.98	F	185
SEVERY CITY LAKE	3.00	1.00	0.00	0.63	P	5
WASHINGTON SFL	2.80	0.00	0.00	0.30	F	65
DOUGLAS SFL	2.67	0.00	0.00	0.32	P	180
CHASE SFL	2.50	2.50	0.00	0.63	F	109
CHANUTE CITY LAKE	2.50	0.50	0.00	0.80	P	80
NEOSHO SFL	2.30	0.30	0.00	0.50	F	92
MIDDLE CREEK SFL	2.17	0.17	0.00	0.45	F	280
OSAGE CITY LAKE	2.00	0.50	0.50	1.30	G	50
HOLTON-ELKHORN LAKE	2.00	2.00	1.50	1.06	F	4
GARDNER CITY LAKE	1.83	0.00	0.00	0.28	P	100
LEAVENWORTH SFL	1.83	0.17	0.00	0.50	P	175
SHAWNEE CO.-LAKE SHAWNEE	1.75	0.50	0.00	0.49	F	416

BLACK CRAPPIE

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>8")	Preferred Rating (>10")	Lunker Rating (>12")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	Acres of Water
RESERVOIR						
LOVEWELL	10.67	3.17	0.33	1.67	F	2986
WEBSTER	3.50	2.92	1.83	1.30	G	3500
SEBELIUS	2.63	1.13	0.50	1.36	F	1500
MARION	2.13	1.38	0.13	0.98	P	6160
WILSON	1.05	0.86	0.14	1.49	F	9040
LAKES						
GRAHAM CO.-ANTELOPE LAKE	34.00	13.00	2.50	1.31	E	80
KINGMAN SFL	16.50	1.50	0.00	0.70	F	144
NEOSHO SFL	12.50	0.00	0.00	0.30	F	92
BUTLER SFL	11.50	0.50	0.00	0.91	F	124
ATCHISON SFL	10.25	9.75	3.00	0.67	F	66
GREENBUSH EDUCATION CENTER	9.80	0.30	0.00	0.50	F	5
CENTRALIA CITY LAKE	9.00	1.40	0.00	0.60	G	400
COWLEY SFL	8.50	1.50	0.00	0.55	F	84
YATES CENTER-SOUTH OWL LAKE	8.50	1.00	0.00	0.60	F	150
MOLINE OLD CITY LAKE	7.00	2.00	0.00	0.72	P	68
PLEASANTON EAST LAKE	6.50	5.75	0.00	0.66	G	127
GARNETT CITY LAKE-SOUTH	6.30	3.00	0.00	1.33	F	25
WYANDOTTE CO. LAKE	6.25	3.63	0.25	1.05	E	407
LEBO CITY LAKE	6.00	0.50	0.00	0.70	G	70
BROWN SFL	5.50	3.25	0.00	0.86	F	62
GRIDLEY CITY LAKE	5.00	2.50	0.00	0.60	F	33
SABETHA - PONY CREEK LAKE	4.75	0.25	0.25	0.93	F	171
LEAVENWORTH SFL	3.00	0.67	0.00	0.54	G	175
WOODSON SFL	3.00	3.00	0.50	1.20	F	180
PLAINVILLE LAKE	3.00	1.00	0.00	0.52	F	100
BRONSON CITY LAKE	2.75	1.75	1.75	1.25	F	0
WILSON SFL	2.50	1.50	0.30	1.00	G	110
NEBO SFL	2.25	0.25	0.00	0.62	F	38
SHAWNEE SFL	1.80	0.30	0.00	0.50	F	135
CRAWFORD SFL	1.80	0.00	0.00	0.40	F	150
SHAWNEE CO.-LAKE SHAWNEE	1.75	1.50	0.00	0.65	F	416
GARNETT CITY LAKE-NORTH	1.50	1.00	0.00	0.50	F	55
BOURBON SFL	1.25	0.25	0.25	1.13	F	103
PRATT CO. LAKE	1.25	0.50	0.25	1.04	F	51
BOURBON SFL	1.25	0.25	0.00	1.13	G	103
HOLTON-ELKHORN LAKE	1.00	0.50	0.00	0.79	F	4
YATES CENTER CITY LAKE-NEW	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.60	G	205

FLATHEAD CATFISH

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>16")	Preferred Rating (>24")	Lunker Rating (>28")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	Acres of Water
RESERVOIR						
SEBELIUS	2.00	1.50	1.50	24.91	G	1500
WEBSTER	1.50	1.00	1.00	16.56	G	3500
KIRWIN	1.50	1.50	1.50	24.25	G	4000
PERRY	1.50	1.00	0.75	16.87	F	12600
MILFORD	0.83	0.50	0.30	35.00	F	16020
LAKES						
HERINGTON CITY LAKE-OLD	3.00	2.00	1.00	18.00	F	367
CLARK SFL	1.50	0.50	0.50	11.46	P	300
MARION CO. LAKE	1.00	1.00	0.00	7.34	F	153
GEARY SFL	1.00	1.00	1.00	14.00	F	97



LARGEMOUTH BASS

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>12")	Preferred Rating (>15")	Lunker Rating (>20")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	Acres of Water
RESERVOIR						
SEBELIUS	102.20	29.80	0.60	3.90	G	1500
WEBSTER	66.40	57.90	6.40	6.30	E	3500
LA CYGNE	59.90	45.70	10.20	9.80	E	2600
CEDAR BLUFF	49.30	24.70	2.00	7.70	G	6500
KIRWIN	22.60	19.40	0.00	3.20	F	4000
HILLSDALE	20.60	12.10	0.70	6.90	F	4580
FALL RIVER	19.00	6.00	1.00	6.39	P	2500
BIG HILL	18.20	9.30	1.70	4.90	G	1240
MELVERN	12.50	9.10	1.00	5.40	F	7000
CLINTON	9.60	3.00	0.00	4.70	P	7000
TORONTO	9.00	2.00	0.00	2.76	P	2800
PERRY	8.40	5.90	1.00	7.00	F	12600
TUTTLE CREEK	5.80	3.30	0.60	5.30	F	15800
LAKES						
PLAINVILLE LAKE	177.78	133.33	5.56	5.28	E	100
PRATT CO. LAKE	170.49	31.15	0.00	2.89	G	51
NEW STRAWN CITY LAKE	157.00	64.00	0.00	3.80	E	3
PLEASANTON WEST LAKE	129.50	73.25	1.10	4.70	E	20
MCPHERSON SFL	119.00	80.00	1.00	6.80	E	46
GARNETT CITY LAKE-NORTH	117.00	63.00	1.00	3.90	G	55
BROWN SFL	107.30	8.20	0.00	3.00	G	62
LEAVENWORTH SFL	107.00	57.00	0.40	4.50	E	175
GARNETT CITY LAKE-SOUTH	100.00	14.00	0.00	4.10	G	25
SEDAN CITY LAKE-OLD	99.00	20.00	4.00	5.95	E	55
OSAWATOMIE CITY LAKE	98.30	0.00	0.00	1.20	F	21
GRAHAM CO.-ANTELOPE LAKE	94.00	14.90	1.50	4.60	G	80
HORTON-LITTLE LAKE	91.70	46.00	10.00	6.10	G	10
OLATHE-CEDAR LAKE	91.50	56.40	1.10	5.40	G	56
GRIDLEY CITY LAKE	90.00	58.00	0.00	3.30	G	33
WOODSON SFL	86.20	64.00	0.00	2.50	E	180
SHERIDAN SFL	86.00	3.00	0.00	4.40	G	67
THAYER CITY LAKE	85.50	12.90	0.00	3.40	F	30
JOHNSON CO. SHAWNEE MISSION LK	85.50	4.80	0.00	2.40	G	121
ATCHISON SFL	82.50	8.30	0.00	4.30	G	66
BUTLER SFL	82.40	44.10	2.00	5.50	E	124
SABETHA CITY LAKE	80.00	16.60	0.00	3.30	G	100
EMPORIA-JONES PARK PONDS	79.00	0.00	0.00	1.34	F	5
SEVERY CITY LAKE	79.00	21.00	0.00	2.20	G	5
CHANUTE CITY LAKE	78.80	50.50	4.00	5.50	G	80
WILSON SFL	77.80	27.50	0.00	4.70	G	110
YATES CENTER-SOUTH OWL LK	77.00	21.00	0.00	3.60	G	150
LEBO CITY LAKE	77.00	39.00	0.00	2.10	G	70
NEOSHO SFL	75.00	39.00	6.10	6.50	G	92
MOUND CITY LAKE	73.80	28.20	3.70	5.80	G	148
SEDAN CITY LAKE-NEW	72.00	24.00	0.00	3.97	G	70
GARDNER CITY LAKE	68.70	35.90	3.00	5.50	G	100
MOLINE NEW CITY LAKE	67.00	10.00	0.00	2.20	G	185
DOUGLAS CO.-LONESTAR LAKE	66.30	20.40	1.70	5.40	E	195
CLARK SFL	63.31	46.37	2.82	5.64	E	300
CHERRYVALE CITY LAKE - TANKO	62.80	17.50	0.00	3.60	G	11
SCOTT STATE LAKE	60.87	2.17	0.00	3.85	G	115
POTTAWATOMIE SFL #2	60.00	32.00	0.00	3.10	G	75
SABETHA - PONY CREEK LAKE	58.10	42.50	2.50	6.50	G	171
HOLTON - BANNER CREEK LAKE	57.50	36.50	0.00	3.10	G	535
COWLEY SFL	55.50	13.60	0.90	4.40	G	84
FORT SCOTT CITY LAKE	52.80	25.70	0.00	2.80	G	350
BONE CREEK LAKE	51.70	11.40	1.70	5.40	G	540
OLATHE-LAKE OLATHE	51.00	37.00	1.00	4.60	G	172
MOLINE OLD CITY LAKE	51.00	14.00	0.00	1.87	G	68
EMPORIA-PETER PAN PARK	50.00	14.00	0.00	3.64	G	2

