KANSAS Wildlife & Parks

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On Point

by Mike Hayden

Open Admission Revisited

During my tenure as secretary of this agency, one of our most persistent issues has been state park funding. Ultimately, our goal has been to develop long-term, dependable funding for state parks. Gov. Kathleen Sebelius has supported our efforts and recently proposed a plan to allow open admission to Kansas state parks, along with the creation of a permanent funding source to finance capital improvements.

To finance open admission to state parks, the proposal would allocate $1.6 million in State General Fund dollars, to replace vehicle admission fee revenues. (Camping and other special use fees would still apply.) The intent is to increase state park visitation and to generate greater public participation in outdoor recreation.

The governor has proposed a dedicated funding source to finance capital improvements in state parks: $3 million annually from the Expanded Lottery Act Revenue Fund, which is supported by licensing of state-owned casinos and licensing of slot machines. That same revenue source would provide an additional, one-time appropriation of $1.5 million to finance repair of state park facilities damaged by the floods of 2007 and to assist communities in developing green space. The Local Government Outdoor Recreation Grant Program (LGORP) would be used to distribute a portion of this money on a one-to-one matching basis to applying communities, with priority given to those affected by natural disasters.

Historically, park-user fees have been supplemented by the State General Fund (SGF). In its early years — from 1958 through 1963 — the parks system was funded entirely from the SGF. Park entrance fees were implemented in 1964 and camping fees in 1982. Since 1995, SGF support for parks has been reduced from 60 percent of the annual parks operating budget to as low as 19 percent. As SGF support declined, park fees were increased to bear more of the funding needs of parks. Park entrance fees were increased twice and camping fees were increased four times just to maintain state park services. This increase in cost created hardships for many families and reduced park visitation and use.

Park users have enjoyed some relief since Jan. 1, 2007, when vehicle fees were cut in half. That reduction was made possible through enhanced funding support from the governor and the legislature.

The benefits of state parks are clear to park visitors. But parks supply benefits beyond recreation. With their aesthetic and recreational attractions, they enhance the appeal of area communities for residents and visitors alike. They also generate income for local and regional businesses.

Park patrons who are Kansas residents spend an average of about $25 per day per person in direct purchases of goods and services for their state park visits. Nonresidents — one-fourth of all park visitors — spend an average $40 per day. Considering the fact that seven of the top 10 most frequently visited attractions in Kansas are state parks, those purchases yield a significant positive impact on local, regional, and statewide economies.

The Parks Division of the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks comprises 111 full-time employees who maintain 26 state park properties. Kansas ranks next to last among all states in spending on its parks but fifth among all states in overnight camping stays. Any long-term deferral of maintenance and capital improvement presents a growing challenge to provide adequate facilities and services.

Gov. Sebelius' proposal offers a promising, stable future for state parks, which would benefit from long-term, reliable funding for major maintenance and capital improvements. As a result, planning and development of state park facilities could be more effectively applied, resulting in safer and more enjoyable outdoor recreation opportunities for all Kansans.

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Front Cover: A black-crowned night heron watches for prey at Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area. Mike Blair filmed the bird with a 600mm lens, f/11 @ 1/500th sec.

Back Cover: State park cabins are the newest way to "rough it" in the Kansas outdoors. Mike Blair photo, 70mm lens, f/8 @ 1/250th sec.

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

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The Kansas Wetlands Education Center

by Bob Mathews
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Photos by Mike Blair
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A unique cooperative effort among several state agencies, Fort Hays State University, and local communities will culminate next winter when the Kansas Wetlands Education Center opens in Barton County.

Throughout its history, Cheyenne Bottoms has nurtured wildlife and intrigued human visitors. In recent years, the wildlife area has undergone a variety of improvements aimed at enhancing its value to wildlife. Soon, the world-famous marsh will also have a facility designed to help people better understand and appreciate the Bottoms and other wetlands.

The Kansas Wetlands Education Center (KWEC) will open its doors next winter. Currently under construction, the 12,000-square-foot center will contain a 75-seat auditorium, classroom, offices, gift shop, and exhibit hall. Overlooking a marsh on the southeast portion of the wildlife area, the facility will offer visitors an in-depth look at some of the richest wetland habitats in the world.

The center will be a branch museum of Fort Hays State University's Sternberg Museum of Natural History. FHSU will staff and operate the center, in collaboration with Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks staff. Equipped with state-of-the-art interpretive displays, the center will offer visitors insights into the unique natural resource values of Cheyenne Bottoms and other wetlands. Exhibits in the facility will provide an overview of the variety of Central Flyway wetlands, from the playa lakes of western Kansas to the flooded timber marshes of eastern Kansas.

In addition to its public education and interpretive programs, the center will host FHSU graduate students conducting wetlands research projects on the 19,857-acre Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area; the adjacent 7,200-acre Cheyenne Bottoms Preserve managed by The Nature Conservancy; and the nearby 21,820-acre Quivira National Wildlife Refuge managed by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Fittingly, given the unpredictable wet and dry cycles that characterize Central Flyway wetlands, construction of the center was delayed for several months due to unprecedented high water. Last August, heavy rains transformed Cheyenne Bottoms , which had only recently filled, following several years of dry weather that had left most of the basin cracked and dusty. Almost overnight, the central Kansas marsh became a sprawling lake. Construction was further delayed by snowstorms during the past winter.

Collaboration, planning, and development on the center began in 2003, after KDWP received a $2 million grant for facility construction from the Kansas Department of Transportation, through funds from the federal Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). Under the direction of Dr. Ed Hammond, FHSU's president, and Mike Hayden, KDWP secretary, a variety of partners joined forces to begin planning the facility. Representatives from local governments, including Barton County, Barton County Community College, Great Bend, Hoisington, Claflin, and Ellinwood participated in early planning and discussion. The Kansas Department of Commerce, The Nature Conservancy, and the Kansas Wildscape Foundation lent support, as well. Representatives from KDWP, FHSU, The Nature Conservancy, Great Bend, and Barton County appointed representatives to serve on planning teams to develop building and exhibit design rec-

This aerial looks west across the Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area. The circled area is the land where the center is being built. Just across Highway 56, the roadside park and several of the wildlife area's large pools are visible in the background. Wetlands in the foreground will be developed so that the center looks out over a demonstration area.

ommendations. Gov. Kathleen Sebelius joined citizens from across the state Oct. 27, 2006, for a groundbreaking ceremony.

While KDWP will retain ownership of the land the education center is on, FHSU will own the building and will be responsible for its operation and maintenance, as well as management of exhibits. The City of Great Bend contributed water service to the center and grounds maintenance. Barton County helped with preconstruction site preparation and construction of an entrance off of U. S. 156. Local communities will provide a base of volunteers to assist with special educational programs, as well as promotion and marketing of the new facility. The Nature Conservancy committed support for development of exhibits and displays, and numerous other private donations are helping to underwrite exhibit fabrication and placement.

Designed by Manhattan architects Bowman, Bowman and Novick, the education center is located 7 miles northeast of Great Bend on U. S. Highway 156. Exhibit design is by Chase Studios, which specializes in development of nature center exhibits and displays.

Exhibit hall displays will feature a large wall panel with a map of Cheyenne Bottoms and its features, including up-to-date information on seasonal wildlife activity on the marsh and management activities underway. Other design elements include a topographic depiction of the marsh and its natural communities; welded steel, life-sized sculptures of birds that frequent the area; and a historical interpretation display that illustrates tools, weapons, gear and other accessories used by human visitors to Cheyenne Bottoms throughout history. In addition, three-dimensional, interactive exhibits will illustrate the rich variety of plants and animals common in marshes, along with displays depicting the various types of wetlands found in Kansas, from the playas common in western Kansas to the flooded timber marshes of eastern Kansas.

It is appropriate that the anticipated opening of the Kansas Wetlands Education Center will occur prior to the 2009 spring migration. The spectacle of tens of thousands of migrating birds has drawn human visitors to this central Kansas marsh for generations. Beginning next winter, the story of Cheyenne Bottoms, of Kansas wetlands, and of the unique contribution these habitats provide, will be on display for visitors from around the world, thanks to the dedication and partnership of many Kansans.

With a ground-breaking ceremony attended by Governor Sebelius, construction began in October of 2006. Floods and winter weather have delayed progress, but a grand opening should occur next winter.

TAG CRAPPIE, YOU'RE IT

by Tom Mosher
fisheries biologist,
Research and Investigations Office, Emporia

photos by Mike Blair

Kansas anglers love to catch and keep crappie because they're good to eat. Biologists know that angling pressure can impact crappie populations, but a recent tagging study provided some interesting insights.

It's certainly no secret that crappie are among the most sought after and caught species of fish in Kansas reservoirs. And, to the chagrin of some local anglers, it's no secret that many northeastern Kansas reservoirs have developed a reputation of being some of the finest crappie fisheries in the U.S.

Lakes such as Clinton, Hillsdale, Melvern, and Perry with their miles of shorelines and many small coves have produced tremendous catches of white crappie in the last three decades. At the other end of the state, Cedar Bluff Reservoir produced excellent fishing for both black and white crappie after it refilled in the 1990s.

Traditionally, most Kansas crappie anglers fished primarily during April, May, and early June when the crappie are spawning near shore. Beginning in the mid-1980s, anglers became more knowledgeable of crappie habits, and with the aid of electronic sonar, they were able to find and catch crappie throughout the year. Anglers became especially proficient at catching crappie during the winter. Pictures of coolers filled with crappie began to appear in the newspapers, and soon anglers were expressing concern about overharvest. In response, department biologists studied factors that affected reproduction, growth, and mortality of reservoir crappie from 1985 to 1990.

This study found that three-year-old crappie comprised the largest age class of fish harvested by anglers. These crappie could be as big as 11 inches or as small as 8 inches, depending on how much they grew the previous summer. It was also found that anglers harvested two-thirds of crappie caught that were longer than 8 inches. As a result, few three-year-old crappie survived to their fourth winter. Given these results and the growth patterns of white crappie, KDWP biologists believed bigger fish could be provided for anglers if mortality of young crappie was reduced. Furthermore, biologists believed length limits to be a better alternative than creel limits because they protected smaller and younger fish. Data showed that a 10-inch length limit would reduce harvest by about 40 percent, which was similar to a reduced creel limit of either 20 or 30 fish per day. Interestingly, biologists in Missouri and Texas found similar results in their studies.

To test this theory, a 10-inch length limit was implemented for crappie at Melvern, Perry, and Pomona reservoirs. No length limit was enacted at nearby Clinton Reservoir, so this lake could serve as a control. Results of that study showed the 10-inch limit effectively provided larger fish at Perry and Melvern, but that crappie grew too slowly with a length limit to do the same at Pomona. Therefore, the 10-inch limit was maintained at Melvern and Perry, and later adopted at Hillsdale.

Part of the 1985-1990 evaluation included a tagging study at Melvern Reservoir. Reward tags were placed on crappie greater than 8 inches before the spring fishing season, and tag returns were used to determine angler exploitation of the crappie population. Anglers claimed they harvested 53 percent of the crappie we tagged during the following year. Because it is unlikely that all anglers returned tags, this was considered to be the minimum percentage of the crappie population that anglers harvested.

Biologists set traps at select reservoirs to collect enough fish for the study project. At lakes with length limits, only crappie as long or longer than the minimum length were tagged. At lakes with no length limit, they tagged fish 8 inches or longer.

Tags are inserted just beside the dorsal fin and are highly visible. The project was promoted locally, and anglers were encouraged to turn tags in, along with information about when and where fish were caught. Rewards were offered to encourage compliance. In earlier projects, anglers were offered t-shirts or caps or cash incentives. In more recent projects, 1 percent of the tags had a $100 value.

Biologists felt this to be too high to support a quality fishery.

Biologists surmised that annual exploitation was reduced when length limits were established, but exploitation had not been studied since length limits became effective. So, from 2003-2005, crappie were tagged and released again, this time at Cedar Bluff, Clinton, Hillsdale, Melvern, and Perry reservoirs. Anglers were asked to return the tags to KDWP and provide information on when and where they caught the fish. During 2003, anglers who returned tags received a fishing cap or t-shirt for each tag that was returned. Additionally 1 percent of all tags were eligible for a $100 reward incentive to increase return rates.

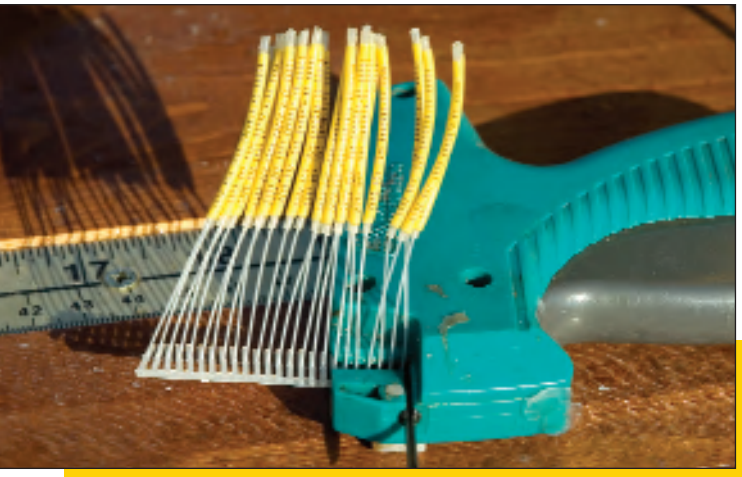
The tags in 2004 and 2005 were valued at $5, $20, or $100. Only legal-sized crappie were tagged at lakes with length limits, so at Hillsdale, Melvern and Perry tagged fish were at least 10 inches long. At Cedar Bluff and Clinton we tagged crappie that were at least 9 inches long because smaller fish were more difficult to tag and had lower returns in the previous study.

KDWP biologists tagged 500 crappie at each lake before the spring spawning period. Biologists also attempted to tag 500 fish during the fall in 2003 and 2004 to evaluate the winter fishery at Clinton, Hillsdale, Melvern, and Perry. We discontinued fall tagging after 2004 because of low returns and difficulty catching enough crappie to tag.

The objectives of this tagging study were to determine, 1) what percentage of the crappie popu-

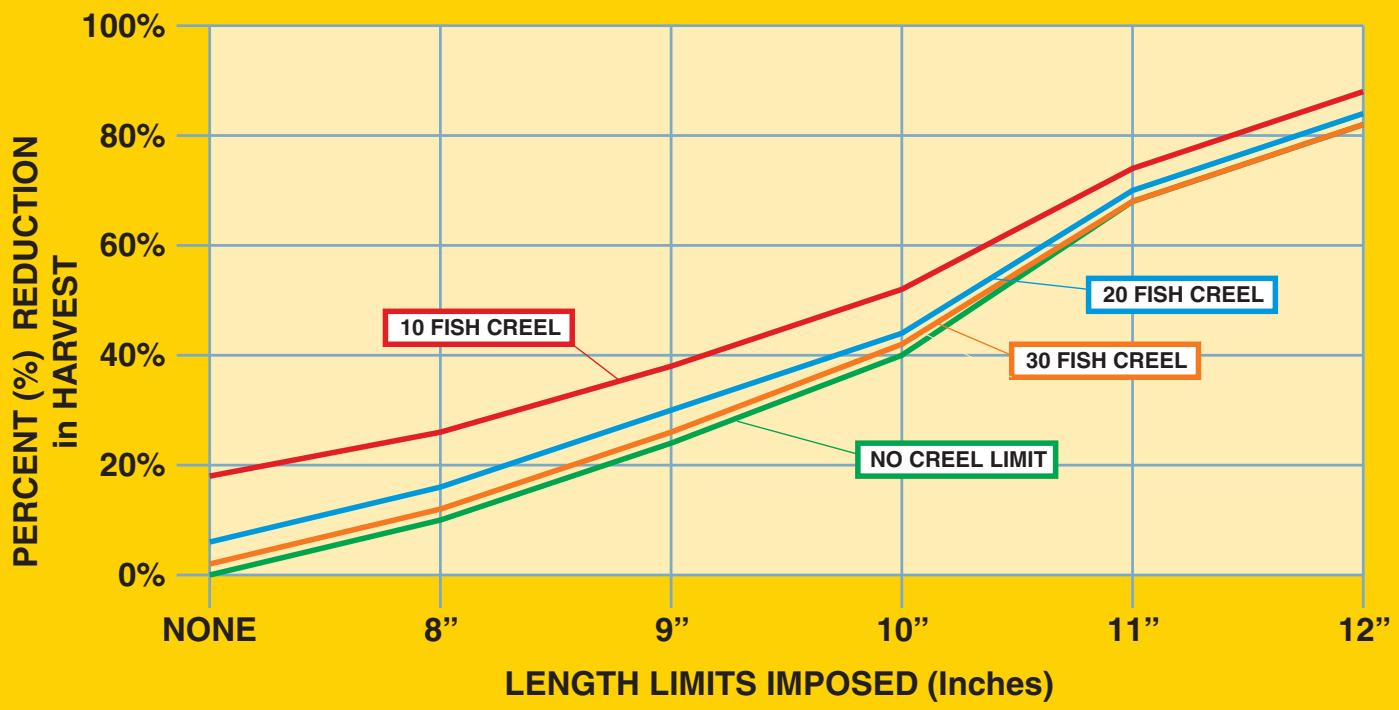
lation was harvested by anglers, 2) when the fish were harvested, 3) where the fish were caught, and 4) how many crappie it took for an angler to have a good fishing trip.

Of the 7,500 tagged fish released during the spring, anglers returned 2,186 (29 percent). The vast majority of returned tags (70 percent) were caught during the first 90 days. The next highest return (14 percent) was during the following spring. The percentage of fish caught during the first year after they were tagged ranged from 12-19 percent at Cedar Bluff, 20-33 percent at Clinton, 21-31 percent at Hillsdale, 14-32 percent at Melvern, and 16-26 percent at Perry.

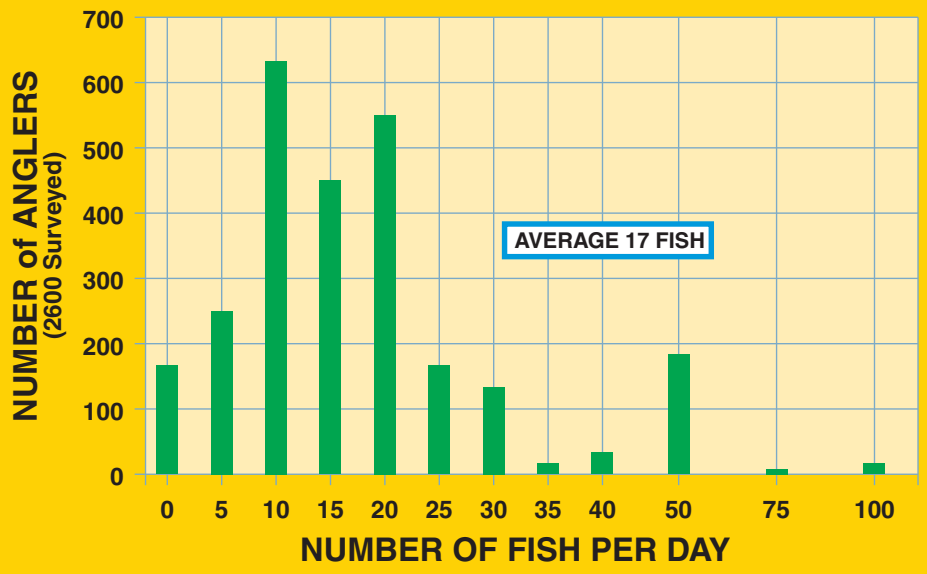


Anglers returned only 19 percent of the 3,682 tags from fish tagged during the fall. Unlike the spring tags, only 21 percent of the fall tags were returned during the first 90 days. Anglers returned 44 percent of these tags during the first spring following release. It appeared that crappie tagged during the fall did not survive very well, possibly because of stress in colder weather, and this part of the study was stopped after the second year.

These returns show us that anglers are not harvesting as great a portion of the population as was noted in 1988. This may be because of the length limit and reduced creel limits, or it may be because of changing social pressure to conserve our natural resources. The tag returns also show us that although crappie are caught throughout the year, the vast majority are still caught during the spring spawning run. Tag returns showed that 78 percent of the crappie were caught during the spring, 5 percent during summer, 8 percent during fall, and 8 percent during winter.

