

Fishing & Hunting

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

Journal



FREE

THIS ISSUE COMPLIMENTS OF

IN THIS ISSUE

• BLACK BEAR
COUNT

• ELK / ELK / ELK

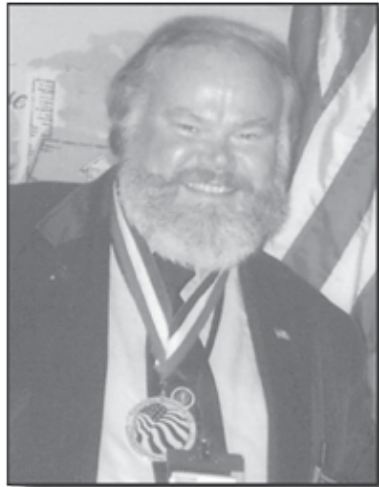
• CHRISTMAS
LIST

• PURSUING A
CAREER IN
FISHING

• RETURN TO THE
CLASSIC

• STRIPED BASS
YOUNG OF THE
YEAR IN VIRGINIA

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Lyme Disease Symptoms

1. Unexplained fever, chills, sweats
2. Unexplained weight changes—gain/loss
3. Fatigue, tiredness, especially around 3 p.m.
4. Chronic sore throat/sinus infection
5. Unexplained swollen glands
6. Testicular/pelvic pain
7. Unexplained menstrual irregularity
8. Irritable bladder/dysfunction
9. Sexual dysfunction/loss of libido
10. Stomach problems
11. Constipation/diarrhea
12. Chest pain
13. Shortness of breath/cough
14. Heart palpitations/racing/slowing
15. Joint pain, swelling, comes & goes
16. Muscle pain/cramps
17. Headaches
18. Neck creaks/cracks/stiffness
19. Stiffness in the joints or back
20. Tingling, numbness
21. Burning/stabbing sensation
22. Bells palsy
23. Double or blurry vision/floaters
24. Light sensitivity
25. Ringing/buzzing in ears, sound sensitivity
26. Dizziness, poor balance, motion sickness
27. Light headedness
28. Confusion, difficulty thinking
29. Difficulty with concentration
30. Short term memory loss
31. Disorientation, getting lost
32. Speech—think one thing, another word comes out
33. Mood swings, irritability, depression, crying for no reason
34. Nightmares, night sweats
35. Do you feel like dying?
36. Have you seen multiple doctors without success?
37. Do people say you are a hypochondriac/ do they say it's all in your head?



By Lenny Rudow

“HOOKED ON FISHING”

Seasonal Extension

the bay and the CBBT or to Virginia Beach, should do the trick unless water temperatures drop down below the low 40's. Of course, with coastal fish the main question is always whether or not they're within the three mile limit—beyond this distance from shore, stripers are protected by federal law.

By the time you read this, our meat-and-potatoes fall fishery in the Chesapeake Bay—stripers, of course—is essentially a memory. And for most of us, it's not a good memory. Thanks to the fall monsoon season of 2011, many areas of the Chesapeake offered fishing which was something less than stellar. Way less. Lucky for us, here in Maryland we can keep taking aim at stripers merely by shifting gears, and heading for saltier waters.

A relatively warm fall has held up the striper migration, and the large migratory fish have been running a little late. That means that there's a good chance we'll be able to find stripers from Ocean City south all along the coast later than usual. And thank goodness, the coastal waters weren't riled and ruined to nearly the same degree as the bay waters were. What if the mercury plummets and those stripers keep right on migrating? Don't worry; a slightly longer trip to Virginia waters, either at the mouth of

Thankfully, the hottest area for winter striper fishing is often right at the CBBT. No wonder, considering that this 21 mile long chain of causeways, islands, and pilings is located right where the Atlantic's salty waters collide with the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay. Note that the Virginia Chesapeake Bay season is set to shut down at the end of the year, but the coastal season which includes waters just outside of the CBBT continues on. Also note that the waters here can be plenty rough, especially during the winter months, and small boat anglers may get shut out if the seas kick up when you plan on fishing. So remember, always consult the weatherman often and attentively, before you hook up the trailer and make the drive down here.