SAUGER

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>11")	Preferred Rating (>14")	Lunker Rating (>17")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	Acres of Water
RESERVOIR						
PERRY	4.50	4.00	1.75	3.53	F	12600
MELVERN	1.80	1.00	0.30	2.00	G	7000
LAKES						
HOLTON - BANNER CREEK LAKE	4.50	3.50	1.00	1.89	F	535



Mike Blair photo

SAUGEYE

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>14")	Preferred Rating (>18")	Lunker Rating (>22")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	Acres of Water
RESERVOIR						
SEBELIUS	37.53	6.16	0.40	4.03	E	1500
TUTTLE CREEK	7.30	4.50	0.50	5.90	G	15800
KANOPOLIS	6.00	4.25	2.50	7.07	F	3550
LAKES						
SHERIDAN SFL	33.00	0.00	0.00	2.14	G	67
MARION CO. LAKE	30.00	3.00	0.00	2.20	G	153
GRAHAM CO.-ANTELOPE LAKE	25.00	5.00	0.00	2.99	G	80
GEARY SFL	15.00	5.00	5.00	6.00	G	97
OLPE CITY LAKE	9.00	1.00	0.00	1.82	F	90
GARDNER CITY LAKE	8.00	2.50	0.00	3.01	G	100
WELLINGTON CITY LAKE	8.00	0.00	0.00	1.81	F	700
SEDAN CITY LAKE-OLD	7.00	4.00	2.00	6.61	G	55
EUREKA CITY LAKE	7.00	1.00	0.00	2.09	F	135
CHASE SFL	7.00	0.00	0.00	1.01	F	109
WASHINGTON SFL	5.00	5.00	1.00	4.60	G	65
MIDDLE CREEK SFL	4.50	1.00	0.50	3.98	F	280
BOURBON SFL	4.00	3.00	1.00	4.08	F	103
PARSONS CITY LAKE	3.50	3.50	0.50	5.00	F	980
SEDAN CITY LAKE-NEW	3.00	0.00	0.00	1.87	P	70
PAOLA CITY LAKE	2.50	2.50	0.50	4.62	F	220
SEDGWICK CO.-LAKE AFTON	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.95	P	240

SMALLMOUTH BASS

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>11")	Preferred Rating (>14")	Lunker Rating (>17")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Big Rating	Acres of Water
RESERVOIR						
GLEN ELDER	40.00	8.75	1.25	3.77	G	12586
WEBSTER	30.43	4.35	0.00	1.49	F	3500
WILSON	28.85	8.52	0.33	3.91	G	9040
COFFEY CO. LAKE	7.20	5.40	0.40	1.70	E	5000
CEDAR BLUFF	6.00	2.00	0.00	1.50	F	6500
BIG HILL	6.00	2.30	0.30	2.50	G	1240
MELVERN	5.10	3.30	1.00	4.00	F	7000
LAKES						
JEFFREY EC - MAKEUP LK	12.90	8.60	2.90	2.80	G	125
GEARY SFL	0.90	0.50	0.00	1.70	F	97

SPOTTED BASS

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>11")	Preferred Rating (>14")	Lunker Rating (>17")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Big Rating	Acres of Water
RESERVOIR						
CEDAR BLUFF	49.00	9.00	0.00	1.50	G	6500
SEBELIUS	22.70	14.40	0.00	2.30	G	1500
MELVERN	2.70	0.00	0.00	1.30	F	7000
MILFORD	0.40	0.10	0.00	1.50	F	16020
LAKES						
CHASE SFL	47.50	21.80	0.00	1.90	G	109
BOURBON SFL	44.30	17.90	0.00	1.90	E	103
WILSON SFL	33.30	11.10	0.00	1.50	G	110
COUNCIL GROVE CITY LAKE	11.00	0.00	0.00	0.80	F	434
FORT SCOTT CITY LAKE	9.70	0.71	0.00	1.40	F	350

STRIPER

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>20")	Preferred Rating (>30")	Lunker Rating (>35")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Big Rating	Acres of Water
RESERVOIR						
WILSON	8.67	0.22	0.11	16.51	G	9040
LA CYGNE	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.00	F	2600

WALLEYE

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>15")	Preferred Rating (>20")	Lunker Rating (>25")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Big Rating	Acres of Water
RESERVOIR						
WILSON	16.44	0.89	0.00	4.06	G	9040
WEBSTER	13.58	1.99	0.61	6.61	G	3500
CEDAR BLUFF	13.00	0.75	0.00	5.25	F	6500
KIRWIN	12.58	1.44	0.36	3.82	G	4000
MARION	10.00	0.33	0.17	6.71	F	6160
CHENEY	9.50	8.00	0.70	7.10	G	9550
MILFORD	9.20	1.30	0.20	5.50	G	16020
COFFEY CO. LAKE	8.30	0.30	0.00	3.00	E	5000
EL DORADO	7.75	1.75	0.50	7.13	G	8000
SEBELIUS	7.74	0.85	0.36	2.57	G	1500
GLEN ELDER	7.50	2.20	0.00	5.11	F	12586
HILLSDALE	4.80	2.40	2.20	6.99	G	4580
CLINTON	3.00	0.75	0.25	7.65	F	7000
LOVEWELL	1.83	1.00	0.17	5.77	F	2986
MELVERN	1.00	0.00	0.00	2.20	G	7000
LAKES						
PRATT CO. LAKE	58.00	0.00	0.00	3.20	G	51
SCOTT STATE LAKE	17.00	9.00	2.00	8.71	E	115
WYANDOTTE CO. LAKE	15.50	0.00	0.00	2.11	F	407
SABETHA - PONY CREEK LAKE	14.00	10.00	0.00	5.95	F	171
MELVERN RIVER POND	12.50	0.00	0.00	1.40	F	100
SHAWNEE CO.-LAKE SHAWNEE	12.00	1.50	0.50	6.10	F	416
JEFFREY EC-AUX. MAKEUP LK	10.00	1.00	0.00	3.30	F	460
LEAVENWORTH SFL	9.50	3.00	0.00	3.96	G	175
JEFFREY EC - MAKEUP LK	9.00	0.00	0.00	1.40	F	125
HOLTON - BANNER CREEK LAKE	6.50	2.50	0.50	5.08	F	535
BOURBON SFL	5.00	3.00	2.00	7.08	F	103
HERINGTON CITY LAKE-NEW	4.00	1.00	0.00	2.70	F	555
ATCHISON SFL	3.00	1.00	0.00	4.08	F	66
SHAWNEE SFL	3.00	0.00	0.00	1.90	P	135
MOUND CITY LAKE	3.00	3.00	0.00	5.70	G	148
BARBER SFL-LOWER	2.50	1.00	0.00	5.79	G	51
OSAGE SFL	2.00	2.00	0.00	5.90	F	140
WOODSON SFL	1.50	0.00	0.00	1.30	F	180
CENTRALIA CITY LAKE	1.50	1.50	1.00	6.70	F	400
BONE CREEK LAKE	1.00	1.00	0.00	5.30	F	540
CLARK SFL	1.00	0.00	0.00	1.44	G	300
FORT SCOTT CITY LAKE	0.80	0.00	0.00	2.60	F	350



Mike Blair photo



Mike Blair photo

WHITE BASS						
IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>9")	Preferred Rating (>12")	Lunker Rating (>15")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	Acres of Water
RESERVOIR						
FALL RIVER	189.00	13.00	0.00	1.69	G	2500
KANOPOLIS	58.75	35.75	2.50	2.71	E	3550
PERRY	57.25	11.50	0.00	1.46	G	12600
HILLSDALE	36.00	20.80	0.20	1.98	G	4580
TORONTO	35.00	14.00	2.00	2.43	G	2800
COUNCIL GROVE	31.50	20.50	0.50	1.77	G	3280
EL DORADO	25.25	15.50	0.25	1.82	G	8000
CLINTON	23.25	17.25	0.50	1.67	F	7000
WEBSTER	21.55	12.67	0.38	2.69	E	3500
CEDAR BLUFF	21.25	8.25	2.25	2.43	E	6500
GLEN ELDER	20.20	18.90	7.10	2.65	E	12586
MILFORD	17.30	12.70	0.20	1.50	G	16020
MELVERN	15.60	10.60	0.20	1.70	G	7000
BIG HILL	14.00	7.30	0.30	1.50	G	1240
COFFEY CO. LAKE	11.80	1.40	0.00	1.60	G	5000
CHENEY	10.80	10.00	4.30	2.40	G	9550
POMONA	9.75	6.75	0.00	1.50	G	4000
MARION	8.67	4.33	0.50	2.26	G	6160
TUTTLE CREEK	8.10	5.90	3.30	3.20	F	15800
LOVEWELL	7.67	3.17	0.00	1.15	G	2986
KIRWIN	6.90	5.99	0.45	3.46	E	4000
LA CYGNE	5.83	3.67	0.00	1.21	G	2600
WILSON	3.89	3.78	1.44	2.69	F	9040
LAKES						
HERINGTON CITY LAKE-OLD	71.00	27.00	3.00	2.90	G	367
HERINGTON CITY LAKE-NEW	37.00	27.00	1.00	1.60	G	555
CLARK SFL	36.00	4.50	0.00	1.11	E	300
JEFFREY EC - MAKEUP LK	17.00	8.00	0.00	1.10	G	125
CHASE SFL	12.00	12.00	1.00	2.01	F	109
FORT SCOTT CITY LAKE	11.50	11.00	0.00	1.39	G	350
WYANDOTTE CO. LAKE	10.50	0.00	0.00	1.53	F	407
MIDDLE CREEK SFL	8.50	6.50	0.00	1.49	F	280
PAOLA CITY LAKE	8.00	2.50	0.50	1.76	F	220
GARDNER CITY LAKE	4.50	2.00	0.00	1.16	F	100
JEFFREY EC-AUX. MAKEUP LK	4.00	4.00	2.50	2.90	F	460
SEDGWICK CO.-LAKE AFTON	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.03	P	240
WELLINGTON-HARGIS CREEK LK	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.03	F	67
DOUGLAS SFL	0.50	0.50	0.50	2.57	P	180