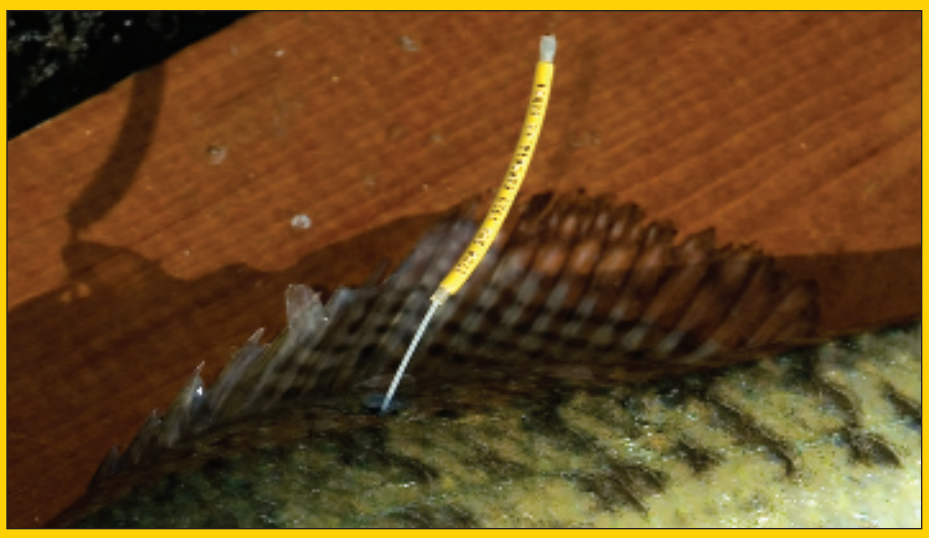


The graph above shows estimates in the reduction in white crappie harvest with various creel and length limits. Estimates were made based on interviews with crappie anglers who completed fishing trips from 1986 to 1990 when no restrictions applied.



Crappie anglers who returned tags from 2003-2007 were asked how many crappie they needed to catch rate their fishing as good. The graph above shows the results

Generally, anglers reported they caught crappie close to the areas where they were tagged. This was expected because we set our nets in areas most likely used by crappie and anglers. However, overall returns indicated that crappie use the entire reservoir. One crappie tagged at Melvern was caught by an angler 6 1/2 miles from the tag site just two days after it was tagged. Others tagged in the main lake have been caught far up the rivers that supply both Clinton and Melvern reservoirs. The good news was that very few tagged crappie were caught below the dams on these reservoirs; only two tags at Perry and one tag at Hillsdale came from the spillway areas. This would indicate that crappie are not being flushed out of the reservoirs in great numbers.



Turn it in. Biologists still want tags and information from anglers who caught tagged fish since 2003. Tag returns show that 78 percent of the crappie were caught during the spring, 5 percent in summer, 8 percent in fall, and 8 percent in winter.

We asked anglers to tell us how many crappie they needed to catch to have a good fishing trip. We received 2,600 responses, and answers ranged from none to 200 with an average of 17 crappie per day.

So far, we have received 2,872 tag returns from 1,830 anglers. Most of the responding anglers (1,340) returned one tag. However, the remaining 490 anglers returned 53 percent of the tags; one angler returned 26 tags. Despite this, many anglers who caught tagged crappie have not returned the tags. There are many reasons for this. Some anglers do not wish to provide the requested information. Others forget to send the tag, while some lose it, and some want to keep the tag as a souvenir. Anglers also become complacent to tagged fish and don't see the need to return the tag. Every tag we receive helps us better manage the crappie populations in our lakes, so we encourage anglers who have crappie tags from 2003 until now to return them so we can get a better idea of how many have been caught. If an angler wishes to keep the tag, we will return it after recording the needed information. Furthermore, if the angler forgets the date when the fish was caught, the month or season (spring, summer, fall, winter) and year will help.

Accurate information from research is vital to fisheries management. Through innovative research projects and angler cooperation, management plans can be designed to establish and maintain great angling.

TUTTLE CREEK STATE PARK: PHOENIX RISING

by Todd Lovin
manager, Tuttle Creek State Park

photos by Mike Blair

Innovative and hard working staff, creative funding, and partnerships have helped Tuttle Creek State Park recover from floods, dam repairs, and just plain old age. It remains of the state's premier outdoor recreation areas.

Manhattan may be best known as home of Kansas State University, but just outside the city limits is a popular attraction called Tuttle Creek State Park. The park is comprised of four individual areas — River Pond, Spillway, Fancy Creek, and Randolph. The four state park areas grace the 12,500-acre Tuttle Creek Reservoir, which is the second largest in the state and owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The state park consists of 1,250 acres, and there are 12,000 acres of public hunting on and around the reservoir. The park is known for its top-notch recreational opportunities and associated facilities, including campgrounds, an extensive trails system, and access to excellent angling opportunities.

But it was not always so. In 1993, the face of Tuttle Creek was dramatically altered by the floods. The River Pond Area was completely flooded except for two small islands, which included two camp sites and the park office.

In retrospect, what initially appeared to be a disaster opened windows of opportunity to update the park and meet the public's changing recreational demands. When waters receded and the devastation was clear, then-park managers Bill Porter and Paul Miller saw opportunities among the devastation, which included destroyed trees, buildings, roads, facilities, and 12 to 18 inches of silt dumped on the River Pond Area. The flood

The River Pond and Willow Lake below the dam provide excellent access for anglers, and in the winter, Willow Lake is stocked with trout. Many improvements have been made to the River Pond park area since the Dam Safety Project began.

In the two years after the flood, Tuttle Creek State Park was fortunate to receive assistance from the Kansas Legislature to replace its major shower buildings, plant turf grasses and trees, and replace shelters and numerous other popular items in River Pond. A transformation was underway, like the mythical phoenix rising from the ashes of destruction. Campers and visitors were pleased with the results. A renewed excitement was created at Tuttle Creek as new opportunities were created.

had wiped the slate clean and forced a new start.

The area first became a state park in 1961. In 1993, when the massive floods hit the area, most of the park's facilities and infrastructure were "original," which means "outdated." For example, an open-air shower building that is not climate controlled, receives heavy public use, and is continually exposed to freezing, thawing, and sun has typically reached its life expectancy at 30 years.

In 1996, the Country Stampede started its first year at Tuttle Creek State Park, drawing 35,000 concert goers. The Stampede has grown into one of the largest country music festivals in the Midwest now attracting 150,000 during the four-day event. Obviously this event has introduced many people to the park, and it has also provided needed resources.

Changes were not limited to the River Pond Area. Fancy Creek and Randolph Areas were dramatically changed by the 1993 flood. These areas no longer had adequate attractive lake access because of siltation at its northern end. Flooding also destroyed the potable water

treatment plant and distribution systems and made it impossible to draw water from the lake.

In 1998, a 100-man National Guard heavy equipment unit used the Tuttle Creek damage for practical application of their required annual two-week training period. They removed many of the old and damaged structures and facilities and repaired and upgraded others. This work, as well as removing standing dead timber killed by the flood, improved not only the aesthetics but the functionality of the area. People could once again enjoy the areas safely.

During the 1990s, the camping and recreation industry adapted to meet the demands of the public. No longer were campers satisfied with a pickup topper or a small camper pulled behind a car. Large, elaborately-equipped recreational vehicles (RVs) and motor homes were becoming increasingly popular. Camper slide-outs became commonplace, which created much greater space needs for these high-tech campers. RVs now routinely require 50-amp electrical service as opposed to the 30- and 20-amp service previously required.

Parks 2000, appropriated by Gov. Graves and the Kansas Legislature, provided $10 million to repair and upgrade aging state park infrastructure. Tuttle Creek State Park was fortunate to receive $750,000, which helped renovate 70 of River Pond's campsites, expanded spaces, and introduced 50-amp camper electrical service. Perhaps the most important upgrade (although not the most visible) was the replacement of all major interior electrical, wastewater, and potable water infrastructure throughout River Pond. No longer are visitors regularly subject to power outages or water line breaks because the basic system is now new. An adequate potable water supply sufficient to meet peak demands became available after the Country Stampede obtained a grant and upgraded the River Pond wells and water treatment plant. In addition, two flush toilet buildings were replaced as a result of Parks 2000.

The shooting range complex was not the only activity that breathed new life into Fancy

As is the case with all Kansas state parks, Tuttle Creek has struggled to keep facilities up-to-date. Changes in patrons' camping preferences have required electrical outlets to be updated to 50-amp service instead of the former 30- and 20-amp services.

In the late 1990s a group started serious discussions about locating a shooting range at the Fancy Creek Area. Eventually, the group organized to become the Friends of Fancy Creek Range, and matching grant funds earmarked for shooting range development were obtained. In September 2002, the Fancy Creek Range opened, providing a fully-staffed baffled range complex that includes a 100-meter range and a 20-meter range, both with covered firing lines. Since opening, the range has hosted numerous events, including hunter education programs, 4-H shooting sports, Scouting programs, and Women Shooting Sports.

(In addition, berms were constructed for a 50-meter range, but the funds were not available for baffles and a covered firing line. Funding is being sought to complete the 50-meter range through another grant application by the friends group.)

Creek. The Manhattan Mountain Bike Patrol and AmeriCorps members developed a 6-mile mountain bike trail at Fancy Creek. The trail is extremely popular and considered one of the best mountain bike trails in the Midwest. Through another grant, 12 new electrical campsites were built at Fancy Creek to allow for today's larger campers. In 2005, a single-lane boat ramp was installed at Fancy Creek to allow access into the Big Blue River through the siltation. This ramp provides convenient nearby access for boaters, especially those interested in angling and waterfowl hunting.

Randolph Area continues to improve, as well. The Flint Hills Trail Riders Association and Kansas Trails Council have developed 13 miles of horse trails in Randolph Area, and another 13 miles are connected to Carnahan Park (operated by Pottawatomie County). National Recreational Trail Fund matching grants have also been used to develop a new vault toilet and horse corrals. In addition, 20 electric campsites with nearby potable water are under development. Randolph Area is not only popular with equestrian campers but also off-road vehicle (ORV) campers. While the state park does not have a developed ORV area, 310 acres managed by the Corps of Engineers as an ORV area is highly popular.

In 2004, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers began the Dam Safety Project, which is designed to make the reservoir's dam safer and more stable. The project has had major impacts on the state park and won't be will completed for several more years..

The Dam Safety project has recently impacted the River Pond area, and while changes were required as a result of construction activities, they also provided opportunities to enhance and update the park's facilities and services.

Nationally, ORV usage is an activity that is rapidly growing, and Fancy Creek and Randolph areas provide the closest campgrounds to this ORV area.

The Spillway Area of Tuttle Creek State Park offers the main boat ramp to the reservoir and Wildcat Marina. Wildcat Marina began business in 2005, taking over the operations from Big Dawg Marina. The marina expanded in 2006 by 20 boat slips to accommodate larger boats. In addition, the marina has continued to expand operations and now offers additional concession services, personal watercraft and pontoon rentals, special events, and a tanning deck. The Cedar Ridge ADA Trail was developed in the Spillway Area in 1999. This 3/4-mile trail was specifically developed for persons with limited mobility, as well as children. The trail won a national award from the Coalition for Recreational Trails for accessibility.

An 18-hole disc golf course was developed in the River Pond Area, complete with concrete tee pads. The course is extremely popular with area youth and Kansas State University students.

In 2004, four new modern rental cabins were installed at River Pond. The cabins were the result of a partnership with KDWP, Country Stampede,

Popular with local youth and university students, the 18-hole disc golf course has been developed in the River Pond area. The course includes concrete tee pads.

Kansas Wildscape, and The Bank of Gardner. The cabins have been very popular with groups from across the country. Three more modern cabins are currently being developed and will be completed in the spring of 2008. These cabins are the result of a statewide partnership with the Kansas Wildscape Foundation, the Greenbush Education Program, and the Kansas Department of Corrections.

Another wave of change and opportunities at Tuttle Creek State Park began in 2004, when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers launched its Dam Safety Project. Parts of the River Pond Area would be heavily affected by this multi-year project. Projected to last seven to 10 years, the Dam Safety Project required that a main entrance road be re-routed. As a result, new gatehouses were purchased to better serve visitors as they enter the park.

Seventy park campsites would also be affected by the Dam Safety Project. To offset this loss, 20 new campsites were built in the Riley Point Area and opened in 2005. Fifty new campsites were built in a new area now known as Rocky Ford Campground, which is on the south side of River Pond. This area opened in 2006. The Rocky Ford Campground offers something special in that it is a forested area, and numerous sites are near the shore of River Pond.

Four modern rental cabins were constructed in the River Pond area in 2004, and more are scheduled for completion this spring.

The annual Country Stampede began in 1994 and has grown from its initial attendance of 35,000 to more than 150,000 over the four-day country music event.

In addition to the road and campsites, the park's potable water wells and trout stream fishery would also be negatively-affected by the Dam Safety Project. The trout stream was mitigated by building a berm and enclosing an area of the River Pond, known as Willow Lake. Willow Lake is approximately 10 acres and is stocked with trout during the trout season. Currently, two docks are in place, and the lake will continue to be improved.

The potable water supply wells were mitigated by connecting water service to the city of Manhattan, which provides much better water quality service than the previous water system. The water line was installed in a 52-acre corridor along the Big Blue River adjacent to Rocky Ford Fishing Area. This corridor was purchased and will provide additional public fishing, hiking, biking, and wildlife viewing opportunities. A 1 1/4-mile concrete trail is being installed along the cor-

A new group, called Friends of Tuttle Creek State Park, has recently been formed and has chosen interpretive, educational, and recreational programs for the park as their top priorities. By offering firewood to campers for a donation, the Friends Group has already funded a canoe float trip, a Dutch oven cook-off and a 1950s/1960s dance. For nearly 10 years, the park has rented canoes, kayaks, paddle boats, and small boats for use on the River Pond. We hope to be able to expand that opportunity in the future.

Park staff have worked steadily to provide trails throughout the park. Today, Tuttle Creek is known for one of the best mountain bike trails in the Midwest. There are also equestrian trails, hiking trails and ADA trails (pictured).

ridor. Currently, the trail connects the Rocky Ford Fishing Area to the Rocky Ford Campground. The remaining trail is under development, and when completed, park patrons will have access to another mile of the Big Blue River.

In 2007, the park again joined with Country Stampede and developed a new swing set for River Pond near the Man Kan Shelter, as well as a new disability accessible playground, that meets today's new national safety standards. Country Stampede has also provided the park with wi-fi internet services. Future plans include replacing many picnic tables and providing additional fire rings.

Tuttle Creek Lake Association continues to enhance fishing opportunities by providing enhanced fish habitat. They have also built two fish cleaning stations. The Lake Association provides ice for park users for a donation and in 2005 helped the park with development of a small coin-operated laundry. The laundry has been extremely popular and provides long-term campers or cabin users an opportunity to do laundry without leaving the park.

Since 1993, one thing has been constant at Tuttle Creek State Park, and that has been change. Much has been accomplished the last 15 years, but many improvements still remain necessary. In large part, the reason for the successes has been the support of park users, the many partnerships, and invaluable volunteers. The use of various matching-fund grants has allowed the park to maximize the use of its limited funds, equipment, and labor to improve and enhance outdoor opportunities and experiences. Park staff continue to develop ideas and plans to better serve its users whenever opportunities arise.

But one thing will never change at this park — Tuttle Creek's location in the beautiful Flint Hills of Kansas. Come see the changes at Tuttle Creek State Park this year, and enjoy the magnificence of this region of the state.

2008 Fishing Forecast

Use the following pages to find quality fishing for the sport fish you prefer. The forecast lists reservoirs (water bodies larger than 1,000 acres) and lakes (water bodies less than 1,000 acres) for each species. Ratings include the **Density Rating**, which is the number of fish captured per unit of effort by fisheries biologists; **Preferred Rating,** which is the number of fish at a preferred length for that species; **Lunker Rating**, which is the number of fish sampled at a length most anglers consider a trophy, and **Largest fish**, which is simply the largest fish caught during sampling. The **Biologist's Rating** is a rating of E -excellent, G - good, F - fair or P - poor given by the biologist who considers other factors in addition to sampling. In theory, a lake with a **Density Rating** of 24 will have twice as many fish per acre as a lake with a **Density Rating** of 12. This information will give you an idea not only of which lakes have high populations, but also those which have larger fish. You may view these tables on the department's web page www.kdwp.state.ks.us or a brochure can be mailed or picked up at a KDWP office.

CHANNEL CATFISH

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>16")	Preferred Rating (>24")	Lunker Rating (>28")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	Acres of Water
RESERVOIRS						
CLINTON	16.50	1.00	0.50	12.00	G	7000
TORONTO	14.00	3.25	0.25	7.72	G	2800
PERRY	8.50	0.50	0.25	9.59	G	11631
CHENEY	6.80	2.50	0.67	15.40	G	9550
MARION	6.20	0.67	0.17	21.80	G	6160
GLEN ELDER	5.11	0.56	0.22	15.85	G	9500
LOVEWELL	4.83	1.17	0.50	11.55	G	2986
WILSON	4.44	0.22	0.00	9.40	G	9040
LACYGNE	4.25	0.00	0.00	3.90	G	2600
WEBSTER	4.25	1.45	0.33	6.31	F	1596
KIRWIN	4.16	0.95	0.33	6.01	G	2059
JOHN REDMOND	4.00	3.50	1.50	10.00	F	9400
POMONA	4.00	0.00	0.00	4.75	F	4000
KANOPOLIS	4.00	0.00	0.00	2.46	G	3550
HILLSDALE	3.80	1.00	0.00	8.90	F	4580
FALL RIVER	3.75	1.50	0.50	8.82	F	2500
COUNCIL GROVE	3.70	1.30	0.00	6.30	G	3280
MILFORD	2.83	0.67	0.17	11.57	G	16020
SEBELIUS	2.68	1.70	0.83	13.12	G	977
MELVERN	2.00	0.30	0.10	11.50	G	7000
CEDAR BLUFF	2.00	0.00	0.00	5.22	F	4000
TUTTLE CREEK	0.80	0.40	0.00	6.00	G	15800
EL DORADO	0.50	0.00	0.00	2.10	F	8000
LAKES						
ANTHONY CITY LAKE	36.00	0.00	0.00	4.78	G	156
PLEASANTON EAST LAKE	34.00	2.00	2.00	15.80	E	127
BUTLER SFL	31.00	8.00	5.00	17.50	E	124
SABETHA - PONY CREEK LAKE	30.00	8.00	1.00	12.57	G	171
CLARK STATE FISHING LAKE	28.00	2.00	0.00	4.70	E	300
PLEASANTON WEST LAKE	26.00	3.00	2.00	15.20	E	20
KINGMAN SFL	24.00	0.00	0.00	5.31	G	144
MEADE STATE FISHING LAKE	23.00	0.00	0.00	1.11	G	80
SEDAN CITY LAKE-OLD	22.00	0.00	0.00	5.73	F	55
MADISON CITY LAKE	21.00	2.00	0.50	8.38	G	114
MOLINE NEW CITY LAKE	20.00	2.00	0.00	6.50	G	185
BOURBON SFL	19.00	2.00	1.00	9.90	E	103
MCPHERSON SFL	18.00	2.50	0.50	11.09	G	46
MELVERN RIVER POND	18.00	8.00	4.00	14.90	E	100
HOLTON - BANNER CREEK LAKE	17.50	4.50	0.50	10.91	G	535
EUREKA CITY LAKE	17.00	1.00	0.00	5.84	G	135
OLATHE-CEDAR LAKE	16.00	0.00	0.00	5.30	F	56
BONE CREEK LAKE	14.50	3.50	0.50	14.40	G	540
LYON SFL	13.50	0.50	0.50	9.26	G	135
CRAWFORD SFL	13.50	0.00	0.00	5.10	G	150
GRIDLEY CITY LAKE	13.00	1.00	0.00	6.60	F	33
JOHNSON CO. SHAWNEE MISSION LK	12.50	3.00	0.50	10.30	G	121
LEAVENWORTH SFL	12.50	2.50	0.00	7.40	G	160
ATCHISON SFL	12.00	1.00	0.00	6.50	G	66
CHANUTE CITY LAKE	12.00	1.00	1.00	12.30	G	80
OSAGE CITY LAKE	12.00	0.00	0.00	6.00	G	50
COUNCIL GROVE CITY LAKE	11.00	4.00	2.00	20.30	G	434
MOUND CITY LAKE	11.00	1.00	0.00	6.80	G	148
GARDNER CITY LAKE	10.30	4.80	1.30	13.90	G	100
WILSON SFL	9.50	0.00	0.00	4.63	G	110
BOURBON CO LK (HIATVILL)	9.00	2.00	0.00	6.10	G	106
THAYER CITY LAKE	9.00	4.00	1.00	11.80	G	30
SHAWNEE SFL	9.00	0.00	0.00	2.30	P	135
GARNETT CITY LAKE-NORTH	9.00	3.00	2.00	14.50	E	55
HOWARD-POLK DANIELS LAKE	9.00	2.00	1.00	10.36	G	69
WOODSON SFL	8.00	2.00	1.30	20.70	E	180
DOUGLAS COUNTY-LONESTAR LAKE	7.00	1.50	1.00	14.80	F	195
OTTAWA SFL	7.00	2.50	0.50	10.71	G	110
YATES CENTER CITY LAKE-NEW	7.00	1.00	1.00	11.90	E	205
BELLEVILLE-ROCKY POND	7.00	0.50	0.50	9.22	G	27
SEDAN CITY LAKE-NEW	7.00	0.00	0.00	4.08	P	70
BARBER SFL-LOWER	7.00	0.00	0.00	3.68	G	51
COWLEY SFL	6.50	0.00	0.00	4.70	G	84
GARNETT CITY LAKE-SOUTH	6.50	1.50	0.00	8.20	G	25
OSAGE SFL	6.00	1.50	0.60	14.50	G	140
LEBO CITY LAKE	6.00	1.00	1.00	9.40	E	70
BROWN SFL	5.00	3.00	0.00	8.82	F	62
HARVEY COUNTY LAKE-EAST	5.00	0.00	0.00	4.08	G	240
CARBONDALE CITY LAKE - EAST	5.00	0.50	0.50	7.83	F	265
HARVEY COUNTY LAKE-WEST	5.00	0.00	0.00	4.08	G	15