Anglers heading for this area should make a conscious decision to either go for numbers, or size. Both hordes of smaller fish and plenty of

honest-to-goodness cows will usually be around during much of the winter, but targeting them often requires very different tactics. Light tackle anglers who enjoy jigging have it easy: most seasons, they can simply look for birds and cast or jig around them. TIP: If you plan to fish this way, get yourself a strong pair of gyro-stabilized binoculars. Yes, I know a decent pair costs around a thousand bucks. But they allow the magnification to be ramped up to 12 or even 14X—which means that in decent conditions you'll be able to spot birds from 5 or 6 miles away! Compare that to less than a mile with the naked eye or two to three miles with regular marine binoculars (assuming it's calm enough to use them in the first place) and you should be able to see why I consider these even more important than having a fishfinder, when chasing after working birds. What do you do if no birds are in the air? Head for the bridge pilings, and cast as close as possible to them with jigs and bucktails.

If you rig up with heavy jigs and drop below the masses of fish, you may encounter some larger stripers. Generally speaking, 30" to 40" fish are considered “big” when you're jigging in this situation. But to target the real cows, leave the light tackle at home and come armed with 30 to 50 pound gear and a cooler full of eels.

No one can say why, but for some reason, extremely large fish have a



The author, with a average-sized schoolie you'll find jigging under the birds.

tough time turning down a wiggling eel. Fished near the Cement Ships, the pilings between Fisherman's Island and the Inner Middle Grounds, and the First Island, eels are a killer on 40"-plus fish. But the “normal” method of fishing eels here is nothing at all like the way we do it in Maryland's Chesapeake. Here, you'll need bobbers. Yes, bobbers—the standard rig consists three or four ounces of lead, a bobber large enough to support it, and a five foot fluorocarbon leader of 50 to 80 pound test snelled to a 9/0 to 10/0 hook. Slide the hook in through the eel's lower jaw and out through

See Rudow Page 5

Maryland Black Bear hunt was a success

Oakland, Md. - The Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) closed the 2011 black bear hunting season at 9 p.m. today with hunters reporting 65 bears to mandatory check stations in Western Maryland. DNR opened the season Monday, October 24 in Garrett and Allegany counties.

“Maryland's black bear hunters enjoyed another safe and successful hunting season,” said Harry Spiker, Game Mammal Section Leader for DNR's Wildlife & Heritage Service. “The cool, mild weather during the first two days kept hunters in the woods and helped DNR meet its management goal in four days.”

The average live weight of the bears taken this year was 154 pounds. Colton Lucas, 12, of Kitzmiller, Md., took the largest bear of the season, a 376 pound male.

The hunt by the numbers:

65 bears taken
59 from Garrett County, 6 from Allegany County
154 lbs. average weight

69% of the bears were taken on private land

533 hunters participated in the hunt and 3,915 hunters applied for a permit

55% of the successful hunters were residents of Garrett and Allegany counties

For more information about Maryland's black bears visit dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife.



Colton Lucas, of Kitzmiller

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Volume 21, Number 7 December 2011/January 2012

Merry
Christmas



Happy
New Year

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Fishing & Hunting Journal

P. O. Box 399 • Crumpton, MD 21628

www.fishingandhuntingjournal.com

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Brother and Sister duo!



On the front cover we have Dennis Thomas, Jr, 18 yrs old and his sister Lindsay Thomas pose with his big 8 point deer taken with a bow in Glen Arm, Md on October 15, 2011.

On top we have Lindsay, 25 yrs old with her first deer ever on the first day of hunting season, a fine 10 pointer taken in Glen Arm, Md on October 1, 2011

And finally Dennis again with his Muzzle Loader 150 class 8 point buck taken from Rock Hall, Md on October 21, 2011



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Annapolis is where all policy-related decisions impacting the traditional rights of Maryland sportsmen to hunt, fish, trap and enjoy the lawful use of their firearms are decided each year. And who represents the sportsmen's interests in Annapolis?