WIPER						
IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>12")	Preferred Rating (>15")	Lunker Rating (>20")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	Acres of Water
RESERVOIR						
MARION	40.67	11.17	1.17	10.88	G	6160
WEBSTER	38.51	29.07	13.27	12.55	E	3500
SEBELIUS	35.30	27.66	10.55	6.38	E	1500
CEDAR BLUFF	20.00	20.00	4.50	10.08	G	6500
KIRWIN	19.65	14.75	5.46	5.15	E	4000
CHENEY	15.00	5.20	3.00	7.70	E	9550
LA CYGNE	5.80	2.00	1.00	5.50	E	2600
POMONA	13.25	10.00	1.25	6.60	G	4000
MILFORD	11.50	5.50	4.20	7.40	G	16020
KANOPOLIS	7.00	2.75	0.75	6.13	F	3550
COFFEY CO. LAKE	6.90	6.90	5.40	4.80	G	5000
LA CYGNE	5.80	2.00	1.00	5.50	E	2600
LOVEWELL	1.33	1.17	0.83	10.72	F	2986
LAKES						
WELLINGTON CITY LAKE	65.00	12.00	1.00	3.92	E	700
SABETHA - PONY CREEK LAKE	51.00	11.00	1.00	5.07	G	171
MARION CO. LAKE	31.00	22.00	1.00	3.81	E	153
DOUGLAS CO.-LONESTAR LAKE	26.50	5.00	2.50	6.31	G	195
PLAINVILLE LAKE	16.08	14.57	5.02	9.55	E	100
JOHNSON CO. SHAWNEE MISSION LK	14.50	11.00	2.00	7.61	G	121
HERINGTON CITY LAKE-NEW	13.00	4.00	1.00	4.40	F	555
COLDWATER LAKE	13.00	12.00	0.00	2.76	F	250
SHAWNEE CO.-LAKE SHAWNEE	12.00	11.00	3.00	5.20	G	416
LEAVENWORTH SFL	10.50	10.50	0.50	3.66	G	175
PLEASANTON EAST LAKE	10.00	5.00	2.00	7.89	E	127
PRATT CO. LAKE	10.00	9.00	1.00	4.46	G	51
YATES CENTER-SOUTH OWL LAKE	9.00	9.00	4.50	5.10	G	150
GRIDLEY CITY LAKE	9.00	7.50	3.50	5.40	G	33
MIDDLE CREEK SFL	8.50	4.00	0.00	2.50	F	280
GARNETT CITY LAKE-SOUTH	8.30	1.70	1.70	8.40	G	25
JEFFREY EC - MAKEUP LK	8.00	6.00	1.00	12.70	G	125
SHERIDAN SFL	8.00	8.00	1.00	6.72	F	67
GRAHAM CO.-ANTELOPE LAKE	7.00	7.00	0.00	2.26	F	80
LEBO CITY LAKE	7.00	4.50	1.50	4.10	G	70
PAOLA CITY LAKE	6.00	3.50	0.50	3.94	F	220
MELVERN RIVER POND	5.50	1.50	0.00	2.00	G	100
OLATHE-LAKE OLATHE	5.00	0.00	0.00	1.10	P	172
EUREKA CITY LAKE	4.00	0.00	0.00	1.04	P	135

Edited by Mark Shoup

GREAT PARK INSERT

Editor:

I have thoroughly enjoyed *Kansas Wildlife & Parks* magazine. I think it is an outstanding promotional publication for the great state of Kansas.

I particularly wanted to thank you for the insert in the March/April issue (Page 15) describing all the Kansas state parks. For those of us who enjoy motor-homing, having those maps and facts available is priceless.

Again, thank you for that wonderful insert and thanks for the work you do in promoting Kansas.

*Randall W. Weller
Hill City*

Dear Mr. Weller:

Thank you for the kind words. That insert is also available at most KDWP offices as a stand-alone publication. As you mention, it should be a valuable tool for all who visit Kansas state parks.

—Shoup

NAVIGATING F.I.S.H.

Editor:

I just received a copy of the new *Kansas Fishing Atlas*. I believe a lot of thought and time was put into this booklet. It looks very nice and makes me even more excited to start fishing this season.

My only concern is that this year's booklet does not contain any directions on how to get to the Walk-In waters like last year's booklet did. I am usually very good at finding my way around, but some of the ponds and streams are hard to locate. Is there somewhere I can go to get maps to these locations, or is it just going to be a trial and error process?

I know your department is very busy, and I am sorry to bother you with such a trivial problem, but I just want to make sure I can find the areas I want to fish. The Kansas FISH program is the best program I have ever heard of. I

would now rather fish in Kansas than any other state in the U.S.

All of you are doing a fantastic job and don't think that it goes unnoticed. Kansas is definitely on the right track to be one of the best fishing locations in the U.S. Thank you all for your hard work and dedication to the wildlife and fish programs that you all work on. God bless.

*Matt Brooks
Shawnee*

Dear Mr. Brooks:

If you look at the front of the atlas, there is a legend showing what tracts are what. FISH tracts are in bright red — stream access being stars, and ponds being blocks that describe their boundaries.

Each map is divided into squares. Each of these squares is a section — one-mile by one-mile. To find your way to a red FISH area, simply count the miles from the nearest town, highway, or other significant landmark to your favorite area.

—Shoup

WHAT CARTRIDGE?

Editor:

An online hunting message board thread spurred a question about using a 9 x 19 mm for hunting deer. I replied that this cartridge does not meet the minimum case-length requirement for handgun cartridges in Kansas and would not be legal, regardless of ethics.

However, the question started me thinking about our rifle cartridge requirements. The abridged version in our *Hunting & Furharvesting Regulations Summary* says nothing about the sort of cartridge length required for rifles. I was at a loss as to whether a round such as the 9 x 19 mm parabellum, which is illegal for use in a handgun, would be legal for use in a carbine. Naturally, knowing the very limited capabilities of the round, I'd never considered using one on deer.

Do the same cartridge dimensions apply to both long guns and handguns?

I'm not looking to legalize the 9 x 19 mm for deer hunting; I'm just hoping to clarify that it and other "small" handgun cartridges aren't slipping through the cracks when chambered in carbines and that they are, in fact, already illegal equipment. Any information on this subject would be appreciated.

*Dakota Base
Manhattan*

Dear Mr. Base:

Currently, there is no cartridge case length regulation for centerfire rifles. Centerfire rifles are restricted by caliber to .23 or larger. Foot-pounds of energy delivered by a bullet is a factor of weight and velocity. Velocity is affected by barrel and cartridge length. Therefore, cartridge case lengths were established to ensure adequate velocities of legal calibers in handguns.

The agency is looking at some of these requirements. Please feel free to attend commission meetings and express your concerns, if you wish.

—Shoup

THANKS FOR YOUTH SEASON

Editor:

I just want to say thank you for having the youth deer season. I took my 14-year-old son out for his first deer season last fall and had a wonderful experience. It enabled me to fully concentrate on him, to guide and teach and further instill safety and hunting skills.

We hunted one day and saw plenty of game and a lot of deer, and he chose not to harvest one. I was able to walk him through the principles he had learned in hunter education in a practical situation, as well as fully acquaint him with a high-powered rifle in the field.

The time loading, unloading, and carrying the firearm boosted his confidence, I know. For me, the excitement was no less and maybe even more than if hunting myself.

*Tom and Cody Rives
Augusta*

HUNTER ED & HUNTER DECLINE

Editor:

In the March/April issue of *Kansas Wildlife & Parks* magazine (Page 52) you attribute the decline in the number of young hunters in part to a belief that young people are not willing to complete the hunter safety course. In previous issues, I have read other equally ridiculous excuses.

The beginning of the end of sport hunting as we know it was the first hunting lease agreement. Now, much land is off limits to everyone who is unwilling or unable to pay for the right to hunt. I know that the state did not initiate lease hunting, but as long as you continue to allow it, instead of regulating it out of existence, you are participating in the demise of sport hunting.

Another big mistake the state has made is in allowing landowners to purchase hunt-on own-land deer permits and then allowing the sale or transfer of these permits to guides or nonresident hunters. I recently read in the newspaper that now the state or Department of Wildlife and Parks was trying to change the archery deer permit system from statewide access to unit access like the firearms permits.

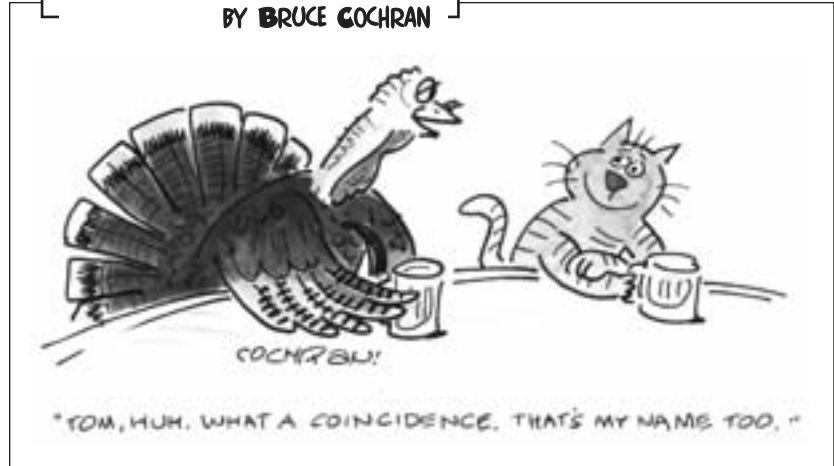
Gentlemen, where are your priorities? You wonder about the declining number of hunters, yet many of the actions you take are aimed at making it more difficult and expensive for anyone to hunt. I also have to wonder what happened to the principal the state espoused: "the landowner doesn't own the game, just the land." We now have rich landowners stealing "our" game by simply fencing it in on their huge ranches, then "managing" it for their lease-hunt clients. It is a real shame that our hunting heritage is being destroyed by selfishness and greed.

Wake up, people, or sooner than you think, only the rich will be able to afford hunting. The rest of us will be out in the cold.