CHANNEL CATFISH

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>16")	Preferred Rating (>24")	Lunker Rating (>28")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	Acres of Water
LAKES CONTINUED						
GEARY SFL	5.00	3.00	1.00	14.33	G	97
PRATT COUNTY LAKE	5.00	0.00	0.00	6.02	G	51
GREENBUSH EDUCATION CENTER	5.00	0.00	0.00	3.70	F	5
MONTGOMERY SFL	5.00	0.00	0.00	3.25	F	105
OLATHE-LAKE OLATHE	4.50	0.50	0.00	6.70	F	172
MIDDLE CREEK SFL	4.50	1.50	0.50	9.50	G	280
CENTRALIA CITY LAKE	4.50	0.50	0.00	3.60	F	400
WYANDOTTE COUNTY LAKE	4.00	0.00	0.00	3.90	F	407
WASHINGTON SFL	4.00	3.00	2.00	10.36	G	65
POTTAWATOMIE SFL#1	4.00	0.00	0.00	3.90	F	24
THAYER CITY LAKE (NEW)	3.60	0.30	0.10	5.11	F	45
NEOSHO SFL	3.50	0.00	0.00	2.30	G	92
CHASE SFL	3.50	0.00	0.00	3.80	G	109
MIAMI SFL	3.00	2.00	0.00	7.30	P	101
ATCHISON COUNTY LAKE	3.00	1.00	0.00	8.60	F	60
SHERIDAN SFL	3.00	0.00	0.00	3.87	F	67
SHAWNEE COUNTY-LAKE SHAWNEE	3.00	0.00	0.00	4.30	F	416
GRAHAM COUNTY-ANTELOPE LAKE	3.00	1.00	1.00	9.49	G	80
MOLINE OLD CITY LAKE	3.00	0.00	0.00	1.40	P	68
OLPE CITY LAKE	3.00	1.00	0.00	9.26	F	90
MARION COUNTY LAKE	3.00	1.00	1.00	14.09	F	153
PAOLA CITY LAKE	2.50	0.50	0.00	5.70	F	220
HERINGTON CITY LAKE-OLD	2.00	0.00	0.00	2.63	F	367
ATCHISON CITY LAKE #2	2.00	0.00	0.00	1.41	F	3
JEFFREY EC-MAKE UP LAKE	2.00	0.00	0.00	5.00	F	125
WELLINGTON CITY LAKE	2.00	0.00	0.00	3.49	G	700
ATCHISON CITY LAKE #9	2.00	0.00	0.00	4.80	F	18
NEBO SFL	2.00	0.00	0.00	5.73	F	32
PARKER CITY LAKE	2.00	0.00	0.00	1.46	F	7
SCOTT STATE FISHING LAKE	1.50	1.50	0.50	7.88	E	115
COLDWATER LAKE	1.00	1.00	0.00	8.84	G	250
GREAT BEND-STONE PARK LAKE	1.00	0.00	0.00	5.31	G	50

BLUE CATFISH

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>20")	Preferred Rating (>30")	Lunker Rating (>35")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	Acres of Water
RESERVOIRS						
MILFORD	3.33	0.00	0.00	12.13	G	16020
LA CYGNE	0.50	0.00	0.00	9.14	G	2600

BLUEGILL

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>6")	Preferred Rating (>8")	Lunker Rating (>10")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	Acres of Water
RESERVOIRS						
PERRY	33.90	0.13	0.00	0.43	F	11631
LAKES						
BROWN SFL	287.00	69.60	0.00	0.62	G	62
OLPE-KIDS POND	262.92	0.00	0.00	0.00	P	2
EMPORIA-JONES PARK NORTH	211.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	G	1
ATCHISON CITY LAKE #2	103.30	0.00	0.00	0.35	F	3
EMPORIA-JONES PARK EAST POND	100.57	0.00	0.00	0.00	G	1
ATCHISON SFL	85.80	5.80	0.00	0.47	G	66
NEBO SFL	72.00	0.00	0.00	0.36	F	32
NEOSHO SFL	67.70	0.50	0.00	0.40	F	92
ATCHISON CITY LAKE #4	60.90	0.00	0.00	0.33	F	4
ATCHISON CITY LAKE #9	36.00	0.00	0.00	0.21	F	18
THAYER CITY LAKE	32.60	0.50	0.00	0.40	F	30
HOLTON - BANNER CREEK LAKE	27.00	6.50	0.00	0.50	F	535
HIAWATHA CITY LAKE	25.00	0.00	0.00	0.20	F	7
CHANUTE CITY LAKE	24.40	0.00	0.00	0.30	P	80
ATCHISON COUNTY LAKE	20.00	0.00	0.00	0.42	F	60
SABETHA - PONY CREEK LAKE	19.40	3.10	0.00	0.44	F	171
EMPORIA-JONES PARK WEST POND	12.52	0.00	0.00	0.00	G	1
CRAWFORD SFL	11.70	0.00	0.00	0.40	F	150
BONE CREEK LAKE	4.40	0.30	0.00	0.40	G	540
EMPORIA-PETER PAN PARK	4.24	0.00	0.00	0.00	F	3

REDEAR

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>7")	Preferred Rating (>9")	Lunker Rating (>11")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	Acres of Water
LAKES						
COWLEY SFL	17.50	3.50	0.00	0.80	G	84
LEAVENWORTH SFL	14.80	2.80	0.00	1.10	G	160
BOURBON CO LK (HIATVILL)	14.70	0.25	0.00	0.52	G	106
LYON SFL	10.00	3.50	0.00	0.68	G	135
BOURBON SFL	10.00	1.50	0.00	0.53	G	103
ATCHISON SFL	8.00	2.75	0.00	0.78	G	66
GREENBUSH EDUCATION CENTER	7.50	0.00	0.00	4.00	F	5
SEVERY CITY LAKE	7.25	0.25	0.00	0.53	G	5
THAYER CITY LAKE	6.50	0.30	0.00	0.50	F	30
MOUND CITY LAKE	4.80	0.00	0.00	0.31	F	148
NEOSHO SFL	4.80	0.00	0.00	0.40	G	92
DOUGLAS COUNTY-LONESTAR LAKE	3.80	1.30	0.00	0.60	F	195
MOLINE OLD CITY LAKE	3.00	1.25	0.00	0.72	P	68
MIAMI SFL	2.30	1.80	0.00	0.80	P	101
JEWELL CITY LAKE	2.20	0.00	0.00	0.23	P	6
THAYER CITY LAKE (NEW)	2.10	0.15	0.00	0.41	F	45
MONTGOMERY SFL	1.75	0.00	0.00	0.41	F	105
BROWN SFL	1.50	0.00	0.00	0.54	P	62
GRAHAM COUNTY-ANTELOPE LAKE	1.00	1.00	0.00	1.10	F	80
SEDAN CITY LAKE-NEW	0.75	0.00	0.00	0.50	P	70

BLACK CRAPPIE

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>8")	Preferred Rating (>10")	Lunker Rating (>12")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	Acres of Water
RESERVOIRS						
SEBELIUS	13.50	4.38	0.13	1.45	G	977
MARION	2.20	1.30	0.00	0.97	P	6160
WILSON	1.47	1.00	0.31	1.54	F	9040
CEDAR BLUFF	0.95	0.65	0.20	1.13	P	4000
KIRWIN	0.50	0.50	0.13	1.10	P	2059
LAKES						
BELLEVILLE-ROCKY POND	99.30	2.00	0.30	1.19	E	27
SABETHA - PONY CREEK LAKE	41.50	22.50	2.00	1.19	G	171
GRAHAM COUNTY-ANTELOPE LAKE	41.50	27.25	4.50	1.27	E	80
BOURBON CO LK (HIATVILL)	25.50	0.00	0.00	0.43	F	106
NEOSHO SFL	25.30	0.50	0.00	0.40	F	92
BROWN SFL	20.50	18.50	0.25	1.06	G	62
GREENBUSH EDUCATION CENTER	20.30	0.00	0.00	0.30	P	5
MIAMI SFL	17.50	1.00	0.00	0.80	F	101
ATCHISON SFL	12.25	2.50	0.00	0.78	F	66
ATCHISON CITY LAKE #4	10.50	0.00	0.00	0.37	F	4
PLEASANTON EAST LAKE	9.50	4.00	0.00	0.90	G	127
PRATT COUNTY LAKE	9.50	1.75	0.00	0.62	E	51
GRIDLEY CITY LAKE	9.00	4.00	0.00	0.70	G	33
GARNETT CITY LAKE-SOUTH	8.00	3.00	2.00	1.30	F	25
CENTRALIA CITY LAKE	6.40	3.70	0.30	1.10	F	400
WOODSON SFL	6.30	0.70	0.00	0.60	G	180
SHERIDAN SFL	6.25	4.00	0.00	0.98	F	67
BUTLER SFL	6.00	0.20	0.00	0.74	P	124
BALDWIN - SPRING CREEK LAKE	6.00	0.00	0.00	0.40	F	7
SHAWNEE COUNTY-LAKE SHAWNEE	5.00	1.00	0.00	0.60	F	416
HARVEY COUNTY LAKE-EAST	4.75	1.75	0.00	0.81	F	240
HOLTON - BANNER CREEK LAKE	4.50	4.13	1.00	1.34	G	535
DOUGLAS COUNTY-LONESTAR LAKE	4.00	2.50	0.30	1.10	F	195
MOLINE OLD CITY LAKE	3.50	2.00	1.25	0.95	F	68
WYANDOTTE COUNTY LAKE	3.50	0.90	0.10	1.30	F	407
BRONSON CITY LAKE	3.50	1.75	0.75	1.66	G	12
THAYER CITY LAKE	3.25	0.00	0.00	0.50	F	30
YATES CENTER CITY LAKE-NEW	3.00	0.50	0.00	1.00	G	205
HIAWATHA CITY LAKE	2.50	0.00	0.00	0.37	P	7
CLARK SFL	2.00	0.75	0.01	1.05	G	300
KINGMAN SFL	2.00	0.50	0.00	0.86	F	144
LEAVENWORTH SFL	1.80	0.80	0.00	0.70	F	160
GARDNER CITY LAKE	1.60	1.00	0.00	0.70	F	100
JOHNSON CO. SHAWNEE MISSION LK	1.60	0.40	0.20	0.90	F	121
GARNETT CITY LAKE-NORTH	1.50	1.00	0.00	0.50	G	55
ATCHISON CITY LAKE #2	1.50	1.00	0.50	1.00	F	3
THAYER CITY LAKE (NEW)	1.50	0.80	0.10	1.01	F	45
CRAWFORD SFL	1.50	0.00	0.00	0.40	F	150
ATCHISON CITY LAKE #9	1.50	0.00	0.00	0.33	P	18
ELLIS CITY LAKE	1.00	0.33	0.33	1.48	F	100
COWLEY SFL	0.83	0.83	0.20	1.10	F	84
NEBO SFL	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.28	P	32
BONE CREEK LAKE	0.30	0.30	0.00	0.60	G	540
BOURBON SFL	0.25	0.25	0.00	0.56	G	103

WHITE CRAPPIE

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>8")	Preferred Rating (>10")	Lunker Rating (>12")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	Acres of Water
RESERVOIRS						
TORONTO	56.94	33.06	12.69	2.87	E	2800
HILLSDALE	44.30	29.50	2.80	1.50	E	4580
POMONA	33.24	1.12	0.06	0.94	F	4000
BIG HILL	22.25	15.50	0.25	1.17	G	1240
PERRY	21.50	8.67	0.67	1.45	G	11631
CLINTON	19.80	6.10	0.30	1.00	F	7000
FALL RIVER	14.25	6.69	3.38	3.97	G	2500
COFFEE COUNTY LAKE	11.00	6.00	3.00	1.80	G	5000
MELVERN	8.50	3.10	0.40	1.01	E	7000
MARION	7.00	3.70	0.20	1.30	F	6160
SEBELIUS	6.25	3.38	0.38	0.93	F	977
COUNCIL GROVE	5.20	1.90	0.30	1.30	F	3280
LA CYGNE	4.25	2.90	0.13	1.15	G	2600
KIRWIN	3.88	1.13	0.13	1.89	F	2059
ELK CITY	3.50	2.00	1.00	1.39	G	4450
KANOPOLIS	2.88	2.50	0.00	0.86	F	3550
CEDAR BLUFF	2.40	1.00	0.60	1.38	P	4000
EL DORADO	1.80	0.40	0.00	1.00	G	8000
MILFORD	1.70	0.96	0.26	1.30	F	16020
TUTTLE CREEK	1.40	0.90	0.00	1.50	F	15800
CHENEY	1.30	0.67	0.17	1.23	P	9550
LAKES						
SEDAN CITY LAKE-OLD	52.00	4.25	1.25	1.37	G	55
ANTHONY CITY LAKE	36.00	11.00	2.20	1.41	G	156
OLATHE-CEDAR LAKE	29.30	4.80	1.00	1.40	F	56
MOUND CITY LAKE	28.00	11.25	0.50	0.85	G	148
OLATHE-LAKE OLATHE	27.80	5.80	0.30	0.90	F	172
SEDAN CITY LAKE-NEW	27.50	11.75	1.75	0.93	G	70
NEOSHO WA - KDOT POND	27.50	12.30	5.30	2.10	G	5
OTTAWA SFL	22.13	2.75	0.63	1.47	G	110
WASHINGTON SFL	21.25	4.50	0.25	0.82	G	65
EUREKA CITY LAKE	20.00	7.25	1.00	1.23	G	135
HIAWATHA CITY LAKE	19.50	4.00	2.50	1.13	F	7
ATCHISON CITY LAKE #9	18.50	0.50	0.50	1.23	F	18
CHERRYVALE CITY LAKE - TANKO	17.50	8.00	0.00	0.62	G	11
PLEASANTON WEST LAKE	17.30	1.30	0.50	1.33	G	20
ATCHISON CITY LAKE #4	17.00	2.50	0.00	0.66	F	4
ELLIS CITY LAKE	17.00	5.67	0.67	0.92	G	100
ATCHISON CITY LAKE #2	16.50	7.00	1.00	0.88	F	3
MADISON CITY LAKE	15.50	1.50	1.50	2.20	G	114
MARION COUNTY LAKE	13.20	11.50	4.20	1.34	G	153
CARBONDALE CITY LAKE - EAST	12.75	4.75	0.50	1.07	G	265
NEOSHO SFL	11.50	4.80	0.30	0.80	F	92
HOWARD-POLK DANIELS LAKE	11.00	5.00	2.00	1.76	G	69
SHERIDAN SFL	10.50	7.50	1.00	1.01	G	67
MIAMI SFL	10.50	5.80	0.00	0.80	F	101
MOLINE NEW CITY LAKE	10.50	6.00	0.75	1.66	G	185
SEVERY CITY LAKE	9.00	5.50	1.50	1.10	F	5
KINGMAN SFL	8.25	1.00	0.50	1.98	F	144
PARSONS CITY LAKE	8.00	2.44	0.63	1.45	G	980
POTTAWATOMIE SFL#1	7.50	0.50	0.30	0.90	F	24
PAOLA CITY LAKE	7.30	0.80	0.00	0.60	F	220
MEADE STATE LAKE	7.25	1.00	0.00	0.71	F	80
NEBO SFL	7.00	1.00	0.25	1.07	F	32
HARVEY COUNTY LAKE-EAST	6.25	6.25	0.50	1.28	E	240
HERINGTON CITY LAKE-OLD	6.00	0.50	0.00	0.76	F	367
SCOTT STATE LAKE	5.33	1.00	0.00	0.52	E	115
LOUISBURG CITY LAKE	5.00	2.00	0.70	1.80	F	23
GARDNER CITY LAKE	4.60	2.40	0.60	1.20	F	100
COUNCIL GROVE CITY LAKE	4.50	2.25	0.25	0.90	G	434
HERINGTON CITY LAKE-NEW	4.25	0.75	0.00	0.70	F	555
MIDDLE CREEK SFL	4.20	1.50	0.00	0.60	F	280
CRAWFORD SFL	3.80	1.00	0.30	0.80	G	150
LEAVENWORTH SFL	3.80	0.80	0.00	0.50	F	160
SEDGWICK COUNTY-LAKE AFTON	3.50	2.25	0.25	1.61	G	240
GEARY SFL	3.25	1.00	0.00	0.67	F	97
MCPHERSON SFL	2.70	0.25	0.25	1.20	P	46
DOUGLAS COUNTY-LONESTAR LAKE	2.50	2.00	0.00	0.80	F	195
ATCHISON COUNTY LAKE	2.50	0.75	0.25	1.33	P	60
BOURBON CO. CEDAR CREEK LAKE	2.50	1.25	0.75	1.06	G	220
RICHMOND CITY LAKE	2.25	1.25	0.00	0.49	F	21
BOURBON SFL	2.00	0.50	0.25	0.91	G	103
CHANUTE CITY LAKE	2.00	1.00	0.00	0.70	F	80
THAYER CITY LAKE	1.80	0.50	0.00	0.50	F	30