It is the Maryland Legislative Sportsmen's Foundation—a non-profit organization comprised of volunteer sportsmen who advise the Maryland Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus...the largest Caucus in the Maryland General Assembly dedicated solely to protecting these traditional rights on the statutory, regulatory and budgetary front. This unique PARTNERSHIP has resulted, among other things, in the following achievements since its inception four years ago:

Enactment of the Maryland *Hunting Heritage Protection Act*
Sunday Hunting of Deer Authorized for the First Time Since 1723

Defeated Efforts to Impose a Black Bear Hunting Moratorium

Fishing Opportunities on the Chesapeake Bay Protected by the *Freedom to Fish Act*

"First" State to Earmark Hunting License Fees for the *Farmers & Hunters Feeding the Hungry Program*

Defeated Efforts to Prohibit the Use of Leghold Traps

Opened up 58,000 Acres of Chesapeake Lands for Public/Private Hunting

Prohibited Offshore Mooring of Boats by Duck Blinds during Waterfowl Hunting Season

To learn more about the Maryland Legislative Sportsmen's Foundation and how you can help protect the interests of Maryland sportsmen: (1) visit our website—www.mdsportsmen.com; (2) contact the Foundation's Vice-Chairman (Bill Miles)—billmiles@chesapeake.net; or (3) write to us at:

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OUR HERITAGE AS CONSERVATION-MINDED SPORTSMEN MUST NEVER BE COMPROMISED.

Rudow ...

Continued from Page 3

the upper, then pay out 10' or so of line and attach the bobber. When you let out additional lines, make them 15' deep, then 20', and so on. Savvy anglers will also drift out one eel swimming without weights or bobbers, as well as one line weighted down to sit at or near bottom. Slip bobbers or balloons can also be used, to eliminate the problems associated with getting the bobber off your line when a fish is on it.

You can try this form of eeling either at anchor or on the drift, but quite often, weather conditions are going to dictate which form of fishing is going to be both more comfortable and more productive. Generally speaking, drift fishing lets you cover a much larger area. But in a 20-knot wind you'll often move too fast and get rocked too much to fish effectively.

If you want to take home a meal after the Chesapeake fishery has closed, you'll have to head outside of the bay/ocean demarcation line (a map showing the exact line can be found online, at www.mrc.state.va.us/regulations/striperregmap.shtm). Luckily, just outside the line is often a good area to fish. Some anglers will drift eels along the edges of shoals, but often, slow-trolling will work even better in these open waters. Rig in-line torpedo weights of varying sizes to cover the water column, and troll them right around those drop-offs. You'll also want to put out some swimming plugs, like Stretch 25's or Swim Whizz plugs. These can be rigged in tandem with a Mojo, to get them diving down deep. Just clip a three-way swivel to your main line, put the Mojo on a six foot leader, and attach it to one of the two remaining eyes. Then clip your plug to a nine foot leader on the third swivel eye.

Yes, it's going to be mighty cold. Sure, you'll get blown out as often as not. But considering how we fared on the Chesapeake this fall thanks to hurricanes and abnormal flooding rains, we should count our lucky stars we live here—because extending the fishing season is just a few hours' drive away.

EELING TIPS

1. Stow your eels in a Tupperware container, kept on ice. The chillier those eels are the slower they move, which makes it much easier to handle them. As soon as they enter the water, the eels will spring



Eels are often the ticket, to get cold stripers biting.

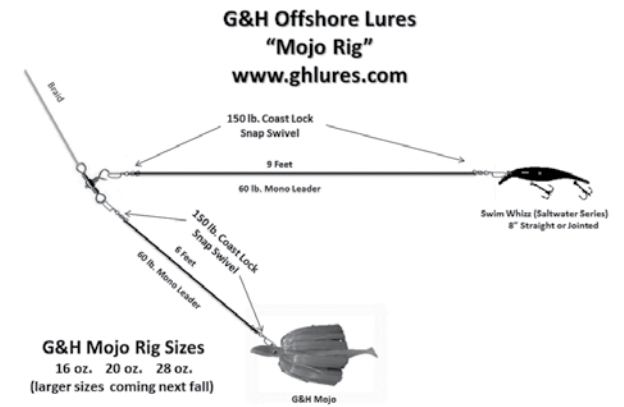
back to life and start wiggling again.

2. Bring a roll of paper towels, and use them to pick up the slimy critters. Rags only work until they're layered in eel goo, but a fresh paper towel always gets the job done.