*T. L. Timmons
Wichita*

WAY outside

BY BRUCE COCHRAN



Dear Mr. Timmons:

KDWP has never taken the position that hunter education is a primary source of decline in hunter numbers. Our recent proposal to streamline the hunter education process is directed at only one barrier we recognize – the perceived difficulty in finding time to take a course. We have not suggested eliminating the course, only making it easier to fit into one's schedule.

We recognize that this is only one small factor in declining hunter participation. Other, larger factors include urbanization of the populace; a myriad of other distractions for kids such as computer games, movies, and other sports; and the lack of a parent to introduce the youngster to hunting. I believe these outweigh all other difficulties in young hunter recruitment.

These factors affect all aspects of hunting, not just deer hunting, to which you refer. Regarding transferrable deer permits, this was something initiated by the Kansas Legislature and opposed by KDWP. (However, Hunt Own-Land permits may not be sold. Transferrable permits that may be sold may only be obtained through a drawing.)

KDWP is attempting to ensure public access to quality hunting and fishing through its WHIA and FISH programs, which lease private property for specified contract periods. It is the right of landowners to determine whether, or to whom, they will lease their properties.

The bottom line is that, as a hunter

without the means to lease property, I share your concern. If you come up with a solution, please let us know. I strongly encourage you to attend commission meetings and consult with your senators and representatives, as well.

–Shoup

OLD FISH ARTICLE

Editor:

Many, many years ago, I subscribed to *Kansas Wildlife* (now *Kansas Wildlife & Parks*) magazine. It has been about 20 years and was yellow, I believe.

In one issue, you had an article I have kept for years but was recently destroyed by fire. The article was about local fish and the depths they lived at and could go to, for what reason they went deep, and how long they could stay. I believe it was in chart form.

It was extremely interesting, and everyone who read it was in awe. Would it be possible to get another one, and what would be the charge.

*Michael Roll
Kansas City, Missouri*

Dear Mr. Roll:

The article you are referring to would be "Out of Their Depth," about the seasonal movements of fish, by Tommie Berger. It appeared in the 1983 July/August issue, (Page 28). While we are out of back copies of this issue, we could send you a photocopy.

–Shoup

Cooperative Conviction

Kansas natural resource officers typically cover a district of two or more counties and often require assistance of fellow law enforcement agencies to make poaching cases. A court case in Saline County last year illustrates how this cooperation works.

In July of 2003, a pair of 22-year-old men were caught window-peeking and video taping a person in a Salina residence. Salina police were called, and the window-peekers were arrested. This arrest led to the solving of an arson fire at a local business and property damage in Salina.

After reviewing the seized videotape, the Salina Police Department turned it over to the Saline County Sheriff's Department. Investigator Mike Smith with the sheriff's department discovered that footage on the tape showed the two window-peekers illegally shooting deer in Saline County. Smith contacted natural resource officer Greg Salisbury to verify possible charges against the two men.

As a result, each of the men faced 12 wildlife charges in Saline County District Court. The counts included shooting deer

at night, hunting without a license, hunting without a deer permit, wanton waste, failure to tag deer, and taking deer with the aid of a vehicle.

In December, the wildlife charges were successfully prosecuted in Saline County Court. The first man received a \$250 fine, \$117 court costs, a suspended jail sentence, loss of hunting privileges for 2004, and forfeiture of a .22 rifle to the local hunter education program. He is also required to retake a hunter education class.

The second man received a \$1,000 fine, \$117 court costs, suspended jail time, 12 months supervised probation, and loss of hunting privileges for 2004. He is also required to retake hunter education.

To ensure continued cooperation between law agencies, natural resource officers provide wildlife training to local law enforcement agencies to ensure that officers are aware of wildlife laws and are comfortable in pursuing wildlife violations.

This cooperation and communication ensures strong enforcement of all laws and is greatly appreciated by the Department of Wildlife and Parks.

—Greg Salisbury,
natural resource officer, Salina

Rose By Any Other Name

In the immortal lines from *Romeo and Juliet*, Shakespeare once wrote: "What's in a name? that which we call a rose/By any other name would smell as sweet." While our fish and wildlife law enforcement officers might take offense at being called roses – or sweet, for that matter – they do have a new name.

Commonly called "game wardens," for a number of years, they have officially held the title of "conservation officer." However, recent reclassification by the Division of Personnel Services has placed their jobs in line with similar positions in other agencies, creating the title "natural resource officer" (NRO). This new moniker is now in effect, so the next time you see your local "game warden," just call him (or her) "officer." The name may have changed, but they're still protecting the resources hunters and anglers enjoy. Just don't call them "sweet."

—Shoup

Explosive Deer Case

In December of 2002, NRO Alan Midcap, Bonner Springs, and I were sent to a residence in Edwardsville to investigate an illegal deer kill. Upon arrival, we were told by the police that they had followed a vehicle with switched tags to this residence, where a deer was hanging without any carcass tags.

Upon investigation, the suspect stated that his friends gave him the deer. However, the suspect was found to have an outstanding warrant for child support and was arrested for this, as well as for possessing a deer unlawfully.

His friends were located, and when interviewed, they denied any involvement. That same evening, the Leavenworth Sheriff's Department arrested them for spotlighting and drug possession.

Their vehicle was seized and a search warrant issued. NRO Sean Williams, Olathe, assisted me with the search of the vehicle, revealing deer hair and blood. While searching the trunk, we found a cooler containing what appeared to be a homemade CO2 "bomb."

Olathe Fire Department bomb technicians Ed Schons, Jr., and Cody Henning were called to the scene and rendered the device safe. According to Schons, "while the improvised explosive device was not very large, it had the potential for great bodily harm and even death should someone be holding this in their hand or be in close proximity when this device detonated."

While still in jail, the suspect confessed to killing the deer illegally and what he called his "little firecrackers," the homemade bomb. The Wyandotte District Attorney's office dismissed the deer charge and filed felony criminal use of explosives on the man.

In an agreement with the court, the man pled no contest to attempted criminal use of explosives, a felony, and was sentenced to 10 months probation, 12 months court services, and 12 months post-release supervision. He was required to pay \$933 for his state-appointed attorney.

But the man's troubles were not over. After the sentence hearing, Williams and I arrested the man on yet another child support warrant as he walked out of the courtroom with his attorney.

—NRO Glen Cannizzaro, Tonganoxie

Circle K Plans Postponed



On March 4, KDWP Secretary Mike Hayden; Adrian Polansky, secretary of the Kansas Department of Agriculture (KDA); and Joe Harkins, acting director of the Kansas Water Office, notified the Governor's Natural Resources Sub-Cabinet of a revised time schedule for the state's proposed acquisition of the Circle K Ranch in Edwards County. The ranch is owned by the cities of Hays and Russell.

The three agency heads asked Gov. Kathleen Sebelius to delay from fiscal year (FY) 2005 to FY 2006 the State Water Plan Fund budget request for purchase of the ranch. The governor concurred and asked the budget director to prepare a Governor's Budget Amendment. Development of detailed plans were delayed due to the time needed to complete the required appraisal process.

"This is too important and complicated to rush to completion," Harkins said. "We can use the next eight months to complete plans and submit a recommendation to the governor and legislature in January 2005."

In the meantime, the KDA's Division of Water Resources will develop a comprehensive water management plan for water resources in the central section of the Arkansas River Basin. The management plan will include the use of regulation, voluntary conservation measures, and retirement of water rights necessary to bring the basin's hydrology into balance.

In addition, KDWP will provide a detailed plan for the management of the Circle K property. The plan will address multiple uses, including crop farming of a limited number of irrigated circles, grazing, wildlife management, and outdoor recreation.

While plan development proceeds, the state and cities of Hays and Russell can begin discussions about the potential sale of the property to the state.

The Lower Arkansas and Upper Arkansas Basin Advisory committees will be asked to review detailed plans after they are completed. The Kansas Water Authority will then make a recommendation to Gov. Sebelius and the Kansas Legislature prior to the 2005 legislative session.

—LeAnn Schmitt, special assistant to the secretary, Topeka

DUCK SEASONS: Early or Late

Editor's note: Each year, there is disagreement among duck hunters about regulations regarding waterfowl hunting. Perhaps the most common issue is when the seasons should be set. Depending on the portion of the state, some hunters believe the seasons are either too early or too late. A common complaint received through the department's website email runs something like this: "We have noticed that in the last few years, there has been a significant decrease in the numbers of ducks during hunting season. But after the season, our area has been overrun with waterfowl. We were wanting to know if there is any way that the hunting season could be extended to actually correspond to the waterfowl migration. I know that weather up north plays a key roll in when the migration begins. Whatever the case, I know that buying duck stamps is pretty expensive, and the duck numbers we are seeing are very disappointing."

Here is a response to such a question by waterfowl researcher Marvin Kraft:

This experience with ducks arriving after the hunt season has ended is not that uncommon, particularly after years when we have a mild fall and winter in Nebraska and the Dakotas. This slows or delays the

migration and tends to reduce harvest in mid- and southern latitudes.

During the past several years, federal frameworks have allowed states to run duck seasons no later than the last Sunday in January. We could have set the season later, but not everyone in the Low Plains Late Zone

wants the season moved into late January. In some areas of Kansas, the October and November period is best, and I get some intense pressure for more October hunting from a few individuals who tend to hunt marshes along the Nebraska border.

The real problem is that with limited days and no more than one split allowed, you have to take days from earlier in the season if you move the season into late January. This becomes a real problem when we have an early winter with freeze-up beginning in December. The majority of hunters prefer hunting open water and don't have access to rivers or creeks or other types of cold-weather hunting spots. Their season ends when reservoirs, ponds, and small lakes freeze.

The Kansas Wildlife and

Parks Commission has tried to give the majority of waterfowl hunters some opportunity to participate in their favorite time of the season. The result is that during most years, most hunters are relatively satisfied. However, in warm winters, support builds for later seasons. It's something that we look at every year when we draft waterfowl season recommendations, but we cannot predict the weather.

I will admit that we have had a trend toward more open water in December and January during recent years. Maybe we will gamble one of these years and move the season back a week — and then hope that we don't have an early winter.