LARGEMOUTH BASS

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>12")	Preferred Rating (>15")	Lunker Rating (>20")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	Acres of Water
RESERVOIRS						
LA CYGNE	57.70	40.00	6.92	9.01	E	2600
TORONTO	39.00	26.00	3.00	5.95	F	2800
FALL RIVER	26.00	16.00	1.00	5.29	F	2500
CEDAR BLUFF	17.65	13.47	0.57	5.69	F	4000
MELVERN	15.00	6.00	0.80	4.60	G	7000
PERRY	13.61	5.91	0.80	6.76	G	11631
BIG HILL	12.93	6.47	0.86	5.13	E	1240
SEBELIUS	12.79	6.98	0.00	2.19	F	977
HILLSDALE	9.80	4.60	0.40	4.60	G	4580
EL DORADO	4.70	0.60	0.00	2.30	F	8000
MILFORD	4.20	1.70	0.13	4.95	F	16020
LAKES						
GRIDLEY CITY LAKE	202.00	41.00	2.70	5.10	F	33
MELVERN RIVER POND	178.00	79.00	0.00	3.00	E	100
GARNETT CITY LAKE-NORTH	161.00	44.00	0.00	2.90	G	55
PRATT COUNTY LAKE	153.33	73.33	0.00	4.85	E	51
EMPORIA-JONES PARK NORTH	138.00	0.00	0.00	1.41	F	1
POTTAWATOMIE SFL#1	137.00	5.30	0.00	2.80	G	24
SEVERY CITY LAKE	126.00	21.00	0.00	4.85	G	5
EUREKA CITY LAKE	117.00	28.00	3.00	6.61	E	135
PLEASANTON WEST LAKE	115.80	71.05	2.60	5.05	E	20
LYON SFL	111.00	26.00	1.00	5.95	E	135
EMPORIA-ALEXANDER POND	108.00	0.00	0.00	1.02	F	2
GARNETT CITY LAKE-SOUTH	106.00	65.00	0.00	4.00	G	25
BUTLER SFL	95.30	50.40	0.00	4.90	G	124
SHERIDAN SFL	95.00	16.00	0.00	3.30	G	67
EMPORIA-PETER PAN PARK	94.00	24.00	0.00	3.64	G	3
SCOTT STATE LAKE	93.51	14.29	0.00	3.79	E	115
SEDAN CITY LAKE-OLD	93.00	37.00	7.00	5.62	E	55
MEADE STATE LAKE	92.31	17.95	1.28	5.17	E	80
MIAMI SFL	90.50	16.90	1.40	6.60	F	101
OVERLAND PARK-REGENCY LAKE	88.60	45.70	0.00	3.80	G	3
NEW STRAWN CITY LAKE	88.00	13.00	2.50	6.00	F	3
SEDAN CITY LAKE-NEW	83.00	12.00	0.00	3.97	G	70
MADISON CITY LAKE	82.00	45.00	5.00	5.95	E	114
BROWN SFL	79.35	16.30	1.10	5.50	G	62
BONNER SPRINGS-NORTH PARK LK	79.20	0.00	0.00	1.13	F	3
JOHNSON CO. SHAWNEE MISSION LK	79.00	13.00	0.00	3.70	G	121
BRONSON CITY LAKE	78.60	16.67	0.00	2.25	G	10
MOLINE NEW CITY LAKE	74.00	11.00	0.00	3.53	G	185
DOUGLAS COUNTY-LONESTAR LAKE	73.40	37.40	2.20	5.40	E	195
OVERLAND PARK-SOUTH LAKE	69.80	18.60	0.00	4.80	G	5
HOWARD-POLK DANIELS LAKE	69.00	34.00	1.00	2.20	G	69
GRAHAM COUNTY-ANTELOPE LAKE	63.00	9.00	0.00	2.30	F	80
EMPORIA-JONES PARK EAST POND	63.00	13.00	0.00	3.75	G	1
ATCHISON SFL	61.67	4.17	0.00	2.00	G	66
EDGERTON CITY LAKE	59.50	37.80	13.50	6.20	G	3
CHERRYVALE CITY LAKE - TANKO	57.95	22.76	0.41	4.41	G	11
OVERBROOK CITY LAKE	57.00	11.00	0.00	2.20	F	8
LEBO CITY LAKE	57.00	37.00	0.00	4.00	E	70
PRAIRIE CENTER POND	56.80	8.10	0.00	3.00	F	1
JOHNSON CO.-HERITAGE PARK LK	55.40	41.20	1.80	5.50	G	20
COWLEY SFL	50.50	9.90	0.00	2.90	G	84
GARDNER CITY LAKE	49.60	15.33	2.20	4.60	G	100
LOUISBURG CITY LAKE	49.20	20.10	2.90	4.80	G	23
YATES CENTER CITY LAKE-NEW	49.00	17.00	0.00	2.80	G	205
OLATHE-CEDAR LAKE	48.50	28.90	1.00	5.60	G	56
WYANDOTTE CO. BONNER POND	43.60	2.80	0.00	2.30	F	7
YATES CENTER-SOUTH OWL LAKE	43.00	25.00	0.00	3.10	F	150
THAYER CITY LAKE (NEW)	42.86	6.89	0.51	3.80	G	45
MOUND CITY LAKE	42.80	19.05	0.00	4.27	G	148
CLARK SFL	41.71	29.38	5.69	7.26	E	300
LEWIS-YOUNG PARK LAKE	40.10	16.70	6.00	4.70	G	2
THAYER CITY LAKE	39.50	15.30	0.00	3.10	G	30
NEBO SFL	39.00	14.00	3.00	6.55	G	32
HOLTON - BANNER CREEK LAKE	38.50	20.50	0.00	2.30	G	535
BALDWIN - SPRING CREEK LAKE	38.50	18.00	0.00	4.40	G	7
LAKE HAMMOND YMCA TOPEKA	38.50	1.90	0.00	3.40	F	15
WILSON SFL	36.38	12.47	0.62	5.13	G	110
SHAWNEE COUNTY-LAKE SHAWNEE	35.90	5.50	0.60	4.80	G	416
BOURBON CO LK (HIATVILL)	35.35	8.08	0.00	3.70	G	106
MCPHERSON SFL	35.00	23.00	0.00	5.18	G	46
SABETHA - PONY CREEK LAKE	34.37	28.75	1.87	4.36	G	171
POTTAWATOMIE CO. LAKE	34.00	7.50	1.30	4.30	G	49

LARGEMOUTH BASS

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>12")	Preferred Rating (>15")	Lunker Rating (>20")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	Acres of Water
LAKES CONTINUED						
OSAGE SFL	34.00	12.00	1.10	4.50	G	140
BLUE MOUND CITY LAKE	33.30	3.03	0.00	3.90	G	19
GREAT BEND-VETS PARK LAKE	30.77	5.13	0.00	2.58	G	13
COLDWATER LAKE	30.61	2.04	0.00	1.54	G	250
PLEASANTON EAST LAKE	30.60	6.50	0.00	5.60	G	127
NEOSHO SFL	29.60	13.20	0.00	4.90	G	92
ALTAMONT CITY LAKE-EAST	29.56	15.09	2.52	6.94	E	21
BOURBON SFL	29.20	2.92	0.00	2.50	G	103
OLATHE-LAKE OLATHE	29.20	14.30	1.30	6.60	G	172
LEAVENWORTH SFL	29.00	10.60	0.00	4.10	G	160
GEARY SFL	27.00	3.50	0.50	4.18	G	97
CHASE SFL	27.00	5.00	0.00	4.30	G	109
OTTAWA SFL	26.62	10.07	2.16	6.58	G	110
BONE CREEK LAKE	26.50	6.80	0.00	3.30	G	540
ATCHISON COUNTY LAKE	26.32	10.53	1.05	6.81	F	60
EMPORIA-JONES PARK WEST POND	24.00	0.00	0.00	1.15	F	1
COUNCIL GROVE CITY LAKE	22.10	10.00	0.00	2.40	G	434
MOLINE OLD CITY LAKE	22.00	2.00	0.00	2.20	F	68
GOODMAN SFL	21.82	6.36	0.91	5.45	G	40
CHANUTE CITY LAKE	21.70	10.60	0.00	4.60	G	80
POTTAWATOMIE SFL#2	19.30	10.70	0.00	2.70	G	75
WOODSON SFL	19.00	6.20	0.00	2.80	F	180
ATCHISON CITY LAKE #9	18.00	4.00	0.00	1.80	F	18
BARBER SFL-LOWER	16.09	0.00	0.00	1.40	G	51
BLACK KETTLE SFL	16.00	10.00	0.00	3.98	F	12
ATCHISON CITY LAKE #4	15.63	1.56	0.00	4.01	F	4
MIDDLE CREEK SFL	15.20	4.00	0.00	2.90	F	280
OSAWATOMIE CITY LAKE	15.10	1.40	1.40	6.20	F	21
WYANDOTTE COUNTY LAKE	14.10	3.10	0.00	3.10	F	407
BELLEVILLE-ROCKY POND	13.60	4.60	0.00	4.55	F	27
PAOLA CITY LAKE	13.30	6.70	0.60	4.90	F	220
KINGMAN SFL	13.30	8.60	0.00	3.57	F	144
WINFIELD CITY LAKE	12.00	7.00	0.00	3.20	F	1200
CARBONDALE CITY LAKE - EAST	12.00	1.00	0.00	2.65	P	265
CENTRALIA CITY LAKE	12.00	8.00	1.00	4.80	F	400
CRAWFORD SFL	11.40	7.90	0.30	4.70	P	150
OSAGE CITY LAKE	11.00	6.00	0.00	3.70	G	50
HIAWATHA CITY LAKE	9.62	3.85	0.00	1.92	F	7

STRIPER

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>20")	Preferred Rating (>30")	Lunker Rating (>35")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	Acres of Water
RESERVOIRS						
WILSON	9.22	0.67	0.33	23.52	G	9040
GLEN ELDER	2.22	0.00	0.00	9.12	P	9500

SMALLMOUTH BASS

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>11")	Preferred Rating (>14")	Lunker Rating (>17")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	Acres of Water
RESERVOIRS						
COFFEE COUNTY LAKE	29.80	20.90	3.90	4.30	E	5000
GLEN ELDER	20.27	6.91	0.92	3.79	G	9500
MELVERN	12.30	3.90	0.00	2.70	G	7000
BIG HILL	9.05	3.88	0.43	3.36	G	1240
EL DORADO	7.50	3.10	0.00	2.20	F	8000
WILSON	7.34	2.70	0.00	2.07	G	9040
MILFORD	3.20	1.00	0.18	2.81	G	16020
LAKES						
WYANDOTTE COUNTY LAKE	14.70	1.70	0.00	2.40	F	407
JEFFREY EC-MAKE UP LAKE	14.40	3.60	1.20	3.30	G	125
BOURBON CO LK (HIATVILL)	3.00	0.00	0.00	1.11	F	106
LEBO CITY LAKE	1.50	1.50	1.50	2.50	P	70

SPOTTED BASS

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>11")	Preferred Rating (>14")	Lunker Rating (>17")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	Acres of Water
RESERVOIRS						
CEDAR BLUFF	28.75	2.05	0.00	1.21	F	4000
MELVERN	16.00	5.40	0.00	1.80	F	7000
SEBELIUS	10.47	6.40	0.00	1.89	F	1500
EL DORADO	3.30	1.50	0.00	1.80	F	8000
TORONTO	2.00	2.00	0.00	1.25	P	2800
LAKES						
CHASE SFL	34.00	10.00	0.00	1.60	G	109
WILSON SFL	30.98	12.68	0.21	3.54	G	110
HOWARD-POLK DANIELS LAKE	13.00	9.00	0.00	2.20	P	69
BOURBON SFL	10.20	0.00	0.00	1.39	G	103
COUNCIL GROVE CITY LAKE	7.90	0.71	0.00	1.30	F	434
CHANUTE CITY LAKE	2.80	0.60	0.00	1.53	P	80
EUREKA CITY LAKE	2.00	0.00	0.00	0.78	P	135
CRAWFORD SFL	1.70	0.00	0.00	1.20	P	150

SAUGER

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>11")	Preferred Rating (>14")	Lunker Rating (>17")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	Acres of Water
RESERVOIRS						
CLINTON	8.80	7.30	1.80	2.10	F	7000
MELVERN	4.10	3.40	0.60	1.80	E	7000
PERRY	2.50	2.50	1.50	3.75	F	11631
LAKES						
HOLTON - BANNER CREEK LAKE	23.50	23.50	15.50	2.74	G	535

SAUGEYE

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>14")	Preferred Rating (>18")	Lunker Rating (>22")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	Acres of Water
RESERVOIRS						
SEBELIUS	29.71	7.75	2.53	6.2	G	1500
COUNCIL GROVE	29.30	19.00	4.30	9.13	E	3280
KANOPOLIS	8.75	2.75	0.50	4.65	G	3550
LAKES						
OLATHE-LAKE OLATHE	16.50	0.50	0.00	2	F	172
GRAHAM COUNTY-ANTELOPE LAKE	15.00	3.00	0.00	3.59	F	80
OTTAWA SFL	14.50	0.00	0.00	1.48	F	138
CHASE SFL	12.00	1.00	0.00	2.3	G	109
EUREKA CITY LAKE	12.00	4.00	2.00	4.63	G	135
SHERIDAN SFL	12.00	3.00	0.00	2.36	F	67
MARION COUNTY LAKE	10.00	4.00	1.00	3.9	G	153
CENTRAILIA CITY LAKE	9.50	3.00	0.50	3.00	F	400
GARDNER CITY LAKE	8.30	2.30	0.80	5.1	G	100
PAOLA CITY LAKE	7.00	0.50	0.00	1.7	F	220
WELLINGTON CITY LAKE	7.00	0.00	0.00	1.71	G	700
WASHINGTON SFL	6.00	1.00	0.00	3.35	F	65
OLATHE-CEDAR LAKE	5.00	0.00	0.00	2	P	56
PARSONS CITY LAKE	5.00	1.88	0.88	8.98	F	980
SEDGWICK COUNTY-LAKE AFTON	4.00	3.00	0.00	3.48	G	240
GEARY SFL	3.00	0.00	0.00	1.21	F	97

WALLEYE

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>15")	Preferred Rating (>20")	Lunker Rating (>25")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	Acres of Water
RESERVOIRS						
CHENEY	12.00	9.50	1.10	9.42	G	9550
EL DORADO	12.00	1.80	0.20	5.30	G	8000
CEDAR BLUFF	8.00	0.50	0.25	7.20	F	4000
WILSON	7.56	0.00	0.00	2.29	G	9040
HILLSDALE	7.50	2.80	1.30	8.40	G	4580
KIRWIN	5.91	1.03	0.50	7.84	F	2059
MARION	5.80	0.50	0.00	3.90	G	6160
MILFORD	5.00	0.67	0.00	4.31	F	16020
WEBSTER	4.92	0.78	0.25	3.81	F	1596
LOVEWELL	4.83	1.00	0.00	3.89	F	2986
MELVERN	3.00	0.50	0.00	4.40	G	7000
COFFEE COUNTY LAKE	2.80	0.00	0.00	2.50	G	5000
GLEN ELDER	1.33	0.22	0.00	4.42	F	9500
LAKES						
HOLTON - BANNER CREEK LAKE	18.50	6.50	1.00	7.50	G	535
LEAVENWORTH SFL	7.00	1.50	1.00	6.30	F	160
BARBER SFL-LOWER	7.00	0.00	0.00	1.40	G	51
SCOTT STATE LAKE	5.00	1.00	0.50	7.56	E	115
COUNCIL GROVE CITY LAKE	5.00	1.00	0.00	3.90	F	434
CARBONDALE CITY LAKE - EAST	4.50	2.00	0.50	6.61	F	265
SHAWNEE COUNTY-LAKE SHAWNEE	4.00	0.00	0.00	2.20	P	416
PRATT COUNTY LAKE	4.00	0.00	0.00	1.38	G	51
ATCHISON SFL	4.00	2.00	0.00	5.73	F	66
YATES CENTER CITY LAKE-NEW	3.50	0.50	0.00	2.70	P	205
SHAWNEE SFL	3.00	3.00	1.00	6.20	G	135
JEFFREY EC-MAKE UP LAKE	3.00	2.00	0.00	4.50	F	125
SABETHA - PONY CREEK LAKE	3.00	1.00	0.00	4.41	F	171
BROWN SFL	3.00	1.00	0.00	3.97	F	62
WYANDOTTE COUNTY LAKE	2.50	0.00	0.00	1.10	F	407
BONE CREEK LAKE	2.50	2.50	1.00	6.30	F	540
MOUND CITY LAKE	1.00	1.00	0.00	4.70	F	148
BOURBON SFL	1.00	1.00	0.00	4.40	F	103
BOURBON CO LK (HIATVILL)	1.00	1.00	0.00	4.40	F	106
HERINGTON CITY LAKE-NEW	1.00	0.00	0.00	2.68	F	555

WHITE BASS

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>9")	Preferred Rating (>12")	Lunker Rating (>15")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	Acres of Water
RESERVOIRS						
TORONTO	70.00	38.00	1.25	2.54	E	2800
CEDAR BLUFF	55.00	33.50	4.75	1.49	G	4000
FALL RIVER	46.75	18.00	0.75	1.79	G	2500
GLEN ELDER	38.44	24.78	7.22	3.16	E	9500
KANOPOLIS	37.25	30.00	3.50	2.71	E	3550
MARION	28.20	20.20	0.50	2.30	G	6160
COFFEE COUNTY LAKE	19.00	16.00	2.00	1.70	E	5000
LACYGNE	18.50	10.30	1.00	1.50	G	2600
PERRY	15.25	5.25	0.00	1.54	F	11631
LOVEWELL	14.33	8.83	1.67	2.05	G	2986
EL DORADO	10.70	6.20	0.00	1.50	G	8000
HILLSDALE	10.30	8.30	0.30	2.50	G	4580
MELVERN	8.40	7.10	0.10	1.70	G	7000
COUNCIL GROVE	7.70	6.00	0.00	1.40	F	3280
MILFORD	7.00	4.50	0.17	1.50	F	16020
KIRWIN	5.20	3.66	0.07	1.56	F	2059
CLINTON	5.00	2.00	0.00	0.80	P	7000
WILSON	4.44	3.78	0.44	1.88	F	9040
WEBSTER	4.19	3.32	1.39	2.13	F	1596
LAKES						
JEFFREY EC-AUX. MAKEUP LAKE	45.50	9.50	0.50	1.50	F	460
CHASE SFL	38.00	24.00	5.00	1.70	G	109
SEDGWICK COUNTY-LAKE AFTON	18.00	16.00	1.00	1.66	G	240
GEARY SFL	16.00	6.00	0.00	1.23	G	97
PAOLA CITY LAKE	7.50	3.00	0.00	0.90	F	220
JEFFREY EC-MAKE UP LAKE	7.00	7.00	0.00	1.40	G	125
HERINGTON CITY LAKE-NEW	7.00	5.00	0.00	0.82	F	555
GARDNER CITY LAKE	5.00	5.00	1.50	2.40	G	100
COUNCIL GROVE CITY LAKE	4.00	4.00	0.00	1.30	G	434
WYANDOTTE COUNTY LAKE	3.00	1.00	1.00	2.20	G	407
HERINGTON CITY LAKE-OLD	3.00	0.00	0.00	0.83	F	367
HARVEY COUNTY LAKE-EAST	3.00	2.00	0.00	1.44	G	240

WIPER

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>12")	Preferred Rating (>15")	Lunker Rating (>20")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	Acres of Water
RESERVOIRS						
SEBELIUS	43.82	30.15	7.28	5.09	E	977
CLINTON	34.30	15.80	0.00	3.30	G	7000
MARION	28.70	26.00	2.00	4.40	G	6160
EL DORADO	18.30	14.50	0.30	4.60	G	8000
KIRWIN	15.43	13.43	3.31	5.83	G	2059
CEDAR BLUFF	14.50	13.75	4.25	9.48	G	4000
MILFORD	14.33	10.33	2.17	7.86	G	16020
GLEN ELDER	10.67	8.33	0.00	2.25	F	9500
WEBSTER	10.67	8.18	2.62	4.48	G	1596
COFFEE COUNTY LAKE	10.00	10.00	9.00	5.30	E	5000
CHENEY	10.00	8.50	4.60	14.15	G	9550
LACYGNE	7.75	2.00	1.00	4.60	G	2600
LOVEWELL	7.33	5.33	2.33	5.74	G	2986
KANOPOLIS	5.25	2.25	0.25	3.71	F	3550
POMONA	1.25	1.25	0.50	4.50	F	4000
LAKES						
COLDWATER LAKE	102.00	102.00	40.00	3.16	F	250
NEW STRAWN CITY LAKE	50.00	50.00	0.00	4.00	E	3
JEFFREY EC-MAKE UP LAKE	35.00	34.00	11.00	4.00	E	125
SABETHA - PONY CREEK LAKE	28.00	28.00	8.00	10.14	G	171
PAOLA CITY LAKE	26.00	1.50	0.50	4.80	G	220
JOHNSON CO. SHAWNEE MISSION LK	25.00	16.50	2.00	9.40	G	121
PRATT COUNTY LAKE	12.00	8.00	5.00	5.02	G	51
MARION COUNTY LAKE	9.00	9.00	3.00	4.09	F	153
MIDDLE CREEK SFL	9.00	3.50	0.50	4.00	G	280
MELVERN RIVER POND	9.00	3.00	3.00	4.30	G	100
OSAGE SFL	7.00	7.00	1.00	2.60	F	140
GRIDLEY CITY LAKE	7.00	1.00	0.00	1.60	P	33
HERINGTON CITY LAKE-NEW	5.00	0.00	0.00	1.31	F	555
OLATHE-LAKE OLATHE	5.00	5.00	3.50	10.80	G	172
SHAWNEE COUNTY-LAKE SHAWNEE	4.00	3.70	1.00	3.80	P	416
SHERIDAN SFL	3.00	3.00	1.00	3.59	F	67
LEAVENWORTH SFL	3.00	3.00	0.00	3.50	P	160
LEBO CITY LAKE	3.00	3.00	3.00	6.60	E	70
CARBONDALE CITY LAKE - EAST	2.00	2.00	1.50	4.74	F	265
GARNETT CITY LAKE-NORTH	2.00	2.00	0.00	1.20	G	55
OVERBROOK CITY LAKE	1.50	1.50	0.00	1.30	G	8
GARNETT CITY LAKE-SOUTH	1.50	1.50	0.00	4.40	G	25
WOODSON SFL	1.30	1.30	0.00	1.40	G	180
WELLINGTON CITY LAKE	1.00	1.00	0.00	2.33	G	700
PLEASANTON EAST LAKE	1.00	0.00	0.00	1.30	F	127
DOUGLAS COUNTY-LONESTAR LAKE	0.50	0.50	0.00	1.30	P	195

NORTHERN PIKE

IMPOUNDMENT	Density Rating (>21")	Preferred Rating (>28")	Lunker Rating (>34")	Biggest Fish (lbs.)	Bio Rating	Acres of Water
LAKES						
KINGMAN STATE FISHING LAKE	8.00	5.00	3.00	9.01	E	144

Morel Treasure

text and photos by Mike Blair
associate editor/photographer, Pratt

Tasty treats magically pop up when conditions are right, and treasure hunters will carefully scour their secret spots each spring.