3. When traveling from spot to spot, keep eels that are already on the lines separated. Never put two in the same bucket and never let two rest near each other on the deck, or they'll intertwine and cause one heck of a tangle.

4. Whenever you detect a strike while eeling, give the fish a full five-count before setting the hook.

5. Never toss extra eels. Instead, take off the heads and skin, marinate them for 12 hours in a half-gallon of water mixed with a cup of salt, a cup of brown sugar, and some garlic powder and soy sauce, and then hickory-smoke them—yummy!



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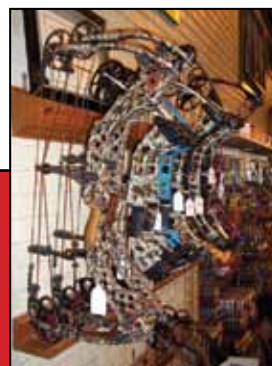
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“TACKLE BOX TIM”

Return to the Classic

By Tim Sherman

The goal of many serious bass fishermen is to make it to the pinnacle of their sport. The BASS Masters Classic is held in the highest regard as being the biggest bass fishing event in the world. Anglers from the BASS Elite Series, Open, and Federation Nation tournament trails have an opportunity to qualify for this grandest of events. Many contend that making it to the Classic through the amateur ranks -- The Federation Nation -- is the most difficult way to qualify. To reach the Classic as an amateur once is a accomplishment in itself. Yet, one Maryland angler has accomplished this feat for a second time.

Chris Price of Church Hill, Maryland, will be competing in his second Classic in February -- ten years after competing in the grand event the first time. Though he lives on Maryland's

eastern shore, he competes on the Delaware Federation Nation trail. There are no Maryland Federation Nation clubs on the shore, thus, he would have to travel across the Bay Bridge monthly to attend club meetings. Chris chooses to fish at the amateur level. In the late 1990s and early this decade, he competed in BASS Top 150 tournaments (top level at the time); but starting a family and growing his roofing business outweighed his desire to compete on the national circuit.

The road to the Classic through the federation starts at club level. Most clubs have 10 to 20 anglers. Numerous tournaments are held during the course of the year and anglers collect points for their performance. The Delaware trail fishes tidal waters such as the Pocomoke, Choptank, Nanticoke, Wicomico, and Potomac Rivers, and the upper Chesapeake.

The top twelve from each club go on to the State Qualifier Tournament (SQT): finishers 1 through 6 as boaters, 7 through 12 as riders. Price finished mid-pack in his club and carried through to the SQT as a rider. He and the other 11 qualifiers would then go on to compete against top finishers

from other clubs from the Delaware Federation Nation.

This year's SQT was held on the Pocomoke River. The top 12 places would move on to the mid-Atlantic Regional Tournament, again 1 through 6 as boaters, and 7 through 12 as riders. While most of his competitors were fishing shoreline cover, Price drew boaters that were willing to fish a little deeper. Knowing his fishing style, it comes as no surprise to this journalist that Chris cast a 4-inch worm and a Bandit crankbait to stumps lying in 4 to 6 feet of water. He finished in 6th place on the Delaware state team and moved on to the regional as a boater.

You may remember the massive downpours we endured the first half of September. Well, the mid-Atlantic Regional tournament was held from September 7 to 9 in utterly abysmal conditions on the Delaware River in Burlington, New Jersey. Price and his fellow team members, competed against teams from Maryland, New Jersey, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. The highest finishing angler from each state would progress to the BASS Federation Nation National Championship. Conditions were so tough that not one angler was able to catch a 5-bass limit during the three-day event. The heavy rains yielded unusually high river levels, so much so that Chris found himself fishing high tide patterns at low tide. He ran spinnerbaits through flooded lily pads to catch his bass. Chris landed five over bass weighing 11 pounds over the three-day contest for a 3rd place finish, the top angler representing the Delaware team.

At the National Championship, this year held on the Ouachita River in Monroe, Louisiana, from November 3 to 5, six spots for the BASS Masters Classic were up for grabs. The top finisher from each region -- Northern, Southern, Eastern, Central, Mid-Atlantic, and Western -- would go on to the Classic. The Ouachita is a lock and

dam river system that Price describes as having a slow meandering current. It is known for good numbers of bass, both largemouth and spotted, but large ones are in short supply. After scouting the river in practice Chris knew a limit wouldn't be hard to catch, but having a kicker in the 3 to 4-pound range would set fishermen up for a good total at the scale.