—Marvin Kraft, Waterfowl Program coordinator, Emporia

ADM AIDS WETLANDS

Archer Daniels Midland Company (ADM) has announced that it will make a \$200,000 contribution to Ducks Unlimited, Inc. (DU), to fund restoration of the McPherson Valley Wetlands.

Originally stretching over 9,000 surface acres, this chain of 52 wetlands was largely drained in the early 20th century.

KDWP began restoration of the McPherson Wetlands in 1987. By purchasing lands from willing sellers, DU and KDWP have expanded the wetland base to 4,010 acres. Working closely with other conservation partners and area landowners, ADM will help DU and KDWP pursue restoration, including the following activities:

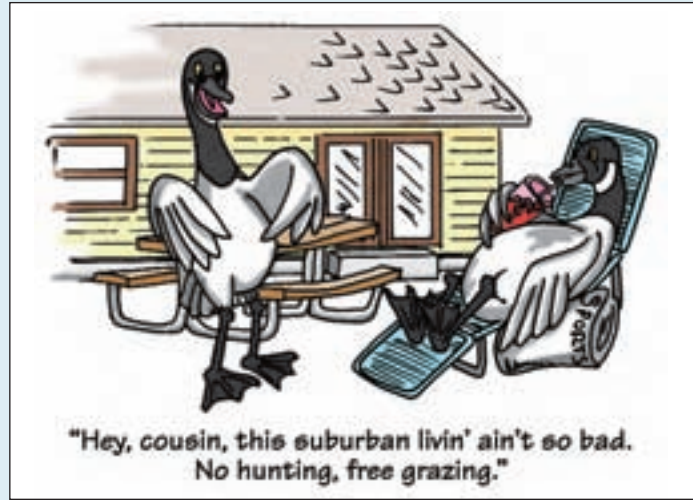
- enhancement of wildlife habitat;
- purchase of additional acreage from willing sellers;
- replacement of an old pump with a new, environmentally-friendly model;
- construction of roads allowing better access to the wetlands for hunters, naturalists, and other visitors;
- maintenance of dikes, ditches, and water control structures; and
- seeding of non-wetland acres with native grasses and other plants.

The grant represents a substantial commitment by ADM. Under an agreement between ADM and the state of Kansas, as well as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), ADM has pledged up to \$6.5 million in support of various environmental causes in areas where the company maintains operations, including Kansas.

—Shoup

Urban Geese

In recent years, the number of Canada geese residing in or visiting urban areas of Kansas has risen dramatically. KDWP began monitoring the number of Canadas in the Wichita metropolitan area in 1983, when the number totalled just 1,600. By 2003, however, this number had risen to 18,332. This has resulted in conflicting and sometimes hostile responses from those who like the geese and those who would like their numbers reduced.



Waterfowl surveys in the Wichita area indicate that migrating Canada geese typically start arriving in mid-November and leave by mid-February, with the population fluctuating depending on weather patterns. The greatest population of migrating Canada geese seems to occur near the end of January.

Individuals may hunt these geese if they have permission from a private landowner in any area outside the city limits. However, there are areas within the greater metropolitan area that may not have been annexed into the city but are surrounded by the city. Hunters must discuss with the city police department whether these areas are in the city and whether a city ordinance against the discharge of a firearm applies.

KDWP staff have many complaints from individuals who live in the city adjacent to land that is not in the city and where hunting is allowed. *Ironically, these same individuals often call to complain about geese and then call to complain about legal goose hunting.*

All goose surveys show increasing numbers of Canada and snow geese. This is not only true for urban areas, but for the continent as a whole. As a result, complaints against geese are increasing.

Because of the increasing population of Canada geese, especially geese that stay in the city year-round and the restrictions on hunting seasons by the International Migratory Bird Treaty Act, some states have implemented a number of methods to stabilize, if not reduce, populations. In the past, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) was responsible for issuing all of these permits. By 2002, the USFWS began to turn these activities over to the states. Targeted at resident geese only, these methods can only be used from late March to the end of August.

One method of population management is egg addling or egg oiling (the eggs are shaken or sprayed with a light coat of 100% food-grade corn oil), which prevents the development of the embryo, thus reducing reproduction. This method works better than destruction of the eggs because the geese will re-nest if the eggs are destroyed. By allowing only a certain number of permits, KDWP hopes to limit reproduction and stabilize populations.

Trapping and transplanting of Canada geese is expensive, and the geese often return. However, this method can establish a goose population where they are desired.

Another control method is the resident Canada goose hunting season in areas surrounding Wichita and the Topeka-Kansas City corridor. The season is in early September and lasts about two weeks. It provides hunters with a chance to reduce the goose population and may make geese more wary of urban areas.

—Charlie Cope,
environmental scientist, Wichita

Raising The Disabled

Last winter, with the aid of KDWP and a Huntmaster elevating portable blind donated by the Paralyzed Veterans of America, Outdoor Buddies of Kansas helped one disabled hunter bag the buck of his life. Here is an account of the event by Merle Heldebrand, Outdoor Buddies coordinator:

We picked up the Huntmaster at the KDWP Pratt Operations Office on Dec. 3 and took it to one of the private ranches the Outdoor Buddies of Kansas is allowed to use for disabled hunters. We set it up in a narrow strip of cottonwood and willow trees where two well-travelled deer trails crossed.

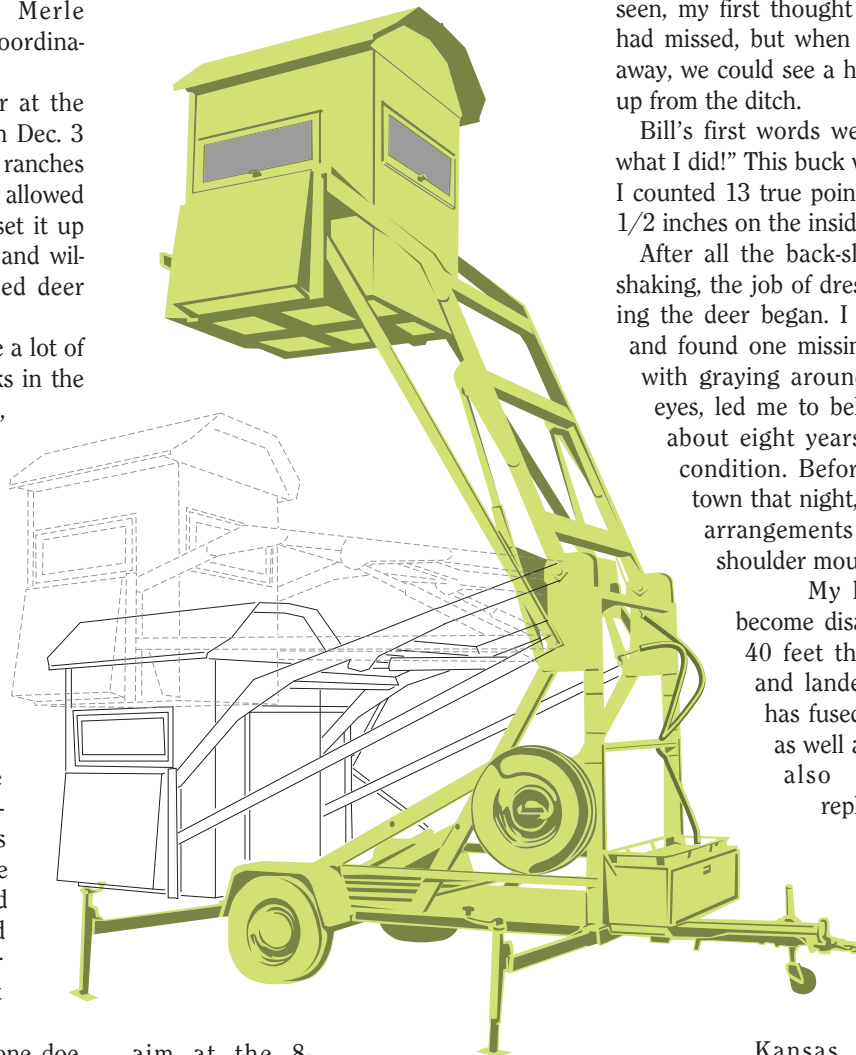
The day we set it up, there were a lot of does and a number of small bucks in the area. The rut was winding down, but some bucks were still following does. Most were within 100 yards of the Huntmaster. I was very excited about the chances for our first hunter.

Early morning on Dec. 3, I put the physically-challenged rifle hunter in the blind and raised it about three-quarters of the way up for the best view of the area. Early on, we kept hearing noises that sounded like turkeys. As the morning brightened, we saw about 50 turkeys roosting in the trees just above the Huntmaster. If we had raised the blind any farther, we would have knocked three off their roosts. We both got a chuckle out of that.

All we saw that morning was one doe. The hunter wanted to wait for a buck, so we returned the next day, Dec. 4. Just before sundown, a parade of does came down one of the trails, followed by five bucks, the last a nice 8-point. My hunter was ready to shoot. At about 60 yards, I noticed that the buck kept looking back, so I told him to hold off and see if a bigger buck was coming, not an easy thing

to do for a first-time deer hunter.

The 8-pointer started to move after one of the does by now, and I began to doubt my advice. Desperately searching the trail, I spotted an ear twitching at about 150 yards. I noticed my anxious hunter taking



aim at the 8-pointer again and urged him to wait for what I was pretty sure was a bigger buck in the willows.

I decided to use my grunt call to coax the animal closer. After five grunts, a huge buck stepped out and started down the trail at a fast trot. He was watching the 8-point and came to a stop, then turned broadside 60 yards in front of us.

I told my hunter to ignore the nice rack and aim behind the front leg. The bullet hit high in the shoulder blade but dropped the animal in its tracks. (In that moment, we learned something about the Huntmaster: if you shoot a large caliber rifle, you must open more than one window or your ears will ring for days.)

It was a magnificent buck that had fallen in a small ditch running along the edge of the trees. Because he couldn't be seen, my first thought was that the shot had missed, but when we were 20 yards away, we could see a huge antler sticking up from the ditch.