Morels are identified by their distinct pitted, conical heads and hollow stems. They are best cut soon after emergence, and avid hunters will begin looking in late March.

It was the mother lode of morels. I'd heard of such findings, but for all my years in the Kansas outdoors, it was the first time I'd hit the perfect conditions for buckets full of these tasty, wild mushrooms. It wasn't all that surprising, given the extreme wet spring. Barber County, not known for exceptional spring moisture, had received eight inches of rainfall during the week before prime mushroom season. Where I usually found only a handful of morels in the sandy soil, hundreds now grew near old cottonwood stumps.

They had just emerged and were rubbery and fresh with the nutty aroma of new fungi. Better, insects and sowbugs had yet to find and infest the fruiting bodies. Armed with a pocketknife and a mesh bag, I worked my way down the creek, enjoying a perfect spring afternoon. Before sundown, I had a year's supply of these highly-sought edibles. It was an outing I'd never forget.

April in Kansas is a great time for outdoors pursuits – especially turkey hunting and crappie fishing. But many would agree that morel hunting is also an important rite of early spring. Morels usually emerge when soil temperatures reach 50 to 60 degrees, but that isn't easy to measure. Instead, many veteran hunters wait for their favorite visible signals, such as blooming redbuds, or "when hedge leaves are the size of squirrels' ears." Morels in Kansas have been reported from late March through mid-May.

Ground fungi like morels depend on soil moisture to produce the edible fruiting heads. They can grow in soils slightly cooler than those needed for aggressive herbaceous growth, and thus they are usually found just before spring's green explosion. It's a good thing, too, because they are hard enough to find in relatively open sight. Colored in earthen tones of tan, yellow, and gray depending on species, morels can be hard to see in the ground duff of an infant growing season.

True morels are distinctive among mushrooms and considered part of the "foolproof four" fungi that are delicious and safe to eat. Morels are unique in appearance with deeply-pitted, conical-shaped heads and hollow stems. In combination, these two characteristics make them unmistakable.

Scientifically, morels are in a fungal group known as ascocarps. They are closely related to simpler cup fungi. Morels are recognized by their trademark fruiting heads, normally 3 to 5 inches tall. These are the edible portions of the fungus but are

Track Kansas and other midwestern morel sightings by visiting http://thegreatmorel.com/sightings.html. Here, morel hunters post their findings by date, helping pinpoint best hunting times for your location. Be sure to check the past several years as well.

only brief reproductive structures of a much larger organism.

The morel fungus is actually a large network of filaments growing beneath the soil surface. This fungus begins when a spore only 1/2,500 of an inch long lands on bare, moist soil and begins to grow. It absorbs water, swells, and sends a fungal peg into the soil. This develops into a long filament known as a hypha. Beneath forest litter, the hyphae branch and develop into a dense mat of mycelium. The mat feeds on decaying vegetable matter and grows throughout warm weather. During winter months it is dormant.

Rising soil temperature reactivates the mycelium in spring. When conditions are just right, one or more fruiting caps emerge to reseed the area with spores. The fruiting caps seem to appear at full size overnight, but growth may continue for a week or more unless a hot dry wind stops the process. Insects and arthropods quickly invade the hollow fungal stems, and the caps usually dry and break from the top down. Many mushroom hunters will take morels that are still about 50 percent firm, even though the edible quality is reduced.

Spores produced from fruiting caps are scattered over an area to start new hyphal mats and spread the species. Depending on soil conditions and success of spore growth, an area may have more or fewer morels the following year.

If you're lucky enough to find the mother lode of morels, they can be frozen. Clean and slice them, dredge them in flour and freeze on cookie sheets. They can then be transferred to ziplocks for storage.

Understanding this growth process clears up a debate among morel hunters about proper harvest technique. Some believe the morel should be cut cleanly above ground to avoid "rooting out" the base, as happens when the fruiting cap is simply pinched out of the ground. According to this theory, taking the "root" will prevent morel growth the following year. Actually, each cap emerges from a large underground hyphal mat that continues to live, so the larger organism is not affected if the morel is pulled.

Morels can be prepared in a variety of ways, but the most popular is to coat pieces with flour then saute in butter or olive oil.

Morels are prized worldwide for their delicious, earthy taste. They command as much as $200 per pound dried. This, along with a short fruiting season and tendency to appear sporadically, makes good morel hunting spots closely-guarded secrets. Generally, finding morels is a matter of putting in serious legwork at the right time of year, especially along moist drainages with the right soil conditions. Fortunately, they can be found throughout Kansas, as well as most of North America.

Morels grow near streams and sloughs, in forest stands, on hilltops, and in moist pastures. They often congregate around dead logs

or cut tree stumps and seem to prefer places where a site disturbance occurred the previous year. They often grow abundantly following a forest fire, especially two or three years later. Some commercial pickers and morel buyers in North America follow forest fires to gather these mushrooms.

No scientific evidence links morels and certain tree species, but many morel hunters concentrate their searches around ash trees, dead and dying elm trees, or old apple trees. Thickets often provide extra cover and moisture, and I've found morels growing in dense sumac or poison-ivy stands just before the woody plants green up.

Morels may grow singly, but they are often found in groups. Once a morel is found, a careful search may turn up more. Sometimes, small morels will hide under leaves, barely showing themselves above the ground line. At other times, they grow in obvious clusters that may be seen from some distance.

The morel hunter can travel light, needing only a sharp pocketknife and a mesh sack or cloth bag to allow picked morels to breathe. Plastic bags hasten the deterioration of moist, delicate fungi, especially on warm spring days. Comfortable clothes and hiking boots are essential, as is a good tick repellent. Normally, hungry ticks are out in force by morel season.

Cutting morel stems is the best practice for cleanliness, as well as field verification of "safe" morels. Pinched morels often have a muddy, sandy residue on their stem bases that can lend a gritty texture to the finished meal.

Prior to eating, morels should be cleaned by washing and soaking them in salt water for a short time. This helps remove dirt and insects that may be present in the pitted caps. Slice each morel into lengthwise pieces, usually about two or three pieces per morel.

Usually, harvested morels are eaten immediately. However, in those years when a rare hunt yields a surplus of these woodland treasures, they may be preserved for later use. Morels can be dried in a dehydrator, but many prefer to freeze them. Take the sliced pieces as mentioned above and drain them on paper towels. Dredge the pieces in seasoned flour and lay them singly on waxed paper on a cookie sheet before freezing. The individual frozen pieces can then be packed into a freezer bag and used as needed throughout the year.

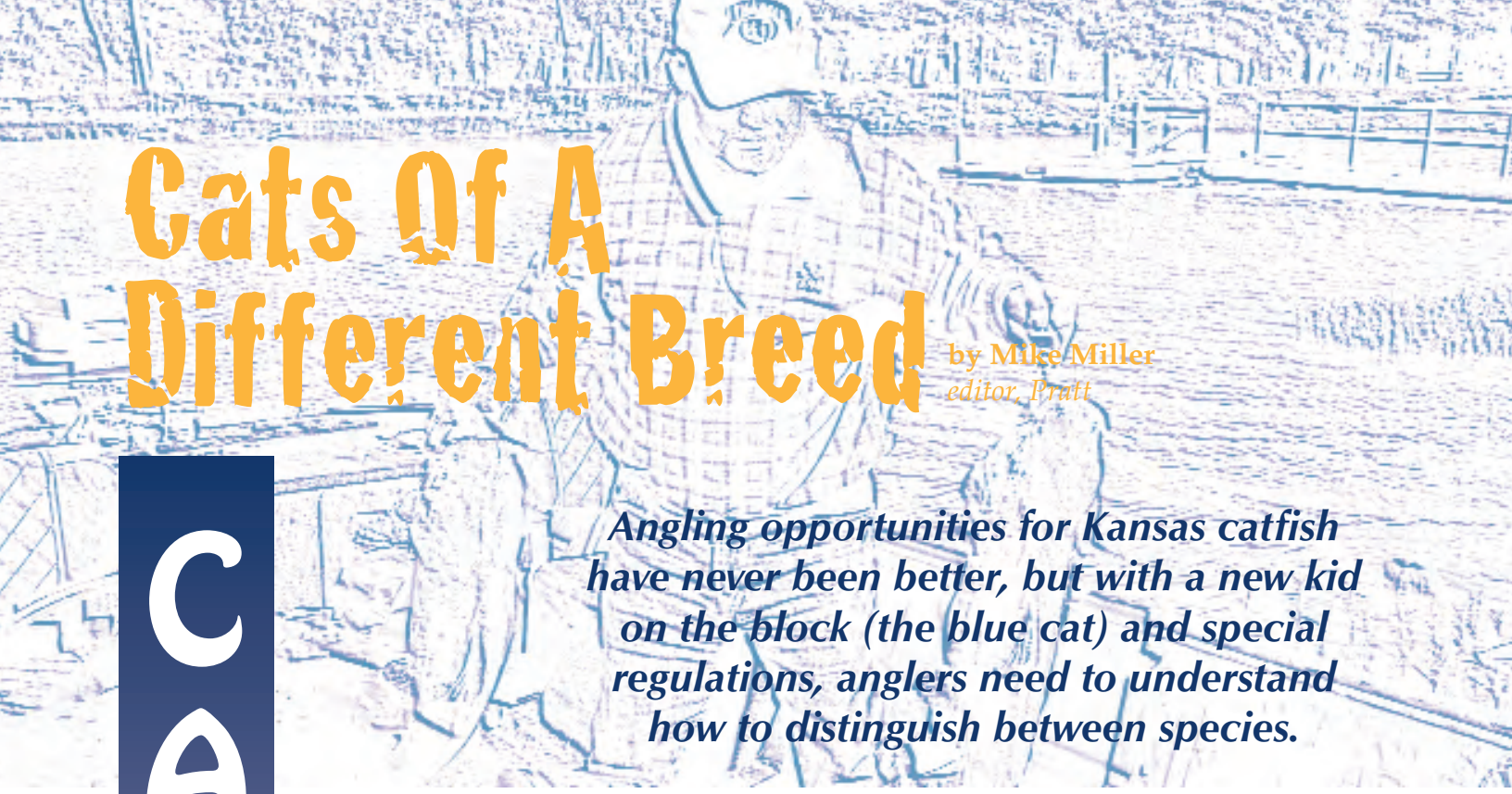
Morels can be baked, stuffed, or used in various pasta recipes. However, frying or sauteing are standard morel cooking routines. Morel pieces are usually dipped in egg and then flour or cracker crumbs and fried in butter or olive oil. They may be scrambled with eggs or simply dipped in flour and deep fat fried. Pre-frozen pieces can be cooked while frozen.

Morel hunting is a great way to visit the spring woods while obtaining one of Kansas' most highly sought wild edibles. Morels are often plentiful on public lands such as state parks and wildlife areas, and they can be a pleasant surprise while hunting turkeys or hiking springtime trails. When hunting private land, be sure to obtain permission. Keep your eyes sharp on April outings and learn for yourself the excitement surrounding morel mushrooms.

DANGER: Many Kansans eat the false morel (*Gyromitra esculenta*) known locally as "Beefsteak" mushrooms. These large, red mushrooms are bigger than true morels and are distinguished by having solid, meaty stems, rather than the hollow stems of true morels. They are usually found earlier in spring and can be quite abundant.

I have eaten these admittedly delicious mushrooms without problems, but since learning they are considered poisonous, I now stay away from them. Uncooked or undercooked, they can cause death. Even when cooked properly, the literature cites common cases of diarrhea, severe headaches, vomiting, nausea, and extreme dizziness when ingested.

Stay away from false morels. True morels often occur in the same locations a week or so later without the possible health consequences. Regardless of your past successful experience with these mushrooms, they are dangerous. Don't take a chance.



Cats Of A Different Breed

by Mike Miller
editor, Pratt

CATFISH

Angling opportunities for Kansas catfish have never been better, but with a new kid on the block (the blue cat) and special regulations, anglers need to understand how to distinguish between species.

Catfish are our bread and butter fish, native to all of our rivers and stocked into our lakes by the millions. Many a young Kansan has been hooked on angling when a catfish took their bait! Catfish are abundant, they get big, are good to eat, fight hard, and will bite on a wide variety of baits. In fact, the catfish's eating habits and the fact that the worse a bait smells, the better it works, might tarnish its image. But even with that minor black eye, catfish are still one of our most popular sport fish.

You might be surprised to learn that there are 12 species of catfish found in Kansas. Eleven are native, six are considered game fish and six are so small and secretive that few Kansas anglers have ever seen them. The small catfish are commonly known as madtoms. They are native to our streams and rivers, and most rarely grow longer than 5 inches.

Bullheads are considered panfish in our fishing regulations, which means there is no creel limit on them. The black and yellow bullheads are native. The brown bullhead was inadvertently introduced in the 1950s and has never been documented outside of a few counties in southeast Kansas.

It is the channel catfish that appeals most to anglers. Healthy, self-sustaining populations inhabit most streams, rivers and reservoirs, and Kansas state hatcheries raise literally millions of channel cats each year to stock into state and community fishing lakes. Channel catfish have smooth skin; barbels, or whiskers, adorn their upper and lower jaws; and the tail is deeply forked. Smaller fish may have spots. Channel cats easily reach weights of 2 to 3 pounds, and the state record weighed 36. The channel cat's whiskers are sensory — touch, as well as taste. And catfish have a keen sense of smell, so they can find food and thrive in muddy water. While channel catfish eat a variety of foods, they are best known as scavengers, and anglers concoct all sorts of nasty-smelling baits to attract them. They are fine table fare.

Flathead catfish provide true trophy angling opportunities in Kansas. Flatheads are native to our larger streams and rivers and have adapted well to large reservoirs. The Kansas state record flathead weighed 123 pounds. It was caught in 1998 in Elk City Reservoir, and it is also listed as a world record. Flatheads are identified by their namesake flat, broad head, and their lower jaw extends beyond the top jaw. A flathead's tail is squared rather than forked. Color can vary from dark brown to mottled

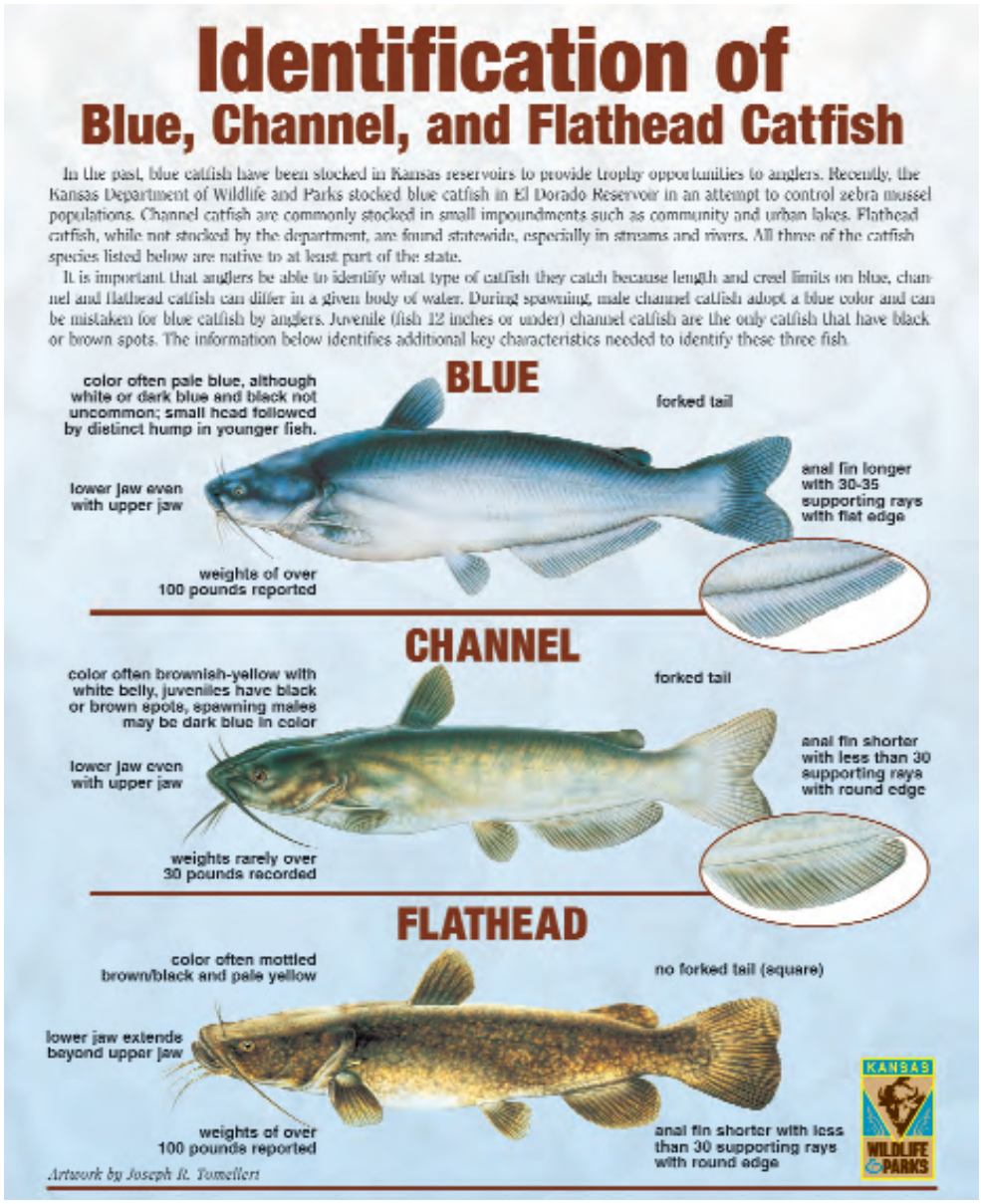
brown to nearly yellow. The flathead is not a scavenger and is usually caught with live bait.

The last sport fish with whiskers is the blue cat. Blue cats are native to the Kansas and Missouri rivers but aren't nearly as common as channel and flathead cats. Blue cats get big. The state record weighed 94 pounds, but there are historical records of blue cats taken from the Missouri River that weighed more than 100 pounds. Blue catfish are named for a common coloration – light blue to nearly white. They feed on fish, crayfish and mollusks but are adept scavengers. Most anglers catch them using dead, cut or stink bait. Their ability to feed on mollusks is one reason Kansas anglers need to learn more about them. Blue catfish have been stocked in several Kansas reservoirs to not only provide an additional angling opportunity, but also to serve as a predator on less desirable fish such as white perch and to eat zebra mussels. It is unknown what impact blue catfish will have on zebra mussels, but they could be one small piece of the puzzle to control invasive species. In the meantime, they will grow big and thrill Kansas anglers. However, to ensure that blue cats are plentiful and grow large enough to be effective predators, biologists have established more restrictive length limits on blue cats, so anglers need to learn how to distinguish them.

At Wilson, Cheney, and El Dorado reservoirs, there is a 35-inch minimum length limit on blue catfish. At Wilson, the daily creel limit is five; at Cheney and El Dorado, the daily creel is 10. In lakes with both blue and channel cats, the daily creel is aggregate, meaning that at El Dorado, for example, an angler may keep 10 channel cats or 10 blue cats, or a combination of the two species that totals no more than 10.

At a glance, channel cats and blue cats look similar. Both have forked tails and both can have a dark to light gray coloration. The head of smaller blue cats may appear small, and there may be a noticeable hump between it and the dorsal fin. The distinguishing characteristic is the anal fin, which has 30-35 supporting rays and a flat edge.

Channel cats are usually brownish-yellow, but adult fish may be dark brown or even dark blue. Younger fish often have spots. The anal fin is shorter than the blue's, with fewer than 30 supporting rays, and the edge is rounded.