During practice, Price also found out that bass were feeding strictly on shad. He tried worms and crawfish imitators but bass would not bite. During the Championship, he targeted main river sand bars to catch his limit, then ventured into stump laden backwaters in pursuit of larger bass. He cast a Strike King Series 1 crankbait and burned it across the sand bars and through the stumps to catch a 5-bass limit each day. At the end of the three-day tournament, Chris amassed a 23 pounds, 11 ounces total. He finished 11th overall and was the top angler from the mid-Atlantic division, thus qualifying for his second BASS Masters Classic.

This year's championship was a 10-year reunion of sorts. With this accomplishment of the Classic berth in hand, Chris also humbly acknowledges the National Championship winner Jamie Horton. He, too, will be competing in his second Classic, and like Price, he fished in the 2002 event. Chris and Jamie first met on the Louisiana's Red River during unofficial practice for the 2001 National Championship. They found a common bond and eventually roomed together during the championship.

They vowed to do their best to meet again at the 2002 Classic -- a premonition that came true. They stayed in contact through the years and the very same scenario played out in October. They met again by happenstance on

See Sherman Page 7

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Sherman ...

Continued from Page 6

the Ouachita seeking bass prior to the championship and both were determined to meet again at the Classic.

Price is already focused on the Classic that will be held on the Red River in Shreveport-Bossier City, Louisiana, from February 24 to 26. He knows that the river has changed since he fished there in 2001. The river is open for unofficial practice until December 12 when it becomes off limits to Classic contenders. Chris

plans to visit to learn how to run the river and its stump laden backwaters and oxbow lakes. He will use official practice 4 days prior to the Classic to hone in on what he perceives to be a prespawn bass fishery.

As an amateur angler competing in the BASS Federation Nation, it's a long trail to the Classic. You have to prove that you can compete at a high level locally, within your state, regionally, and against the top national amateurs. Chris Price has proved to be the best from his region for a second time.

Congratulations Chris!
We will be eagerly watching you at the 2012 BASS Masters Classic.



Chris Price battled his way through the Federation Nation trail to fish in his second BASS MASTER Classic. Photo credit B.A.S.S./Adam Harbottle

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"HUNTING PASSION"

Choke the Pressure

By Mike Monteleone

Not long ago, a long time friend and beginner hunter asked me to explain to him how to put together a strategy for this year's gun opener. He wanted to know which scents, grunt tube and other accessories he should purchase so that he would be ready when the day arrived. He also questioned me on scrapes, rub-lines, bedding areas and food sources.

"Sorry to disappoint you," I replied, "but I seldom use those tactics, at least not during the state's firearms season."

Then I had to clarify what I meant. Sure, during the bowhunting season when few others are afield, or when gun hunting on very private (large tracts of) land, deer are indeed subjected to my entire bag of tricks. But otherwise, when an estimated 78,000 plus redcoats flood into the deer-rich woods of Maryland to hunt the gun season, it sometimes seems like a prudent idea would be to randomly hang traffic lights throughout the woodlots to keep them from bumping into each other.

"When this occurs," I pointed out, "all bets are off. Now, your chances of grunting in a mature buck or picking him off while he's contently dinning on acorns, are between slim and none, and slim has just left town."

Under Siege

On the whole, the bailiwick of deer is relatively quiet for the most of the year. On some occasions the brief intrusion of a hiker, mountain biker, or farmer feeding his livestock, neither of which pose much of a threat; a buck, so alerted, merely moves out of the way to give a wide berth and then returns shortly thereafter.

When the bowhunting season kicks into gear, the deer start becoming sensitized to increased human activity; but still they continue to adhere to their usual behavior patterns.

But then the long-awaited opening day of firearms season arrives and it seems like everyone who can buy or borrow a gun is prowling around, routing the animals out, shooting at many and missing most. This sudden lifestyle change causes mature bucks to accept the fact that their usual haunts no longer safe, so now they begin exiting through "doorways" that will give them access to other regions where, hopefully, there is little or no human disturbance.