Bill's first words were, "Oh, my, look what I did!" This buck was a real monster. I counted 13 true points and measure 22 1/2 inches on the inside spread.

After all the back-slapping and handshaking, the job of dressing out and loading the deer began. I checked the teeth and found one missing. This, combined with graying around the muzzle and eyes, led me to believe the deer was about eight years old but in good condition. Before we got back to town that night, I called and made arrangements to have the deer shoulder mounted.

My hunter, Bill, had become disabled when he fell 40 feet through scaffolding and landed on his feet. He has fused discs in his back, as well as fused ankles. He also has had knee replacements. In spite of these injuries, he has learned to walk on very level ground.

I am very grateful to the

Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks and the Paralyzed Veterans of America, which donated the Huntmaster, as well as the manufacturer, New Heights Manufacturing, Inc., for use of the blind. Their generosity has opened up a new world for physically-challenged hunters.

—Merle Heldebrand, president, Outdoor Buddies, Inc., Kingman

BOWLEGGED BULLFROG SWING



by Mark Shoup

When my ol' buddy C.R. popped a John Anderson tape in the deck of his Chevy pickup, I was dumfounded. It was about 1990, and C.R., my other buddy, Nedly, and I were on our annual menonly campout on the Arkansas River near Lamed. We had pitched camp east of town and were going back for supplies when he committed this sabotage.

The three of us had grown up in the sixties, you see, and we cut our musical taste on the likes of Credence Clearwater, Steppenwolf, and The Who. So what if we were country boys. We had radios.

"Man, this stuff is a hoot!" C.R. raved, a devilish grin on his rough, blond-bearded face. I just looked at him like he was three pecans short of a full pie. "Check it out, Marky. Heck, you're just a redneck at heart and don't know it."

So I tolerated country music that weekend as the three of us sat around camp between setline forays. These were sweet times, after all – no women, no kids, no showers, no etiquette. At these camps, in fact, any etiquette whatsoever was considered in bad taste. I didn't want to start a row by complaining about the music, and Nedly didn't seem to notice.

We had set our camp wagon-train fashion around the campfire. C.R., as usual, had a neatly erected tent, the latest nylon model, and all the cooking equipment perfectly arranged in a custom-built camp kitchen just outside. Always the camp cook, C.R. was also orderly.

Nedly had his old Howdy Doody sleeping bag thrown on the ground at his nexus of the campsite, a small log propped at the end for a pillow, an open bag of potato chips on one side, and a quart of Squirt on the other. Nedly might not have been neat, but nothing kept that buzzard from a good night's sleep.

At my corner of this star, I backed my old Toyota pickup, rusting at the seams but still ticking. I kept a topper on the bed with a twin-bed mattress inside. Among the

three of us, you could say I was the moderate.

It would be a night of little sleep because we had set lines on the west side of town, too, on a stretch of the Pawnee Creek. We decided to check the nearby lines every hour, and were diligent the first 60 minutes, at least.

Then an eclipse of the moon passed over, and a strange silliness overcame us. It was as if there were something in the water, which there might have been beings how the river had been dry just a few years earlier, and the water was coming from Colorado again which, we knew, had been taken over by Californians who would put anything in the water just for the heck of it.

Anyway, about midnight – just after Nedly took a picture of me with the minnow seine on my head, a stringer full of channel cats in my teeth, and my hand over my eyes as if shading the sun – we decided to have a bow-sawing contest. Understand that we were all in pretty good shape in those days. I went first and made 100 full-draw, rapid-fire strokes through a fallen cottonwood trunk before flagging. C.R., an ex-football jock, would not be outdone, and he got 120. Nedly must have been a bit tuckered because he only sliced 80 strokes.

By this time, the night was getting long, and we still hadn't checked the lines out west. As C.R. and I were discussing who would make the trip, we noticed that Nedly had curled up on his Peanut Gallery bedroll. That left us.

West of town, we tripped down the muddy bank of the Pawnee and nearly capsized our waiting canoe, required to check lines in this deeper water. C.R. paddled while I pulled lines, and to our great delight, we hauled a 12-pound flathead off one set.

On the way back through town, we got the munchies and decided to sneak in my

folks back door to borrow some of Mom's fried chicken from the fridge. But first, C.R. pulled a camera from somewhere and insisted we get shots of each other – mud-faced but happy – holding our catch in front of the water tower across the street. I don't know what became of them, but it's possible those photos mistakenly hang on some dusty Post Office wall.

When we finally made it back to camp, Nedly was smoking a cigar and stoking the fire. It must have been 3 a.m., and he was uncharacteristically wide awake.

"Where ya'll been?" he asked gleefully. "Holy moly! You two up and caught a big 'un and didn't even wake me!" Nedly had a timely way of feigning indignation. "Well, pull on up here and have a cigar. These are the good 'uns. Swisher Sweets."

Now, I've never been a smoker, but for the sake of camaraderie, I decided not to do anything in bad taste. I lit up.

"Take 'er in deep for the best flavor, Marky," Nedly insisted. "It perked me right up. Cubans' got nothin' on these."

I did as I was told, and next thing I knew, my head was spinning as I crawled into the back of my pickup, hoping I wouldn't lose my fried chicken. C.R. and Nedly were rummaging through C.R.'s pickup, muttering something about bows and arrows and bullfrogs.

I woke up a short time later to a ruckus in the river. "Lemmie give it try, Nedly!" C.R. hollered. "You couldn't hit next week if you had a month to hunt!"

"He's under them branches, C.R.!" Nedly protested. "And besides, he's bowlegged!"

As they fussed over the bowlegged bullfrog, John Anderson's "Swingin'" blasted through C.R.'s boombox. Suddenly, something cold and slimy slapped onto my face. I bolted upright and banged my head on the topper roof as the longest, bowleggedest bullfrog I ever saw released its grip and the two of us rocked the pickup, clawing toward the exit.

I hit the ground kicking like a Vegas showgirl, and the frog sprang erratically between me and the fire, no doubt wondering if I were some crazed relative. Nedly doubled over laughing.

"Look at him go, Nedly!" C.R. cried, puffing on his cigar. "Doin' the Honky Tonk Mamba with a bullfrog, no less. Hey, Marky! I told you this music was a hoot!"

Springtime means crappie to the majority of Kansas anglers, and one of the best tactics for taking home a limit is jigging.

Actually, jigging covers a wide variety of tactics, each of which can be effective in different circumstances.

The most common method is vertical jigging. This is a good tactic early in the spring when crappie are in fairly deep water. It involves setting over a known crappie bed, usually a brush pile, and dropping the jig straight down. Usually, the lure is allowed to fall all the way to the bottom and then brought up very slowly, stopping frequently to twitch the lure in place – “jig” it up and down slightly. Often, the fish will hit the jig as the lure falls or is held steady. Once a crappie is caught at a particular depth, lower the jig to the same depth for continued success.

Another type of vertical jigging is



THREE-WAY CRAPPIE

called “dabbling” – dropping a crappie jig into pockets and holes in brush and other cover used by the fish when they spawn in shallows. In the past, a short section of line was tied to the end of a cane pole and used to reach into these tight spots. These days, however, modern graphite crappie rods make the job much easier. Whether wading or from a boat, merely move from one spot to the next, dropping the jig in place, jigging it a bit, then pulling up and moving to the next hole.

Casting jigs and bring them back in a slow “swimming” retrieve is a deadly tactic for locating crappie during pre-spawn and post-spawn, when they are not as concentrated in the shallows. Cast the jig up to the shoreline and bring it back in a slow swimming motion. Vary the depth by speeding up or slowing down the retrieve until you start catching crappie, then use the same depth to continue catching fish.

Any number of jigs work well. Some have spinners attached, and some don’t, but both work. Standard marabou (feathered) or plastic tails work well. Sizes range from 1/4-ounce to 1/32-ounce. Heavier jigs are best for vertical fishing in deep water, and smaller, lighter jigs work best for dabbling or casting. A wide assortment of colors is recommended although chartreuse or black and white are the most popular.

–Shoup

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Anglers enjoying spring weather will find welcome news in the *Kansas Fishing Atlas*, now available for viewing and download from the Wildlife and Parks website. This program allows fishing access to private waters. The program features more than 130 sites in 48 counties, including 1,300 acres of ponds and lakes ranging in size from five acres to more than 100 acres, as well as access to more than 80 miles of streams formerly unavailable to the public. Properties are open March 1-Oct. 31. The *Kansas Fishing Atlas* also includes public fishing sites, including state fishing lakes, reservoirs, and river access.

The 2003 Fishing Forecast – lake-by-lake predictions of fishing prospects in Kansas – is also available at the website, and fishing regulations may be downloaded. Both publications are available in hard copy from KDWP offices.

Weekly reports on fishing conditions at waters throughout the state are posted on the website, as well.

New for this year is a completely revised and improved *Kansas State Parks Guide*. This 32-page, four-color booklet contains fee and facility charts, easy-to-read color maps, and textual information describing each of the state’s 24 state parks. The *Kansas State Parks Guide* is available in hard copy only, at most KDWP offices or by request from feedbacks@wp.state.ks.us.

Some 400 pages of valuable information on fishing, hunting, wildlife, parks, outdoor education, Wildlife and Parks statutes, regulations, licenses, permits, and boat registration renewals may be found on the Wildlife and Parks website – www.kdwp.state.ks.us. For additional information, contact KDWP at (620) 672-5911 or e-mail feedbacks@wp.state.ks.us.

–Shoup

NEW GLEN ELDER BIOLOGIST

The department has hired Scott Waters as the fisheries biologist to be stationed at the Glen Elder State Park Office. His district includes Glen Elder and Lovewell reservoirs, Jewell

State Fishing Lake, and other waters located in Jewell, Republic, Cloud, Mitchell, and Osborne counties. Waters will be replacing Kyle Austin who has become the statewide fisheries management coordinator stationed in Pratt.