Dance For A Daughter

by J. Mark Shoup
associate editor, Pratt

Stories of dancing prairie birds told by a father to a young daughter never fade, and the daughter fulfills a quest in the Flint Hills of Kansas.

Terry Beilman grew up on a farm in eastern Colorado, an area much like that open expanse of earth Willa Cather described, saying "Elsewhere the sky is the roof of the world; but here the earth is the floor of the sky." Perhaps this landscape — both sparse and dramatic — helped spark her imagination when her father told her stories of his youth near Garden Plain, a landscape lush by comparison and a magical contrast for a child. These stories, as well as the animals she encountered on the family farm, imbued in her a lifelong love of wildlife.

Now in her 70s, one of her most vivid memories is the story her father told of the dance of the prairie chickens — the spring mating ritual often called "booming." For a child of the shortgrass prairie where annual rainfall averaged 15 inches per year or less, this story held such fascination that to this day she recalls her father's injunction to one day witness this spectacle.

In the spring of 2007, Terry — who was battling cancer and happens to be my mother-in-law — told me about this and asked if I knew where she might be able to watch this ritual. I did, and said that I would take her. It was then that she began describing her outdoor experiences growing up where she did and how she had acquired this interest. She said that growing up on a wheat farm in the High Plains was a tough life, but for a kid who had known nothing else, it was a great place.

"It was like a fairy tale," Terry said. "We had flower and vegetable gardens, and the valley around Roggen had a lot of truck farms that were irrigated. All kinds of vegetables and melons were grown in that old dry country. There were big canals, and we would take trips up to the Platte River for Fourth of July picnics.

"I loved the wildlife around the farm," she continued. "We had deer, bobcats, lots of rabbits, burrowing owls, rattlesnakes, kestrels. We even had wild horses. When my dad worked the ground, he watched for the wildlife, but sometimes he would break up their nests. Sometimes when this happened, he would bring the little ones home, and we would feed them and put them back in the wild. We'd feed little pheasants and leave their cage open during the day."

Although pheasants were among the wildlife Terry was familiar with, prairie chickens dwelt in her imagination, sparked by her father's stories. Whenever the subject of wildlife came up, he would describe the prairie chickens and how he and his brothers would hide and watch the annual mating dance on leks near Garden Plain (where no chickens are found today). These stories were etched in her memory, and in early 2007, a PBS special on lesser and greater chickens rekindled her desire to view them.

"Dad had described them so well, and he tried to imitate their sounds, so when I saw that, I just knew I had to see it."

Roger Wells of Americus, who is the National Habitat Director for Quail Unlimited, suggested Jane Koger's ranch near Cassoday, which is a short drive from the Beilman home in Wichita. Terry was recovering from chemotherapy at the time, and a shorter ride would be easier for her.

Jane had a blind set up on an active lek, so we made arrangements to meet her at 4:30 a.m. on April 16. Terry's husband, Vern, drove, and we arrived in good time. Roger and a pleasant couple from New York City were there, as well, anxious to view the spectacle.

Jane's blind is a shed on wheels, big enough to accommodate seven, and we were comfortably situated about an hour before dawn. As the impending sunrise painted the rolling Flint Hills' eastern horizon with pinks and blues, the facing northern horizon must have been 50 miles away.

Then the first chickens could be heard. Although not yet visible in the dim light, the distinct call of the greater prairie chicken was unmistakable — a long, deep, drawn-out drone (like blowing into a soda bottle) with a sharply interspersed *caa-EEE-cack-cack*. Hearing this sound in the pre-dawn light properly quieted the group to whispers. Terry peered through a slot in the blind, squinting for a glimpse of the birds and quietly urging the sun to rise as she held her breath in anticipation. Her expression mirrored the excitement she revealed when describing her father's stories — eyes wide with wonder, smiling as if anticipating the appearance of angels in the slowly rising dawn.

It may have been a half-hour or more until the light was right, but time stood still as the air filled with an ethereal chorus. Then, as if by magic, the birds suddenly appeared, about 10 of them in full courtship display, males strutting before the females, wings splayed toward the ground, heads down, their air sacs puffing in and out as they "boomed" and stamped the ground with their feet (called "drumming").

The birds were perhaps 20 yards away but still close enough for good viewing, especially with binoculars, which Vern and Terry traded back and forth, smiling eyes riveted on the birds.

About 10 or 12 birds appeared for this performance, and they put on a good show. Each male had a territory in which he would display, attempting to attract one of the females. Whenever a bold male ventured into another's territory, a fight ensued, the birds leaping into the air while striking at one another with claws and wings. These battles did not last long, and usually the intruder would beat a hasty retreat.

The best part was that Terry got to see several females mated. When an acceptable male came near, the female would lie close to the ground while the male mounted, quickly taking advantage of this brief opportunity. Then the mated female would leave the lek, flying off in the distance perhaps to study the terrain for a suitable nesting spot.

We watched until the last lonely male left, careful not to disturb the lek. It was about 10 a.m. — about four hours in the blind — yet it seemed like a short show, spectacular as it was, like a concert or a play that one never wants to end.

But Terry had finally witnessed what she had dreamed of since she was a child — a father's fairy tale come true.

By the time we got back to the Koger ranch house, where breakfast was waiting, it was late morning, pushing noon by the time we hit the road back to Wichita. Terry must surely have been worn out, but she sat in the back seat of Vern's pickup and chatted like a young girl, asking questions about the birds, recounting details of the morning, and recalling events from her childhood and things her father had taught her. She was unexpectedly animated after such a long morning.

Finally, about 10 miles from Andover, she apologized and said she needed to lie down and rest. She lay down gently but did not sleep. Her eyes were wide open, gazing somewhere far beyond the cab of the pickup, like a child with a soft smile crossing her lips.

On Feb. 3, 2008, Terry Beilman, pictured here with her husband Vern last spring in front of the prairie chicken blind, lost her three-year battle with cancer. She was a prolific artist and poet and once wrote, describing her pain, Love . . . comes so softly, gently, muffling pain's control. / Somehow, even when we live with sorrow / We will make it to tomorrow. *I trust that Terry's tomorrow is now filled with joy and dance, perhaps even that of the prairie chicken.*

New Look For The Magazine

We'll unveil a new look in the next issue of the magazine. It won't be radically different, but we hope it provides our readers with a format that gives them the information they want in a convenient layout. The biggest change will be that the Wild Currents section will be no more. Instead, we'll devote the first dozen or so pages of the magazine to various short and current stories. We'll still cover the important stuff – you'll see familiar topics such as letters, law, wildlife, hunting, issues, parks, and fishing, and we'll introduce you to a select group of department employees who have agreed to write regular columns. These writers' work will appear in each issue, bringing you useful information about their particular field of expertise.

Some of them will be familiar. Ken Brunson, the department's wildlife diversity coordinator, will write about general wildlife natural history. Ken has written often for the magazine in his more than 30 years with KDWP, and he has a wealth of wildlife knowledge to share. Marc Murrell, who is a frequent magazine contributor, will write a column on hunting for each issue. Those of you who've followed Marc's writing know that he loves to hunt – just about anything, anywhere. Kevin Jones directs the Law Enforcement Division and he has agreed to write something about laws, regulations, and the work of his natural resource officers for each issue. Law stories are always the most popular with readers. Mike Rader, our wildlife education coordinator, will write about birds and birdwatching. Mike's somewhat of a legend among birders. Mike and couple of friends stet a record when in May of 2002 they recorded 225 species of birds in 24 hours — midnight to midnight. Wayne Doyle coordinates our Hunter Education Program and has many years of hunting and hunter education teaching experience. Wayne will write a regular column called "Hunting Heritage," which will discuss topics such as safety, ethics, and tradition. More familiar faces will include Mike Blair, who will pen a column on outdoor digital photography. Graphic designer Dustin Teasley will write about how to prepare wild game for the table. Dustin has processing deer meat down to an art form, and he is always learning new ways to fix game meat. Mark Shoup will keep readers informed about the web; how to find outdoor stuff on our website, as well as the world wide web. And Mark will also develop a column that informs readers about department employees and the jobs they do. Bob Mathews, the chief of our Information and Education Division will produce a column, "Looking Back," which will provide readers with interesting historical facts about the department, its staff, and our mission through the years.

I'm sure there will be additions as we finalize the new format, and we hope you like it. By all means, let us know what you think. Our mission is to inform, educate and entertain readers with everything Wildlife and Parks.

—Miller

Edited by Mark Shoup

CAUGHT IN A SNARE

Editor:

On Sunday, Dec. 2, I nearly lost my quail hunting companion after he became caught in a snare on the west side of Hillsdale Lake. By the time that I reached him, he was already unconscious. Fortunately, I was able to release the cable snare from around his neck, and my German shorthair pointer began breathing and appears to be back to normal.

Had I not been close to the dog, he would be gone. To the trapper's credit, the snares were marked with the owner's name and address. Although I have seen a friend's dog caught in a leg-hold trap, this is the first time I have encountered a snare in over 30 years of hunting with dogs. I sincerely hope that this note prevents another gun dog from being trapped. Please take this opportunity to warn others who hunt with dogs about the danger of these devises.

Do not misunderstand me; I do not have a problem with trapping. However, I do believe that it is a mistake to set dryland snares along edge cover where quail hunters and dogs will be hunting.

Mark Jacobs
Louisburg

Dear Mr. Jacobs:

I'm glad your dog was okay, and thank you for reporting this incident to us. We document all such reports, and consider their frequency and outcome when evaluating furharvesting regulations.

One of the reasons we've been able to support the use of traps and snares on our public wildlife areas is that, while dog captures in traps and snares do occasionally occur, it is very rare that they result in any type of permanent injury or death to the dog. This seems consistent with your experience in over 30 years of hunting, though it does sound like you had a close call.

We attempt to notify those who visit our wildlife areas that furharvesting and other activities are allowed by posting regulations in kiosks on the areas and by providing this information in our printed materials, such as the *Hunting and Furharvesting Regulations Summary* and the *Public Lands Regulations Summary*. In addition, on the Hillsdale wildlife area in the kiosks and at main access points, red and white signs are posted that read "Attention: Trapping is authorized on all areas open to hunting." Consequently, we would hope many users are aware of the possibility of encountering a trap or snare on a wildlife area during the furharvesting season.

Trappers do have a responsibility to use good judgment in how and where they make their sets. Not having seen the area you mention, I could only speculate as to why the trapper selected that location. However, I do know that most trappers recognize that harming dogs on wildlife areas could result in the loss of their ability to use certain trap types, and do make an effort to avoid hunters.

The KDWP recognizes a responsibility to both parties involved, and this is an issue we closely monitor. We don't want to see anyone's dog get hurt, and we don't want to eliminate an important furbearer management tool either. I've forwarded your comments to the appropriate public lands personnel, including the wildlife area manager at Hillsdale.

Matt Peek
furbearer biologist

TURKEYS IN TREES

Editor:

As an avid turkey hunter, I often find myself trying to gain as much knowledge of the sport as possible. I often read *Turkey and Turkey Hunting* magazine for useful and educational information regarding the sport. However, there was an article in a recent issue that caught my eye regarding shooting turkeys out of trees. The article sheds some light on the ethics of such practice and also shares information regarding such states that consider the practice illegal. But there is no mention of Kansas being a state that prohibits shooting turkeys out of trees.

I know that most hunters have an obligation to know the rules and regulations regarding hunting and fishing. But the current copy, as well as previous copies of the *Kansas Hunting and Furharvesting Regulations Summary*, does not make it entirely clear that shooting turkeys out of trees is prohibited by law. What I am saying is this information is not available or posted in the fall or spring turkey hunting rules and regulations. Instead it is posted in the illegal pursuit section of the booklet.

Like I said, it's every hunter's duty to read and understand all the regulations, but this is information that should also be posted within the turkey hunting section of the regulations. Perhaps next year's copy will have that information more readily available to turkey hunters who may otherwise neglect to read the entire handout.

I guess the problem is that if you didn't know to look in the illegal pursuit section, one might think it was okay to shoot a turkey off a tree when in fact it is illegal. Anyway, its just a suggestion. Thank you for your time and help.

Jeremiah Bass
Ottawa

Dear Mr. Bass:

Thanks for your comments on turkey hunting regulations. We will make some adjustments in future hunting regulations summaries to improve hunter awareness of turkey hunting regulations.

While we do produce separate brochures with turkey hunting information, it is sometimes difficult to make sure those brochures reach every turkey hunter. I haven't seen the *Turkey and Turkey Hunting* magazine you refer to, but I assume that no state allows shooting turkeys off the roost.

I appreciate your dedication to turkey hunting and your comments. That's the only way we can continue improving the information we provide to hunters, by applying suggestions such as yours.

–Mathews

WHY NOT .223?

Editor:

In my opinion, the one change that would produce the single largest increase in young and female hunters is to legalize the .223 Remington for the taking of deer. Recoil is the thing that most of these women and kids are discouraged by, and it's also a big factor in poor shooting and flinching. I'm 66 years old, have a B.S. in biology from Pittsburg State University, and have hunted and repaired guns all my life. I had a bow tag in 1965 and have taken deer all legal ways. I reload and have several deer rifles.

The commonness of the .223 is another factor in the argument to legalize it. Ask those who know. There are now plenty of bullets for the .223 that will stay together and kill deer cleanly.

We all know that the future of our sport is in the hands of the young; we also know once we get them into the woods, they will never leave. That's my two cents.

Art Huntsinger
Pittsburg

Dear Mr. Huntsinger:

Actually, KDWP has proposed allowing the use of the .223 for deer hunting this year. Development of newer cartridges with greater velocity, weight, and energy upon impact in recent years, as well as comments from hunters, has prompted this proposal. Ultimately, no matter what equipment is used, a hunter must choose that with which he is most competent. Shot selection and bullet placement are the keys to avoid wounding animals.

–Shoup

BALD EAGLE PHOTO

Editor:

I was able to get the attached picture of a mature bald eagle while deer hunting this week. What a magnificent bird, and the picture is really clear when magnified. Feel free to use it as needed.

Greg Markowitz
Cottonwood Falls

Editor's note: *if you would like to have your wildlife photos published on the KDWP website, go to www.kdwp.state.ks.us and click on "Wildlife Photos," then "guidelines in submitting your own pictures."*

CHANGE UPLAND OPENER

Editor:

First, let me say that ***Kansas Wildlife & Parks*** magazine is one of the best I have ever seen, and I have enjoyed it for many, many years. By now I hope you have heard from lots of hunters who think that opening the pheasant season one week earlier than usual is a big mistake.

First, hunters I know who go out of state for pheasants in Nebraska and South Dakota are also attracted by the reported larger number of birds they can find in Kansas. Our earlier season by a week had no impact on their decision to hunt out of state. Second, one week earlier for our season meant the chance of even warmer temperatures for opening weekend and birds that were more likely to be in uncut milo and corn that farmers don't want hunters tramping through. Lastly, in both 2006 and 2007, our hunting party found several coveys of quail we couldn't hunt opening weekend. Later, when we hunted in that area again after Thanksgiving, the landowner asked us not to hunt some of the areas that held quail because he was saving that area for relatives to hunt deer the following week.

I realize that change is a necessary part of trying to improve hunting opportunities in Kansas, but at one time Kansas also tried a one-hen and three-rooster daily limit, and that didn't work either. I hope that after reviewing the past two years, Kansas will return to the opening of pheasant and quail seasons on the second weekend of November.

Richard Davis
Lawrence

CHANGE UPLAND OPENER II

Editor:

My name is Randy Bartlett. I grew up in Fowler, and after living in Colorado for 30 years, recently moved to Russell. I read with interest the letter from Mike McClaskey in the Nov/Dec issue of the ***Kansas Wildlife & Parks*** magazine (Page 33). I also do not like the new opening dates for pheasant season. It has been the second Saturday of November since there has been a modern-day pheasant season in Kansas, and many of us look on that as a tradition that should not be changed.

I hunt with a group of about 15 on my family farm every year, and to the man, none of us like the change. This a group of resident and nonresident hunters. I also know many Colorado hunters who hunt Nebraska and Kansas each year, and the general consensus of this group is to go back to the way it was.

In your reply, you said the Kansas Wildlife and Parks Commission will revisit this issue following the 2007 season. I would like to know who and how to contact the necessary people to make my opinion known.

Randy Bartlett
Russell

Dear Mr. Bartlett:

Commissioner contact information may be found on the KDWP website, www.kdwp.state.ks.us. Click "KDWP Info" in the upper left-hand corner of the home page, then "Commission" in the left-had column.

(The modern-day upland bird season we most commonly think of only began in 1982, running the second Saturday in November through Jan. 31. Before that, seasons varied dramatically, from the first season in 1917, which ran 15 days, to years with no season or limited counties, to a season in 1981 that ran through Feb. 15. So the "tradition" is not really that old.)

–Shoup

Deer on Ice

–Jason Deal natural resource officer, Yates Center

It was an especially cold morning on Jan. 17, 2007. Overnight lows were hovering around 0 degrees Fahrenheit. About 9 a.m., as I drove around the east side of Woodson State Fishing Lake, I noticed a dark hump on the ice. I stopped and looked through my binoculars and realized it was a deer on the ice. As I drove closer, it was apparent that it had fallen through and was clinging to the edge of the ice with its front legs.

The deer was about 10 feet from shore. It appeared to have fallen through about 20 yards out and had broken ice almost all the way back before it ran out of strength. It was shaking severely, and its head and ears were covered with ice. Its hindquarters were still in the water. I began to appreciate the deer's tenacity to survive and decided I would help. I went back to my patrol truck for my lariat.

I shuffled back down the bank, stood on the edge of the ice and threw my loop. A perfect loop landed around the deer's head. (I guess all of those hours roping a plastic steer head stuck on a hay bale at college finally paid off.) I pulled the deer up and over the edge of the ice and to the shoreline. The deer managed a faint bleat but was completely immobile. I picked the yearling deer up and managed to make it up the bank without breaking any bones – the deer's or mine. With the deer loaded in the back of the truck, I drove to the Woodson State Lake Wildlife Area Office and enlisted the help of conservation worker Frank Hull and a couple inmates from his work crew.

We blindfolded the deer and placed it in the shop. After observing the deer for about an hour, we decided it would take several hours for the deer to possibly recover. A makeshift pen was built on a mower trailer and placed under the ceiling furnace of the shop. After about seven hours, the deer had stopped shivering but was still lying down in the pen. Turning the deer outside for the night would have meant certain death, so it was left overnight in the heated shop.

I had my doubts whether the deer would survive the night, but Frank called the next morning and said it was standing up. It even drank some water and ate a little feed that was placed in the pen.

With the highs expected to be in the 20s for the day, we was decided to turn the deer loose because the stress of captivity wasn't beneficial either. The animal was in fair shape, with just bruises and cuts to its hindquarters.

With the deer in the pen on a trailer, we pulled outside next to an evergreen row, opened the gate, and nothing. The deer just stood there. We went back in the shop and waited. After about 20 minutes, we decided to escort the deer out of the pen. As we approached the pen the second time, the animal's flight response kicked in. It found the opening in the pen and trotted off into the evergreens, never to be seen again.

I felt a bit sheepish after the event, knowing how much we promote hunting these critters. But observing an animal with a will to live and in such a dire situation drives one to act. After I went back to the spot in the ice, I realized that the deer was probably trying to find food in one of the fish feeders out on the lake. The feeders actually look like the commercial deer feeders many hunters hang in the woods before hunting season. The harsh winter weather had probably driven this young deer to search for food in a precarious spot.

Ferrets in Logan County

Black-footed ferrets were thought to be extinct until a small wild population was discovered in Wyoming in 1981. These animals were captured, and a breeding program was established. Thanks to aggressive conservation and reintroduction efforts, today ferrets number well over 600. The latest reintroduction occurred in Logan County in December, where the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), in cooperation with local landowners and The Nature Conservancy, released 24 captive-reared ferrets on private land.

The Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks has been involved in the planning process but currently has no active involvement. However, if asked by the USFWS, KDWP biologists may assist with monitoring and surveillance efforts in the future.

The experiment will continue for five years, after which it may be terminated or continued indefinitely depending upon success and cooperating landowner desires. The national goal to improve the status of the species from endangered to threatened is to establish 10 free-ranging populations of ferrets, spread over the widest possible area within their former range. To meet this goal, it is hoped that 1,500 breeding adult ferrets will be established in the wild by the year 2010.