The time frame in which all of this occurs depends upon a variety of factors. If the terrain consists of large, unbroken tracts of exceptionally thick cover, the deer may tirelessly circle and dodge hunters without ever leaving their home turf. Yet nowadays, such

types of semi-wilderness are becoming increasingly rare. Suburban sprawl, the proliferation of business and housing developments in rural areas continue to carve up whitetail habitat into smaller and smaller patchwork configurations.

Not to fret, however, because most of these segments of deer habitat are in one or another connected to each other. That "connection" may be an narrow bottomland funnel, short gully, steep ditch, brush filled culvert, or perhaps a sliver of timber. In any event, the narrowest and most constricted part of this access or exit corridor that deer pass through to quickly enter or exit a high pressure area and slip into a no-pressure area is the "choke point."

Drain Plug

A few years ago my buddy Jeff made the trek to the Potomac State Forest for the gun opener. His plan was to hunt a choke point that always yielded a good buck. In going back to his exact location Jeff selected to bushwhack his buck, it consisted of a point of thin timber extending sharply downhill into an oak bottomland. Surrounding him to his left, right, and straight ahead were small woodlots where hunters traditionally enter from the opposite side to stage drives or climb into stands and this had the effect of gently pushing the deer out. Where the deer go to avoid this commotion is a large chunk of jungle like piney woods and brushy cover immediately behind Jeff, and the only way to reach the safety of that cover was to travel the spine of the ridge where he was situated. Simply sitting down where he had an unobstructed shooting lane in two different directions, all that remained for Jeff to do was remain motionless, count the deer that periodically filtered passed him and pick out the buck he wanted.

Scouting Smarts

In the past, when I wasn't as computer savvy and the internet wasn't as well developed or populated I would go the library or my local county office to get aerial photographs or elevation maps to determine the roads hunters would use when accessing the area I also wanted to hunt. Now, in this age of the fully developed World Wide Web I just go to my favorite browser and "google", Google Earth to find aerial views of my hunting ground.

I would drive every road that I thought a hunter would use and tried to imagine which route the hunter would take when entering the woods. I would then use the aerial photographs combined with the elevation maps to predict the escape route of the deer and my ambush point.

As deer begin drifting away from sources of hunting pressure, you can count upon them gravitating toward the thickest and most impenetrable cover in their home range, and they will use those narrow heavy-cover travel corridors that allow them to maintain a

low profile.

Your role in this scenario is as simple as setting up to watch one of these choke points to intercept the animals as they are en route.

Of special importance, don't worry if the location of choice seems to be bleak of any deer sign because you are not expecting to encounter a deer casually feeding on acorns or making a scrape or doing other normal deer things without a care in the world. Your foremost intention is to merely be in position to intercept a buck as he attempts to evade hunting pressure.

Also keep in mind that although classic choke points are most frequently associated with hilly and mountainous terrain, such as hourglass-shaped funnels in deep bottomlands, they are also found in flat land areas. Of course, the far western portion of the state has the most dramatic of elevation changes but as you travel to the eastern part of the state the landscape reveals a subtle undulating appearance consisting of wide flats separated by gentle dips and rises. Flatland whitetails use these shallow, thin-cover depressions as drains just as religiously as their counterparts living elsewhere use deep ravines and cover-filled cuts.

Earlier this season, I was invited to accompany a friend of mine to his eastern shore property for a day during the early muzzleloader season. As we drove the roads surrounding the

property I pointed out the areas that I would be interested in hunting. One of the spots that I pick out was two separate cover configurations barely touching each other surrounded on three sides by cut cornfields. Usually where two finger like projections extend outward to each other in the form of opposing wooded points of land creates a choke point that may bring deer-in-your-face action when daylight arrives. The deer may come by your location only a few scant yards away. These types of funnels may also be connected in the form of a low swampy bog, an isle of thick saplings or, perhaps, simply a brushy fencerow.

Deer positively love these flatland situations because, in using such drains to gain access through a long, progressive string of otherwise separate pieces of cover they can travel, often for miles, without ever once fully exposing themselves crossing open ground.