Waters will be leaving a position as a research assistant with North Carolina State University in order to accept the fisheries biologist job with KDWP. He was born and raised in Kansas, earned bachelor of science degrees in fisheries biology and wildlife biology from Kansas State University and a master’s degree in fisheries and wildlife sciences from North Carolina State University. His diverse background in fisheries management and research will suit him well as he pursues this new endeavor.

Waters began his job with KDWP the first of April. We’re glad to have him on board in Region 1 and welcome Waters and his family back to their home state of Kansas.

–Steve Price, Region 1 Fisheries & Wildlife supervisor, Hays

Nature's Greenhouse

Kansas is home to more than 800 different species of wildflowers, from commonly-recognized sunflower and yucca to such lesser-known species such as spiderworts and even members of the orchid family. Many of these wildflowers grace the roadsides of Kansas. Others take a bit of hiking to view. In either case, a good wildflower viewing guide is essential.

The other essential is a basic knowledge of when these flowers are in bloom. The following is a list of events in and near Kansas to help you become more acquainted with these spectacular, albeit small, native wonders.

—Kansas Nature-Based Tourism Alliance

- **May 1, 10 a.m.** Visit Snyder Prairie, near Shawnee Mission. Rain date: May 2. For more information, contact Jeff Hansen at hanjd@earthlink.net or (785) 478-1993.
- **May 8, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.** Barber County Spring Wildflower Tour. Morning and full-day tours. Half-day tour includes breakfast and transportation to and from one identification site for \$6. The full day tour (\$12) includes breakfast, transportation, two identification stops, lunch, and afternoon refreshments. Pre-paid reservations should be sent before May 3. For more information, phone (620) 886 3721, ext. 3.
- **May 8, 9 a.m.**, Prairie Center. Meet at the parking lot by the red barn on Cedar Niles Rd. off W. 135th St. in Olathe. For more information, phone (913) 262-3506.
- **May 9, at 8 a.m.**, Ft. Leavenworth woods. This woodland includes oak-hickory and maple-basswood sections, as well as several orchid species. Reservations required by March 19. Phone (785) 864-4493.
- **May 9, 1 p.m.** Wildlands Hike at Powell Gardens, Kingsville, Mo. Contact kkopeccky@kc.rr.com or (816)966-9544.
- **May 15.** Missouri Prairie Foundation Spring Prairie Day and Family Campout at Stilwell Prairie (near Richards, Mo., northeast of Ft. Scott). For more information, phone (888) 843-6739.
- **May 22, 10:30 a.m.**, Kansas Land Trust's Flint Hills Tallgrass Prairie Project in Riley County. For more information, contact RoxAnn.Miller@klt.org or (785) 749-3297.
- **May 29, 9 a.m.**, Sand Prairie Reserve, Newton. Meet in front of the Kauffman Museum in North Newton. For more information, contact sthollen@cox.net or (316) 634-0049.
- **May 29, 9-11 a.m.** Visit Butcher Falls Nature Center, Red Buffalo Ranch, Sedan. Enjoy a nature trail through wooded river bottoms and cross-timber savanna. For more information, contact gjweisen@yahoo.com or (620) 637-2343.
- **May 29,** Prairie Plant Hike at Kill Creek Park, on the Douglas-Johnson County line. This beautiful 20-acre prairie remnant has one of the rarest plants of the tall grass prairie – Meads' milkweed. For more information, contact eileenm@planetkc.com or (816) 523-7823.
- **June 1-5,** new Audubon of Kansas property on the Niobrara River. An extended field trip to the Hutton Niobrara Sanctuary in northcentral Nebraska. For more information, contact was@wichitaudubon.org or (316) 942-2164.
- **June 5, 8:30 a.m.** 9th annual Wilson County Wildflower Tour, southeast Kansas. Prepaid reservations, \$6 per person, must be received by June 2. For more information, phone (620) 378-2866.
- **June 5,** Prairiefest Wildflower Tour, Arkansas City. Chuckwagon breakfast at Wilson Park and wildflower walk. Admission is \$17. For more information, phone (620) 442-5895.
- **June 5-6, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.** each day. Maxwell Wildlife Refuge Prairie Days. For more information, email bernie@wwwebservice.net or phone (620) 628-4455.
- **June 11-12,** Kansas City Wildlands 3rd Annual BioBlitz, Burr Oak Woods Conservation Area in Blue Springs, Mo. Naturalists and biologists create a list of species for this remnant natural community. On June 12, the public is invited to see what the scientists have discovered. For more information, contact Linda@bridgingthegap.org or (816) 561-1061, ext. 116.
- **June 12, 9-11 a.m.** Explore South Owl Lake Prairie, Yates Center. For more information, contact Gary Weisenberger at gjweisen@yahoo.com or (620) 637-2343.
- **June 13, 2 p.m.** Tour three prairies in Douglas County. Start at Ivan L. Boyd Prairie Preserve then caravan to the Pioneer Cemetery 3 miles away. The final site will be Allen Prairie, 2 1/2 miles to the northwest. For more information, contact Dr. Roger Boyd at rboyd@bakeru.edu or (785) 594-3172.
- **June 13, 7 p.m.**, Friends of Konza Prairie Annual Wildflower Walk along McDowell Creek Road, west off K-177 near Manhattan. For more information, phone (785) 587-0381.
- **June 19, 6:30 a.m.** Wildflower Walk at Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve, Strong City. For more information, contact GishBEAR@aol.com or (785) 232-3731.
- **June 20, 1 pm.**, a glaciated tallgrass prairie wildflower walk at the Coblenz Prairie on Clinton Wildlife Area. For more information, contact ccfree@ku.edu or (785) 864-3453.



FREE PARK ENTRANCE DAYS

On May 1-2, Kansas state park patrons will enjoy one of their favorite weekends – Free Park Entrance Days. For two days, boaters, fishermen, and day campers will have free access to Kansas state parks (overnight camping fees not included).

Most state parks are adjacent to major reservoirs where both pleasure boating and fishing are allowed. Kansas Free Park Entrance Days are the ideal time for park users to check out those parks they have always wondered about or to simply enjoy their favorite spot. This weekend is particularly appealing to fishermen.

For more information on Free Park Entrance Days, contact the state park or Wildlife and Parks office nearest you.

–Shoup



OK KIDS WRITING WINNER

Each year OK KIDS Day – or Outdoor Kansas for Kids Day – is administered by the Kansas Wildscape Foundation, in partnership with the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks and sponsored by Bass Pro Shops. Events, which occur at state and community parks from April through October, are designed to get kids and families outdoors.

In conjunction with this event, Kansas Wildscape sponsors a youth essay contest. Last year's winner – writing on the topic, "Why

the Outdoors is Important to Me," was 12-year old Kelsey Korte of Holton. The following is her essay.

Why the Outdoors is Important to Me

The outdoors is important to me because it is my whole life, well other than my school, family, and my friends. I really don't like TV, so after all my homework is finished, I go outside – spoiling my cat and her kittens, walking and brushing my bucket calf, and playing with my dog. Most of the time, I go over to play and pet my neighbor's horse, Sady. I am trying to tame her. Sady is the kind of horse I want when I get the money to buy one. Sady still had that wild sense in her. The only problem is she isn't broke.

I love to go outside right after it rains. The air smells so clean and fresh. Everything is much brighter than before. Nature reveals it's true color after a rain shower.

When I was at Banner Creek, my friend and I found a giant tree that had fell into the lake. It went out into the water 15 feet or so. We took off our shoes and socks and walked out onto the tree. It was wide enough that we could lie down on it. So we did, with our feet in the water, and just enjoyed all of the sounds and the cool summer breeze. We could hear the waves crashing upon the shore and the birds singing. We were there for a couple of hours, and all we did was play on that tree.

In the winter, I love to build snowmen and go sledding. Where else are you going to do these activities

but outdoors? The snow is really bright and glistening.

In the summer, I like to go to the Holton Pool to swim. I like the Holton Pool because it has diving boards. My favorite board is the high dive.

In the spring, I love to go mushroom hunting through the timber. The best part is eating them. They are soooooo good! Also, I enjoy planting flowers and trees to make our land look beautiful.

In the fall, my sister and I rake up what leaves we have and jump in them. We like to throw them at each other.

Through the seasons, I find the outdoors keeping me busy. The outdoors is so enjoyable; that's why I like it so much. I don't think I would be the same person I am today if I didn't go outside as often as I do.

–Kelsey Korte, Holton



FISHING CLASSIC ESSAY DEADLINE

The 8th Annual Governor's Fishing Classic is scheduled for June 3-4 at Coffey County Lake near Burlington. The youth essay contest, open to all Kansas youth 16 and younger, is again being conducted as part of this year's event. The winner of the essay contest will be recognized by Gov. Kathleen Sebelius during the Governor's Award Ceremony, to be held at 1 p.m. June 4 at Coffey County Lake.

A certificate, a cash award of \$100, and a plaque will be awarded to the top girl and boy winning essay writers. The Kansas Wildscape Foundation, which manages the Governor's Fishing Classic,

will also provide an all-expense-paid trip for the winners and an accompanying adult to the fishing classic.

"My Wildest Fishing Story" is the assigned subject for this year's contest. Essays must be 500 words or less and should be submitted to the Kansas Wildscape Foundation, c/o Governor's Fishing Classic Essay Contest, 1 Riverfront Plaza, Suite 311, Lawrence, Kansas 66044, by early May. Participants may fax their entries to (785) 843-6379 or email them to wildscape@sunflower.com. For more information, contact Kansas Wildscape toll free at 1-866 655-4377 or phone (785) 843-9453.