"Any efforts that can result in a species being removed from endangered or threatened status is a good thing," says Keith Sexson, KDWP secretary for Operations. "Why Logan County? The existence and survival of black-footed ferrets are dependent upon prairie dogs and the habitat conditions provided by prairie dogs. Logan County has sufficient prairie dog populations and colony distribution to support this experimental release of black-footed ferrets. Without prairie dogs, you do not have black-footed ferret habitat."

Black-footed ferrets, one of the rarest mammals in North America, were once found throughout the Great Plains from northern Mexico to southern Saskatchewan. Their range extended from the Rocky Mountains east through the Dakotas and south through Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. They are found almost exclusively in colonies of prairie dogs, their primary prey.

Ferrets live and rear their young in prairie dog burrows. They have one litter each year, with an average of about three kits per litter. In the wild, kits do not come above ground until they are two to three months old. Mothers and young remain together until early fall. By October, the kits are able to take care of themselves.

More information on black-footed ferret introductions is offered by the USFWS. For copies of the *Application for an Enhancement of Survival Permit, Finding of No Significant Impact*, and *Black-Footed Ferret Reintroduction Plan for Logan County*, go online to mountain-prairie.fws.gov/species/mammals/blackfootedferret or phone the USFWS Mountain-Prairie Regional Office, 303-236-4256. (For questions and answers on this project, see the "Nature" section of this issue.)

—Shoup

PETA DEATH TOLL

An official report from People for The Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), shows that the animal rights group put to death more than 97 percent of the dogs, cats, and other pets it took in for adoption in 2006. During that year, the well-known animal rights group managed to find adoptive homes for just 12 pets. The nonprofit Center for Consumer Freedom (CCF) is calling on PETA to either end its angel-of-death program, or stop its senseless condemnation of Americans who believe it's perfectly ethical to use animals for food, clothing, and critical medical research.

Not counting animals PETA held only temporarily in its spay-neuter program, the organization took in 3,061 "companion animals" in 2006, of which it killed 2,981. According to Virginia's Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS), the average euthanasia rate for humane societies in the state was just 34.7 percent in 2006. PETA killed 97.4 percent of the animals it took in. The organization filed its 2006 report this month, nine months after the VDACS deadline of March 31, 2007.

In courtroom testimony last year, a PETA manager acknowledged that her organization maintains a large walk-in freezer for storing dead animals and that PETA contracts with a Virginia cremation service to dispose of the carcasses. In that trial, two PETA employees were convicted of dumping dead animals in a rural North Carolina trash dumpster.

In Southampton County, Va., another PETA employee will face criminal charges in a dog-napping case. Andrea Florence Benoit Harris was arrested in late 2006 for allegedly abducting a hunting dog and attempting to transport it to PETA's Norfolk headquarters.

—Center for Consumer Freedom

Power Plant Confusion

When secretary of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) blocked expansion of a coal-fired power plant in western Kansas last November, a conservation quandary was created. Although the action was taken because of concerns about carbon dioxide emissions, part of the power plant project would have restored 34,000 acres of prairie habitat to benefit at-risk species such as the lesser prairie-chicken, halting water-guzzling irrigation along the Arkansas river in the process. This conflict between potentially negative and positive environmental outcomes underscores just how complicated land- and resource-use decisions can be.

Sunflower Electric's plans to expand its Holcomb-area plant are on hold after KDHE denied the company an air qual-

ity permit to construct two proposed coal-fired generators.

As plans to expand the plant are on hold, so too are Sunflower's plans to restore thousands of acres of sandsage prairie. As part of the expansion, Sunflower purchased land and irrigation rights for 34,000 acres of cropland and is restoring the land back to native sandsage prairie. So far, Sunflower has restored about 10,000 acres, but plans to restore another 24,000 acres are on hold pending the outcome of the lawsuit.

The area planned for restoration is adjacent to another 20,000 acres of native sandsage prairie, which already provides habitat for the lesser prairie-chicken, northern bobwhite quail, loggerhead shrike, Cassin's sparrow, and many other prairie bird species. The Sunflower site and adjacent prairie combined could preserve a significant block of sandsage prairie in western Kansas.

—Playa Lakes Joint Venture

NWTF 2008 Projects

Last fall, the Kansas State Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) announced selection of the following Hunting Heritage Super Fund proposals for 2008 funding. These proposals had been evaluated and ranked earlier by the Kansas Super Fund Committee.

These projects are in addition to more than $30,000 budgeted towards outreach and education designed to preserve the hunting heritage. They include 4-H Shooting Sports, JAKES (NWTF youth), Wheelin' Sportsmen (for disabled), and Women in the Outdoors events.

A research proposal titled "Gobbler and Hen Survival on Public and Private Lands in Northcentral and Northwestern Kansas" was selected for a 2008 NWTF National Research Grant and will be awarded $23,550. This proposal was submitted to the national research program by Jim Pitman, KDWP small game coordinator, and Dr. Scott Lutz of the University of Wisconsin.

Since 2002, NWTF has funded more than $99,000 worth of habitat improvements on public land in Kansas. In addition, more than $36,000 has been spent on habitat and management equipment, and more than $15,000 has been spent on public hunting access to private lands (WIHA). These project funds are generated by volunteers who organize and attend local NWTF Hunting Heritage banquets. For more information about these projects or to apply for funds, contact NWTF regional wildlife biologist Brandon Houck at 620-443-5906 or go online to www.ksnwtf.org.

—National Wild Turkey Federation

· $5,000 approved for additional acres of spring turkey Walk-in-Hunting Areas (WIHA);

· $4,650 approved for red cedar removal in a riparian unit at Cedar Bluff Wildlife Area to prepare for prescribed burns;

· $2,500 approved for woodland and grassland restoration on Byron Walker Wildlife Area;

· $2,000 approved for oak savannah restoration on Woodson Wildlife Area;

· $4,600 approved for woodland openings and grassland restoration on Clinton Wildlife Area;

· $750 approved to purchase native grass and forb seed for retired cropland on Council Grove Wildlife Area;

· $1,250 approved for grassland restoration on Pottawatomie State Lake #1;

· $3,500 approved to match EPA grant funds to purchase a tractor for use in the Marais des Cygnes Watershed Riparian Forestry Initiative; and

· $3,000 approved for Conservation Districts in northcentral Kansas to purchase prescribed burn equipment for newly-formed burn associations.

NICE SHOT

This is a picture that I took during the 2006 rifle deer season in northwestern Kansas. It would be pretty cool to see it in your magazine. I've found that as I have grown older and after deer hunting for about 25 years, I get more enjoyment from shooting pictures instead of shooting deer although I still can't pass up a nice buck. I have taken a few hundred pictures of deer over the years.

—Dale Cain, Olathe

BUCK RECOVERY

My name is Tyler Meats, and I'm 12 years old. This year I decided to start hunting with a bow. My father and I put up a tree stand on my Uncle Bob's land in Woodson County. Because he doesn't hunt, my Uncle Bob had transferred his Hunt Own Land Deer permit to me.

On the afternoon of Nov. 11, 2007, my dad and I were got in the tree stand and noticed a buck about 10 yards away. I shot my bow and hit him in the rib. We trailed the buck for 150 yards that night, but did not find him.

The next morning, we trailed the blood in the tall weeds for another 350 yards. After not finding him by walking through the grass, we drove through the field looking for him. Still no luck, so we gave up.

On the first day of rifle season, my dad and I went back to the same tree stand, hoping for a chance at shooting a buck. About 5 p.m., my dad noticed over his shoulder the same deer I shot during bow season two and one-half weeks earlier.

I got my rifle ready and waited. After about 10 minutes, he walked about 125 yards in front of us. I put the crosshairs in the middle of his kill zone and pulled the trigger. The bullet hit him, but he staggered away in the tall grass. We circled a 100-yard area looking for him, but it got too dark. On Nov. 29 at 6:30 a.m., we went back out to the area and looked. We circled the south side of my uncle's property with no luck.

Then my dad made a circle around the back of a pond dam and saw him. After looking at the buck, we noticed that this was for sure the same buck that I had shot with my bow. I feel very lucky to have recovered this nice buck that had thought I'd lost in the bow season.

—Tyler Meats, Leroy

*(**Editor's note:** an HOL permit allows holders to hunt during any season with equipment for the season.)*

A little of your time . . . the time of their life

PASS IT ON

Youth Event

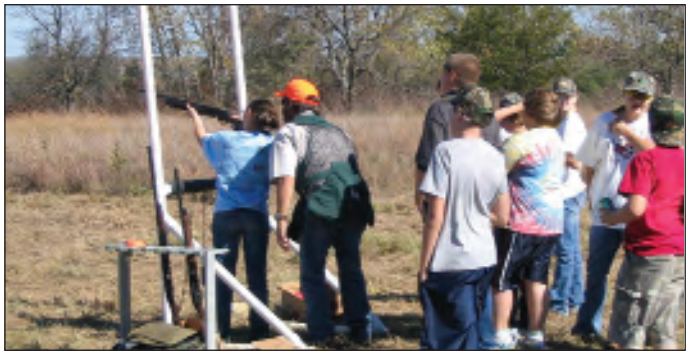
The Council Grove 4th Annual Outdoor Youth Event was conducted on Oct. 20 at Council Grove Reservoir. Forty-seven youngsters attended and enjoyed a windy but pleasant fall afternoon afield. The event is part of KDWP's "Pass It On" Program, designed to recruit and retain Kansas hunters, particularly youngsters. This special event provided participants with a free opportunity to enhance shotgun and archery shooting and safety skills.

The afternoon began with a hearty lunch provided by the Neosho Valley Chapter of Quail Unlimited. Participants were then divided into four groups and allowed to visit each of four stations for one hour. Designed to provide as much hands-on instruction as possible, stations provided shotgun, archery, and simulated hunting training.

Two of the stations provided students with opportunities to learn wing-shooting techniques with youth model 20 gauge shotguns and flying clay targets. A third station provided opportunities to develop or enhance skills at shooting compound archery equipment. The final station provided students with opportunities to participate in a computer generated hunting/shooting experience – opportunities to "hunt" in several realistic outdoor scenarios generated by this system.

Gear and supplies, including shotguns, shells, bows, arrows, targets, and eye and ear protection were provided by KDWP's "Pass It On" Program.

—Brent Konen, Council Grove Wildlife Area manager



The Iceman Cometh

by Mark Shoup

> **The ice was here, the ice was there,**
> **The ice was all around:**
> **It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,**
> **Like noises [come unwound].**
>
> ***–Samuel Taylor Coleridge,***
> ***The Ancient Mariner***

If old man winter has a soft white beard and blows cold air across the Great Plains through puffed cheeks, he must have an evil brother who occasionally blasts in front. I imagine him with black spiked hair and beard, and nose, lips, ears, and tongue pierced with ice diamonds that crack and spray barely liquid vapor across the landscape. I call him the Iceman.

On the night of December 10, 2007, the Iceman paid a rare visit to Kansas. His first manifestation was a light mist as I reached the farm after work. *It's too cold to be raining*, I thought, but by bedtime, the mist had turned to a steady rain although it was below freezing. Tree branches collected ice as I crawled beneath a thick stack of blankets. Sleep came quickly under the warm covers, but about midnight, my wife and I were startled by rifle shots coming from a large shelterbelt just north of our house. The shots echoed through the trees, followed by crashing explosions.

Then I realized what was happening. This is an old tree belt, graced by cottonwoods well past the century mark and more than 6 feet in diameter. Huge branches were snapping like toothpicks and falling 30 feet or more to the ground. It sounded like a battle raging, but we couldn't fire back, so we hunkered down in our bunker and tried to sleep. I was in and out of sleep all night, however, as the battle raged all round the house, sometimes on top of it.

At first light, I got up to assess the damage. The Iceman's barrage was still wrecking havoc as from every window in the house, I watched limbs snap and fall. Our power was out, and the power pole next to our house had been snapped in two by several large cottonwood limbs. Ironically, it was held at a 45-degree angle by the very limbs that had felled it, braced between the ground and the power line. No heat, no lights, no water.

Obviously, we were going nowhere today, so Rose turned the burners on our gas stovetop while my son Will and I hauled firewood from storage shed to hearth. We would spend that day in the kitchen and family room and the evening gathered round the fire playing board games by battery-powered lanterns and candles. Will thought it all great fun, and I have to admit, Rose and I enjoyed that evening, as well. We went over all the old reminders of how easy our lives are compared to our forebears who cooked, read, and wrote by firelight, and kept warm by fire as a matter of routine.

The next day, still with no power, work beckoned me to town. I called every place looking for a generator, but none were to be had. I did, however, get on the list for a load that was coming the following morning and nabbed one as soon as it arrived.

Hooking it up was another matter. Although I have a double-throw switch for a generator on my power pole, I had no idea how to wire it correctly. Fortunately, my neighbor Phil's first-hand man, Justin, happens to be a bona fide genius who can fix or install anything. Justin came over with a tractor and chain saw, and after propping up the power pole with lumber, he carefully cut away the offending limbs. Then we unpacked the generator and filled it with oil and gas, only to discover gas pouring out of the carburetor like blood from a punctured artery. Justin tipped the machine on its side, quickly dismantled the carburetor, and discovered a kinked O-ring. He jumped in his truck and was back in minutes with several boxes containing at least 10,000 O-rings. After some careful slicing and dicing, the wounded machine was healed.

Justin spent the rest of the afternoon figuring out the wiring in my box – which must have dated back to the invention of electricity – and we had power before dark. Unfortunately, a power surge during the storm must have blown the transformer on our furnace, but at least we had light and water. Finally, we could take a shower. (Have you ever wondered what people smelled like in the 19th century?) On the fourth day, I got an electrician to fix the furnace, so with the generator running night and day, I only had to survey the damage and calculate how long it might take before I would be able to clear the timber – much of it 8-12 inches in diameter – from three acres of yard and miles (or so it seems) of trails.

It's late January as I write, and our power pole still rests like the Leaning Tower of Pisa. I've only scratched the surface of cleanup and will likely not finish until summer. Ironic, however, is the fact that when I look back on it, I remember how astonishingly beautiful everything was when the sun came out after the storm. Every standing limb, cedar bow, leaf, pine needle, and blade of grass shone with a dense coat of ice. It was like something out of a fairy tale, but beyond compare. The natural world turned gleaming crystal.

That such beauty can reap so much destruction is beyond comprehension. Perhaps such a paradox of nature should give humans time to reflect upon the similar nature of our beings.

NEW FISH REGS

The following are new fishing regulations that went into effect January 1, 2008.

Aquatic nuisance species

• diploid (fertile) grass carp have been added to the list of species illegal to import or possess in Kansas.

Black bass tournaments

• minimum weigh-in procedures for all black bass fishing tournaments featuring weigh-ins have been established, holding them to similar standards currently required of tournaments in which participants hold a black bass pass.

Length and creel limits

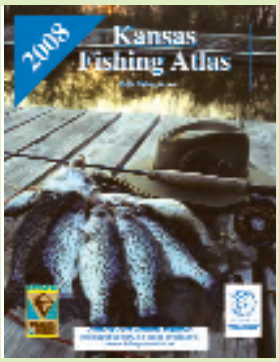
• the wiper creel limit was increased from two per day to five per day at Coldwater City Lake, Douglas County Lonestar Lake, John Redmond Reservoir, Leavenworth State Fishing Lake, Paola's Lake Miola, and Lake Shawnee;
• a 20-inch minimum length limit and one-fish creel limit on brown trout has been established in the Mined Land Wildlife Area;
• a creel limit of five per day has been established on blue catfish at Wilson Reservoir; and
• a 35-inch minimum length limit has been established on blue catfish at Wilson, Cheney, and El Dorado reservoirs.

Methods of take

• gigging is now a legal method for taking nonsport fish, and
• barbless hooks are no longer required for paddlefish snagging on the Neosho River.

Fees reduced

• the 24-hour fishing license fee has been reduced to $5.15 (from $7.15);
• youth 15 and younger no longer must possess a trout permit to fish in designated trout waters during the trout season, but there is a daily creel limit of two trout (unless they purchase a trout permit, which allows a full daily trout creel limit); and
• a youth paddlefish permit fee has been established at $5 for anglers 15 years and younger.



Paddlefish

• all paddlefish snagged must be kept, except on the Kansas-Missouri boundary waters, where there is a 24-inch length limit.

Trout

• Willow Lake in Tuttle Creek State Park has been added to the list of waters where a trout permit is required to fish from Oct. 15 through April 15, and
• Lake Shawnee in Shawnee County requires anglers fishing for or possessing trout to have a trout permit Oct. 15-April 15.

—Shoup

MAP YOUR FISHING

The 2008 Kansas Fishing Atlas is available for viewing and download from the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks' (KDWP) website, www.kdwp.state.ks.us. Printed copies are also available from most KDWP offices and license vendors.

The maps in this atlas pinpoint all public fishing areas, including Fishing Impoundment and Stream Habitats (F.I.S.H.) waters. F.I.S.H. waters are privately-owned ponds or streams KDWP has leased for public access. The Kansas Fishing Forecast is also available at the above location.

—Shoup

ROCKIN' WALLEYE

Any of Kansas' 24 reservoirs – and many of the more than 200 community lakes and 50-plus state fishing lakes – can produce nice catches of walleye. The avid walleye angler may find late March and early April a special time to fish. This is during spawn when water temperatures climb into the 40s. Walleye males arrive first at rocky or rip-rap shorelines and wait for egg-laden females. Anglers walk dams and jetties nearly 24 hours a day during this period, some preferring to fish after dark, when the light-sensitive fish move closer to shore.

Although walleye are more preoccupied with spawning than feeding and may be harder catch at this time than in late May and early June, the odds of catching really big walleye are the best. Most anglers use artificial lures such as jigs, rattle traps, crankbaits, and stick baits. Some even wade to cast parallel with the shore.

According to the 2008 Fishing Forecast, the top five walleye reservoirs are Cheney, El Dorado, Cedar Bluff, Wilson, and Hillsdale. The top five smaller lakes are Holton-Banner Creek Lake, Leavenworth SFL, Barber SFL, Scott SFL, and Council Grove City Lake. Check out the 2008 Kansas Fishing Forecast on Page 18 or access it online or pick up a brochure at KDWP offices and license vendors. Also, check the KDWP website for weekly fishing reports. Here you will find the latest reports from biologists across the state, as well as a spot to share your own reports and read those of other anglers.

It's not unusual to catch 6- or 7-pound walleye, or even bigger, during the spring spawn. When the livewell or stringer is blessed with big fish – always a possibility during the spawning season – the table fare provided by these large members of the perch family is second to none.

—Shoup

Ferret Q & A

In the "Issues" section of this issue, you will find an article about reintroduction of black-footed ferrets in Logan County. The following is a sampling of questions the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has received regarding this project, along with responses.

—Shoup

Q: How many comments did you receive on this proposal to reintroduce black-footed ferrets in Kansas?

A: The comment period was open for 30 days from Oct. 19, 2007, to Nov. 19, 2007, during which time the Service received more than 16,000 comments. The Service also accepted comments from meeting participants at a public meeting held in Logan County in November 2006. Twenty substantive comments were identified. Each of these comments was addressed in the *Finding of No Significant Impact*, which is available at http://mountainprairie.fws.gov/species/mammals/blackfootedferret/.

Q: Will the presence of black-footed ferrets restrict use of nearby private property, such as the ability to poison prairie dogs, aerial spray agricultural chemicals, or use or install irrigation systems?

A: Although the ferrets to be reintroduced will be fully protected as endangered, the use of a Recovery Permit authorizes the Service to assume responsibility for incidental or accidental take of any ferret that dies as a result of human-caused activity. Only the direct, purposeful take of a ferret would be considered an illegal act.

The Service will work with our cooperators to ensure that any prairie dog poisoning on release areas conforms to practices that have been used safely on other reintroduction sites. The Service will encourage those same practices on neighboring lands, but they will not be mandatory.

The Service does not anticipate any conflicts between irrigation systems and black-footed ferrets because that activity typically occurs in cropland, which is not suitable habitat for ferrets.

Q: Will the Service provide neighboring landowners assistance with prairie dog control issues?

A: The Service and several of its partners are making financial and technical assistance available for surrounding landowners to enable them to control dispersal of prairie dogs off reintroduction sites and onto lands where they are not wanted.

Q: How does this reintroduction affect Kansas state law that allows mandatory eradication of prairie dogs?

A: The Service's plan in no way attempts to circumvent existing state law. No one who opposes prairie dogs on their property will be expected to provide anything for ferret restoration in Kansas.

Q: What happens after the initial five-year experiment concludes? Will the Service sign off on assurances of landowners' rights, and will these hold up in court?