–Shoup



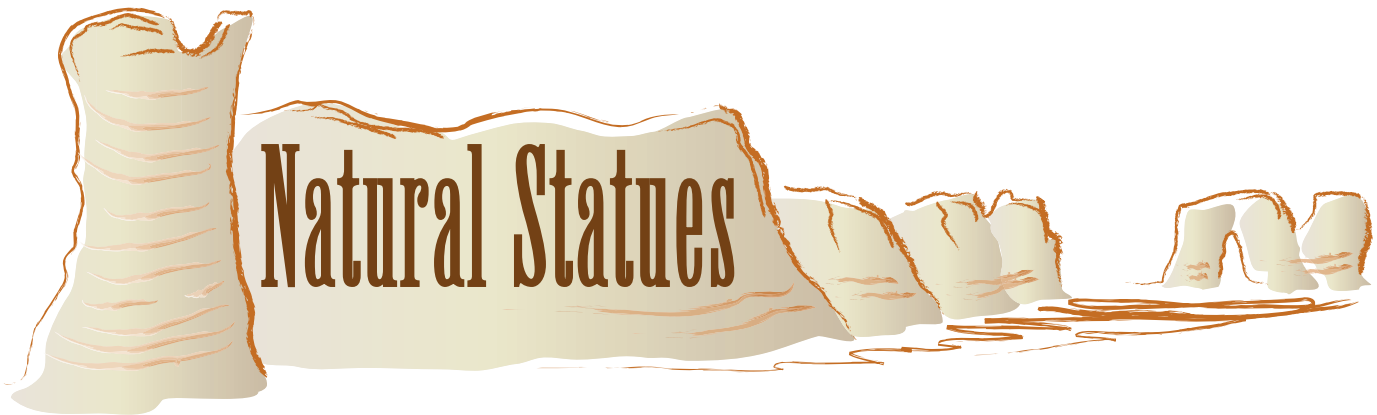
FREE FISHING DAYS JUNE 5-6

Free Fishing Days are June 5-6 – fish without having to buy a license. This traditional weekend coincides with National Fishing Week, June 5-13, sponsored by the American Sportfishing Association (ASA) and state conservation agencies across the country.

The weekend – and the entire week – is geared toward youth, but anyone can participate simply by going fishing or by participating in events sponsored by local and state agencies and organizations.

Kansas Free Fishing Days is the perfect opportunity to enjoy family time. For information on Free Fishing Days or Free Fishing Week events in your area, contact the nearest Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks office.

–Shoup



Although dry in recent years, the Smoky Hill River of northcentral and northwestern Kansas once had enough water to carve unique "badlands" in the fossil-rich chalk layers of western Kansas. One of its best-known formations is the area known as the Monument Rocks. Sometimes referred to as the Chalk Pyramids, it is officially recognized by the National Park Service as a National Natural Landmark.

In addition to the unusual geology, the area also offers some interesting habitat for wildlife. Small holes in the formations provide nesting cavities for the state's smallest falcon, the American kestrel. Pigeons also fly from ledge to ledge as they commonly do in most cities. Here, we gain an understanding of this introduced bird's natural habitat in Europe and why they are also called rock doves.

Pronghorns inhabit the surrounding shortgrass prairie. Although they are large mammals, their colors make them surprisingly difficult to see. Also in the area are coyotes, black-tailed jackrabbits, lesser earless lizards, and the venomous western rattlesnake.

Birdwatchers find Cassin's sparrows, ferruginous hawks, and golden eagles. Common

birds include horned larks, vesper sparrows, western meadowlarks, and black-billed magpies. Winter brings prairie falcons, rough-legged hawks, and large flocks of Lapland longspurs.

The "Badlands of Kansas," famous for its fossils, is an area of many chalk bluffs, chalk flats, and chalk pinnacles. Eighty million years ago, this region was an open



ocean brimming with calcium-shelled microscopic animals, giant oysters, sharks, bony fish, and reptiles swimming or flying over the surface. As they died, the small shells of trillions of these microscopic animals fell like snow to the bottom, forming a thick limy ooze, which covered the bodies of larger animals that had died.

Through time, the ooze was covered by other sediments and pressed into chalk (a soft limestone). Thousands of years of sculpting by the Smoky Hill River have left what you see today. This geological formation is the Niobrara Chalk, named after bluffs of the same chalk on the Missouri River near the mouth of the Niobrara River in northeast Nebraska. Sharks' teeth and other fossils are exposed after rains erode the gravel and rocks.

To explore this region, acquire maps of Logan, Gove, and Trego counties and try the back roads that crisscross the river. There aren't many good east-west drives, and many of these roads are impassable when wet.

Thousands of shark teeth and other fossils can be examined at the Fick Fossil and History Museum in Oakley. The famous fish-within-a-fish fossil — as well as giant turtle and swimming and flying reptile fossils — can be seen at the nationally-recognized Sternberg Museum in Hays. The museum's walk-through Cretaceous period diorama (complete with a life size roaring T Rex) is a must-see. The Sternberg also has Miocene epoch fossils of rhinoceros, camels, horses, and saber-tooth cats taken from Rhinoceros Hill in Wallace County and other private quarries in Kansas.

Monument Rocks encompasses 10 acres, all on private land. However, a road does pass the area, and visitors often drive by to take pictures. No digging is allowed, however.

To get there, travel U.S. Highway 83 until it crosses the Smoky Hill River about 25 miles north of Scott City. North of the river 2.5 miles, a sign directs visitors another 4 miles east and 2 miles south to Monument Rocks.



Editor's note: For more information on this and other great Kansas nature trips, pick up a copy of *Watching Kansas Wildlife*, by Bob Gress and George Potts. Jim Mason, who works at the Great Plains Nature Center in Wichita, adapted this article from that book.



Backlash

by Mike Miller

Competitive Shopping – Man Style

When Lennie and I fish together, we always compete. Though it's rarely discussed during fishing, we always know the score. Who caught most doesn't come out until later.

"Pretty good evening," Lennie mentioned matter-of-factly on the ride back to town. "We caught some nice bass." Lennie was still fishing, except now he was looking for a rise from me. "I don't know how many you landed, but I had seven over 2 pounds."

Lennie knew exactly how many fish I caught, and he knew he caught more.

"Yeah," I sighed, staring blankly out the truck window. "But it was better a couple of weeks ago when I caught that 4-pounder."

Lennie knew getting outfished was eating at me, so he set the hook.

"That was a nice fish. Too bad the fish you caught tonight wouldn't have weighed 4 pounds together," he chuckled.

But the competition wasn't just about fishing. Equipment was also a part of our tally. When I met Lennie, his rods consisted of two itty-bitty Daiwa spin-cast outfits that would make a decent bass laugh. On our first fishing trip, Lennie envied my Shimano baitcaster. On a trip soon after, I noticed Lennie proudly digging a backlash from his own Shimano casting reel.

And we each strived to have the magic lure that would ensure we caught the most fish.

"What'er you using?" I asked, swallowing my pride after Lennie released his third bass one summer night. I hadn't even had a swirl on my spinnerbait.

"Midge-Oreno," Lennie grunted as he cast, making sure I didn't get a look at his plug. He was savoring the moment.

"Don't tell me 'Mr. Big-Time Bass Fisherman' doesn't have a Midge-Oreno," Lennie rubbed it in. "It's only the best topwater plug ever made. Got one in every color," he added, knowing I wouldn't stoop to borrowing one.

Later that night, I picked up a Bass Pro catalog to order some Midge-Orenos. But I spent more time trying to find a lure I knew Lennie didn't have so I could exact my revenge.

The competition peaked on a trip to Bass Pro Headquarters in Springfield years ago. It took about an hour for two country bumpkins to get over the sensory overload of that much fishing equipment under one roof. But once we did, we got down to the business of shopping — competitive shopping.

We prowled the isles, each keeping one eye on the

other. In fact, I was studying a spinnerbait trying to decide if it had "magic" potential when I felt this large, looming presence. As I turned, I nearly bumped noses with Lennie, who was actually reading the package label over my shoulder.

"What?" he blurted and stepped back. "I already have one of those . . ."

"Go find your own lures," I hissed.

The competition was fierce, but I didn't realize the advantage I had. Lennie's kind of a skinflint, and his conscience is good at math. While Lennie was caught up in the competitive moment, his conscience was calculating his basket total. My conscience isn't good at math, and I've never been accused of being a miser when it comes to fishing gear.

When we decided to check out, we couldn't believe the people standing in lines at the cash registers. As we watched fish in the aquarium and browsed to let the lines subside, I began noticing abandoned lures. There was a Zara Spook lying on the rocks at the aquarium. I found a spinnerbait next to some hunting boots in the shoe section. There was a package of Roadrunners on the drinking fountain. And tucked into the antlers of a mounted whitetail head, I found a new topwater plug called the Wood Chopper. That's when it all made sense.

Lennie and I had both grabbed a couple of the Wood Choppers after watching some guy in a promotional video catch bass after bass. But now, Lennie's frugal conscience was working on him. He was unloading lures from his basket like they were rotten Easter eggs. I waited until we were both reached the cash register in a long line before I started to work.

"What color Wood Chopper did you get, Lennie? It might just be the best looking topwater plug I've seen. The big bass at the Mulberry pond will go nuts for 'em."

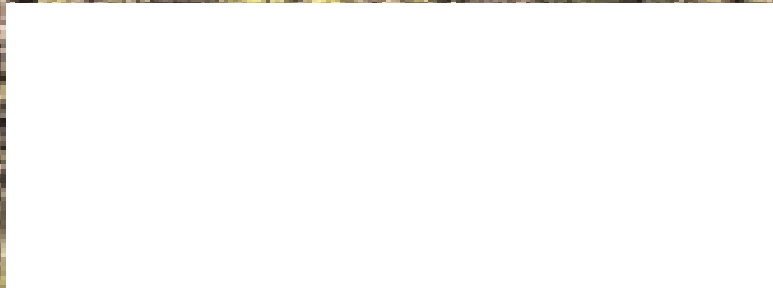
"Black, I think," Lennie mumbled without looking in his basket. This was fun. Lennie actually had little beads of sweat on his forehead.

He glanced toward the drinking fountain, then over to the shoe section. He couldn't remember where he'd tossed the Wood Chopper, and even if he did, he couldn't lose his place in line. Lennie knew he would regret not having a Wood Chopper, but after his conscience had finished with him, he didn't have much to show for his shopping effort. It was my turn to set the hook.

"Not a bad afternoon of shopping," I mused while feeling the heft of my shopping bags "Nothing better than a full sack of new lures. Feels kind of like — well, like victory." ♡



Small informational sign attached to the tree trunk.



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