A: If successful, and with continued landowner support, the effort may be continued beyond five years to try to establish a self-sustaining wild population. As long as this reintroduction effort is active, the Service, through our recovery permit, or other administrative rule-making, will retain responsibility for the incidental or accidental take of any ferrets in Logan County. Landowners will not be held liable for unintentional take of ferrets. Any activity that is legal at this time will continue to be legal in the presence of reintroduced ferrets and any future offspring. The intentional killing or taking of a ferret will continue to be illegal.

A specific court case would be required to determine with certainty whether these assurances would survive a legal challenge, but no such challenge has occurred at any other ferret reintroduction site in any of the states in which they have occurred.

Q: Will the presence of ferrets restrict energy exploration and development in the area, including oil and gas, electric power lines, and wind power generation?

A: Activities that disturb or alter the ground surface or subsurface on the reintroduction sites will be reviewed for their potential to impact species and habitats. Only projects with the potential to reduce habitat for the black-footed ferret on the reintroduction sites (e.g., significant reduction in prairie dog acres) or that could result in mortality to individual ferrets on a reintroduction site would be of potential concern. In that case, the Service would work with our cooperating landowners and the project developer to avoid or minimize impacts to ferrets. Similar energy exploration, development, and transmission projects occur at other ferret reintroduction sites in other states and have had no identified impacts on ferret recovery.

Q: If a reintroduction is successful, will critical habitat be designated in the future, resulting in further restrictions to the use of private property?

A: At this time, there is no federally-designated critical habitat for the black-footed ferret anywhere, including the larger and more successful reintroduction sites that have been active for more than a decade. Because the ferret was first listed as endangered in 1967, prior to the 1978 amendments to the Endangered Species Act that required critical habitat to be designated at the time a species is listed, there is no legal requirement for the Service to designate critical habitat for ferrets. Therefore, there is no risk the Service could be legally compelled to designate critical habitat by other interests.

—U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

DON'T LAMINATE LICENSES

When issued a green license, stamp, or permit at a KDWP office or license vendor, license buyers should be aware that these cannot be laminated. Several have tried to laminate these green hunting licenses, and they turn black and are unusable, forcing the purchaser to buy duplicates. These issues are designed to hold up well to moisture, so leave like them they are when they are purchased.

—Shoup

KAWS' FIRST DIRECTOR

In December, the Kansas Alliance for Wetlands and Streams' (KAWS) board of directors announced the appointment of its first executive director, Harold L. Klaege of Salina. KAWS works with local people to create, protect, and restore our state's wetland and stream resources. KAWS provides its services through 12 local chapters that cover the entire state.

Klaege recently retired from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), where he served as the state conservationist for Kansas. As state conservationist, he was responsible for the management and direction of all NRCS operations in the state. He attended Ohio State University where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in agricultural engineering in 1971.

Klaege is the first full-time organization employee. KAWS currently has eight other contractors serving in a variety of support positions.

Over its 11-year existence, KAWS has helped educate thousands of adults and students about the state's wetland and stream resources. As part of that process, KAWS has completed over 300 demonstration projects expending nearly $5 million since 2003 in nearly two thirds of Kansas' counties. KAWS provides its services through 12 local chapters that cover the state.

Klaege can be reached by writing P.O. Box 2112, Salina, KS 67402-2112, by phone at 785-820-1619, by fax at 866-658-4535, or by email at hklaege@kaws.org. Go online at http://www.kaws.org to find out more about KAWS.

—Shoup

COOKOUT FOR TROOPS

The New Year brought new excitement for the Rangers of 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade, 1st Infantry Division – often known as Ft. Riley's Big Red One – as the home stretch of their 15-month deployment neared. Thanks to Kansas chapters of Pheasants Forever and the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (TRCP) through the Fort Riley Outdoorsman's Group, affectionately known as FROG, the soldiers were offered a taste of home to celebrate the close of 2007 during a barbeque and raffle on New Year's Eve in Baghdad.

In addition to being a night of celebration, the Rangers managed to promote outdoor conservation as well. Brigade Commander Col. Ricky Gibbs was in attendance, and together with Brigade Command Sergeant Major James Champagne and Maj. Brent Cummings, the regiment's executive officer, they distributed dozens of prizes including shirts, hats, calendars, magazine subscriptions, and the main prize of the evening – four free bird hunting trips.

Pheasants Forever and TRCP donated merchandise and trips for the event. These Rangers were the second combat brigade deployed in support of President Bush's surge and have been fighting in one of the most dangerous portions of Baghdad for nearly a year. According to Cummings, the party was "a way for soldiers to let off some steam and remind themselves of the great things that wait for them when they return to Kansas in the spring.

"Many of our soldiers enjoy hunting, fishing, hiking, and camping back home in Kansas," Cummings added. "This evening gave supporters a way to show their appreciation for our soldiers and promote conservation though current and future Kansas outdoorsmen."

PFC Joseph Semtak, an avid outdoorsman who assisted with the evening event, identified with the excitement shown by soldiers who walked away with free hunting trips.

"For many of them, it was the first time they had heard of the various conservation and outdoor groups around," said Semtak. "Now they have more ways to support the environment and the outdoors when they get home. They can help protect what they love."

Cummings acknowledged that the merchandise and trips were a way for stateside groups to thank soldiers in Iraq for what they do every day, but he also saw it as more.

"These soldiers are fired up about protecting what they have back home," said Cummings. "We hope that they know they are appreciated and that they also become involved in these programs when they return to Kansas."

By the end of the party, Cummings, Gibbs, and Champagne – who sit on the board for FROG – were able to give everyone a prize and a free one-year subscription to the *Pheasants Forever Journal of Upland Conservation*.

With barbeque-filled stomachs and soldiers looking forward to fall hunting trips back home, the night served as a great way to ring in the New Year. It also served as an opportunity for some very supportive people back home to thank these soldiers who took a step towards protecting the Kansas environment from the opposite side of the world.

—Shoup

by Pat Silovsky

The Eagle Has Landed

When was the last time you took a close look at our national symbol, the bald eagle? Have you seen one in a book or on TV? Have you seen one in a zoo or nature center? Better yet, have you seen one in the wild? Hopefully, the answer is "yes" to all of the above questions.

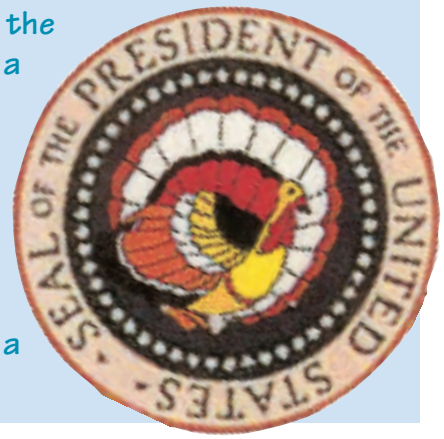
Living in Kansas gives you a lot of opportunities to see bald eagles in the wild. That's right, Kansas is home to large numbers of bald eagles (as many as 1,000) during the winter. We also have a few bald eagles — about 23 pairs and growing — that nest in our state in the spring and summer.

The bald eagle is a type of "sea eagle" and dines mostly on fish. As such, it is not usually far from water and is typically seen around seacoasts, large rivers, or lakes. In Kansas, our large lakes and reservoirs provide great places to hunt for fish, and even the occasional duck or goose. Easily identified by its white head and white tail, an adult bald eagle is a beautiful and majestic sight. Its wings may stretch from 6 to 7 1/2 feet, and it may weigh anywhere from 8 to 15 pounds. Because the eagle is a raptor (bird of prey), its feet come equipped with large, curved talons, and its beak is large and curved for eating meat. Both the feet and beak of the bald eagle are bright yellow, as are its eyes. Believe it or not, male and female eagles look alike except that the female eagle is bigger.

They mate for life and build the largest single nest in the bird world. Because a pair returns each year to the same nest, each year they add another layer of sticks. The largest nest on record was a bald eagle nest in St. Petersburg, Fla., that grew to be 20 feet thick, 10 feet across, and weighed about 2 tons.

Young bald eagles do not have a white head or a white tail, so they are not as easy to identify. An immature eagle has a brown head, beak, tail and

One story goes that Ben Franklin wasn't in favor of choosing the bald eagle as our national symbol, though he only wrote this in a letter to his daughter. Why, you ask? Well, Ben believed that the eagle had a few "not so nice" traits, such as stealing fish from ospreys (another fish-eating bird) and being easily chased off by smaller birds like a kingbird. In truth, he thought the wild turkey might be better as it seemed to have more courage and would not hesitate to chase off a Redcoat from the farm yard. Can you imagine the Seal of the President of the United States with a turkey on it?



body with a little white underneath its wings, which can be seen as they fly overhead. During its first four to five years, an immature eagle will have a blotched appearance of white and brown until finally the characteristic white head and white tail can be seen.

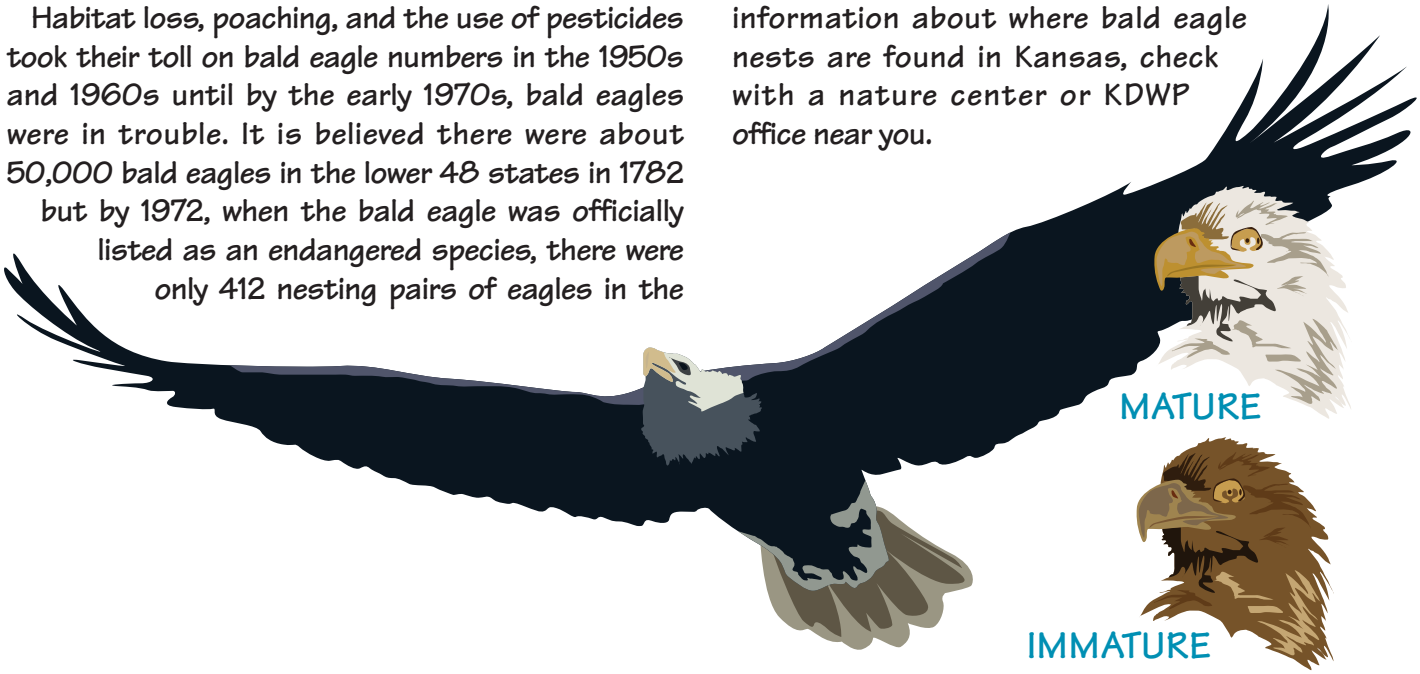
Even though the bald eagle has been our national symbol since 1782, this country that adopted it has not always treated it well. Even from the time of its adoption, there were a number of other animals suggested as the national symbol — the rattlesnake, the phoenix, the rooster, and the dove are some of them.

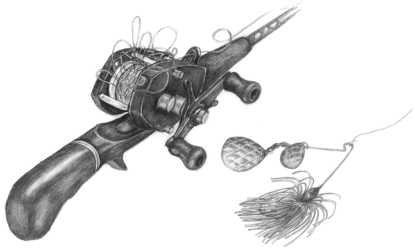
The bald eagle really did turn out to be the perfect symbol because it is only found in North America. The golden eagle, which is the other North American eagle, can be found in Europe and Asia.

Habitat loss, poaching, and the use of pesticides took their toll on bald eagle numbers in the 1950s and 1960s until by the early 1970s, bald eagles were in trouble. It is believed there were about 50,000 bald eagles in the lower 48 states in 1782 but by 1972, when the bald eagle was officially listed as an endangered species, there were only 412 nesting pairs of eagles in the lower 48 states and none in Kansas. The pesticide DDT was damaging to the eagles as it collected in their bodies, making their eggshells thin and resulting in very few eggs hatching.

The good news is that in August of 2007, the bald eagle was officially taken off the Endangered Species List. Recovery programs for the eagles — which included banning the use of DDT and protecting eagle habitat — worked, and their numbers have rebounded. Even though they are not listed as an Endangered Species, a bald eagle is still protected by several laws, so they cannot be harmed.

So take a drive around a reservoir in Kansas and look for bald eagles this March. They can be seen wintering at most reservoirs from as early as November to February. In February or March, the pairs that have nests here have begun the long process of raising their young. For more information about where bald eagle nests are found in Kansas, check with a nature center or KDWP office near you.





Backlash

by Mike Miller

A Dog's Life

I watched in amusement the other night as my parents' dog, a Schnoodle, tested Mom. The little dog sat and stared intently at my mother, tilting his head whenever she spoke. "What you do want? Outside?" He cocked his head to the right but did not follow when she walked toward the back door. "Are you hungry?" He cocked his head the other way but didn't follow when she went over to his dish. Finally – "You silly dog. You don't know what you want."

At the time, I figured the pooch was trying to convey something, but he just couldn't figure out how. Now, I'm convinced the dog was just having fun. He does it often – just sits and stares at Mom or Dad — and I think it's a game to see just what he can get Mom or Dad to do.

I read a magazine article about care dogs that described a Golden retriever that somehow senses when its owner's blood sugar is about to crash and warns her so she can avoid seizures. A Labrador retriever warns its owner before she has an epileptic seizure, so she can take measures to avoid injury. It made me think about our connection with dogs.

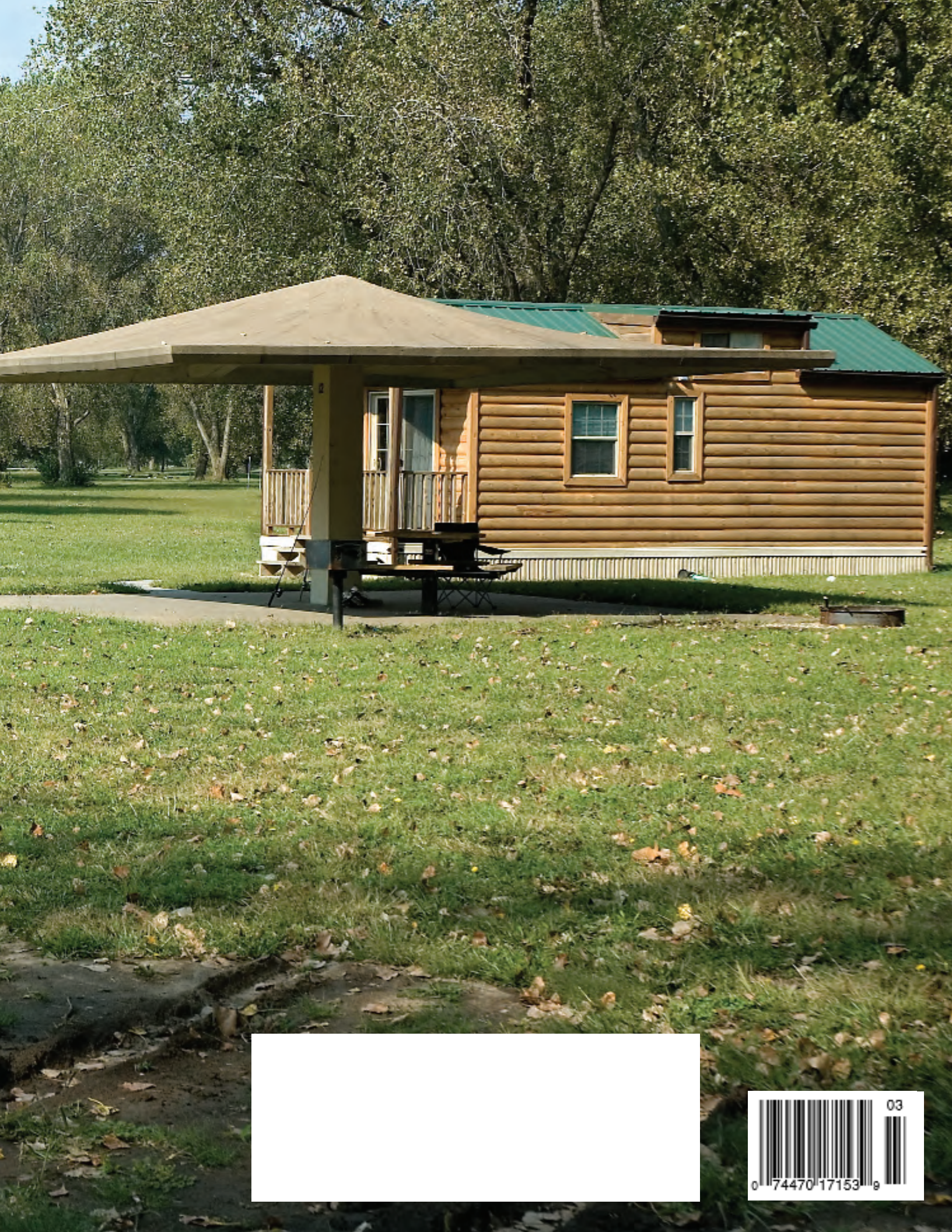
The quote, "May I be half the man my dog thinks I am," always made me chuckle, but not anymore. I'm convinced dogs know more than they've been letting on – a lot more. They're living among us, like undercover spies, duping us with that happy-go-lucky, "I'll do whatever you want because you're my master," attitude. But it's all an act with a single goal of securing a life of ease.

Our Lab plays my wife and I like a drum. The big black dog and I have a connection – he always knows where I'm going and what I'm going to do. I used to think it was coincidence or routine. He leads me out the deck door when I go to light the grill. He goes to the back door when I need a couple of sticks of firewood. When I get ready to leave the house, he's already standing at the front door, expecting to go along. I always assumed he picked up on visual cues. For example, when I grabbed a lighter, he knew I was going to the grill. But he gave himself away recently because our new grill has a push-button start. He still knew. The goofy mutt knows more than he has let on, and he's worked his way into a far cushier life than most people can imagine. He has his meals served to him daily, large pillows to sleep on, and he even has an oversized easy chair that he slips into when the pillows aren't quite soft enough. He has few household jobs – he fetches the paper each morning and runs squirrels from the bird feeder – so he lives a life of luxury.

I guess I could feel betrayed, but he's pretty good company. He enjoys doing whatever I'm doing. If we're going hunting, he's suitably excited. But he goes along with the same exuberance if I'm washing the pickup. When Lisa puts on her tennis shoes for a walk, you'd think he'd won the lottery in Milkbones.

So, I guess dogs aren't the only benefactors in this relationship. Truth is, dogs can be therapeutic. Having a good dog around can give us optimism and companionship, and feeling so revered strokes our egos. I know some people enjoy the company of cats, and my family has usually had a house cat. But I've always been partial to bird dogs, and I've determined that bird dogs sense this and use it to their advantage. Brittany and Lab puppies are drawn to me, and it's not because I have any "dog whisperer" talents. It's because they're born with an intuition that allows them to sense a human they can manipulate – a sucker.

I can just imagine a litter of Brittany puppies listening to their momma's orders as I approach: "Here comes a keeper, pups. Look cute and act silly. Tex, it's your turn to chase your tail. Sissy, you roll onto your back and beg to have your belly scratched. Runt, you sit by yourself and look sad. Fletch, this one is probably looking for a hunter, so you fetch the tennis ball and act very interested in the pheasant wing he's carrying. Remember, it has to seem like it's his idea to choose you. Places, dogs! This could be your ticket out of this kennel and into a life of luxury."



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