Other types of natural terrain features also play a role. In both flatland and hilly terrain regions, I particularly like to find a lakeshore or riverbank that is bordered by a band of thick saplings and then a very steep hillside only a Billy goat could climb. In the case of my early muzzleloader hunt in October in Baltimore County this was the case but a long swamp replaced the river and the saplings were substituted

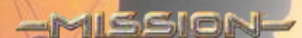
See Monteleone Page 9

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Monteleone ...

Continued from Page 8

with greenbriers. Wherever the cover squeezes down to its narrowest is the choke point I try to hunt.

One of the biggest bucks I never shot at made his appearance in this very type of situation; he was so close that when I raised my gun all I saw was brown and my scope was turned to 2.5x and seconds later he was out of sight. The next year I took a smaller buck in that same location but my gun was furnished with open sights. It was not unlike shooting a big squirrel at 5 yards.

Getting It All Together

Slipping in to occupy a choke-point location doesn't require the same amount of stealth you'd ordinarily use when entering the deer woods. The reason is because choke points are not hubs of normal deer activity, so you don't have to worry about your approach spooking animals out.

As an analogy, if you wanted to locate 10 people in a large house, you might expect to find a few in the kitchen, a couple in the living room, a few in the bedroom and so on.

This is similar to the way undisturbed deer are dispersed in the "many rooms" of the large unbroken tract of land; it's also why scouting for sign in this situation is imperative if one

is to have close encounters with any of the deer on the property. Yet, if someone were you yell "FIRE!" you know precisely where each individual would make an appearance to find safety elsewhere.

Same thing with deer; when the opening day starts to sound like a goose volley, the place to see the greatest number of deer is not from a well placed treestand looking over a bedding area, feeding area, tracks, scrapes, and other sign; it's going to be at the access corridor the deer will predictably begin using to get outta there!

However, this doesn't mean one can carelessly hike to a choke point location and sit or stand just anywhere. Again, consulting your aerial photo, it should be apparent where the bulk of the undisturbed deer inhabiting the general area probably are, so be sure to skirt that deer-rich area as widely as possible when hiking to your choke point.

Another thing to think about; a treestand in this situation might be a hindrance to success. Treestands can limit your mobility when hunting one particular choke point. You may choose a spot only to see deer traveling just out of range or through thicker cover than expected. Without the use of a stand you simply rise to your feet walk a few 25 yards and wait for the next traffic jam.

And of greatest importance, the wind must be in your favor. You can expect deer coming through the choke point to

be traveling at loping speed with their ears laid back to keep tabs on whatever routed them out behind them, and they'll have their noses and eyes focused upon what's up in front of them. So if you're relatively well concealed, don't blink and are down wind, deer may pass within spitting distance.

Of course, hunting choke points isn't the only effective way to pursue whitetails during the opener. So look upon this strategy as still another tool

in your toolbox that can be brought out when the need arises, yet I'll bet you'll find yourself using it far more often than a lot of other tools you've previously been relying upon.

Another note that has nothing to do with the story; if you choose to climb into a stand at any time this season, be sure to wear a safety harness.

Your family and friends are depending on your safe arrival and hopefully with a deer.



Brian Sears with his 194 3/8" 16 point Buck. Brian is a 4 year member of the Chester River QDMA coop. Photo Courtesy Chestnut Manor Farm.




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“ON THE SCENE”

Pennsylvania Elk

By Andy Aughenbaugh

In August of this year, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), The Maryland Legislative Sportsmen’s Foundation and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) announced the formation of a partnership to determine the viability of elk reintroduction to Western Maryland. Talk of Elk in Maryland, sprung several conversations as to whether something so grand as Elk in Maryland was even possible or were these guys dreaming. Well, Maryland is not the first to take on such an endeavor. Just to the north, the Pennsylvania Game commission took on the lost Elk herd and brought the majestic beast back to the east coast.

When the first European settlers arrived on the North American continent, Eastern Elk ranged from northern New York to central Georgia. The mountains and rolling hills

of Maryland once were the home of the Elk. Hard to believe now, but yes Elk once roamed the Maryland woods.

Pennsylvania’s largest elk concentrations are believed to have been in the Allegheny Mountains. Elk were aggressively pursued wherever they could be found in colonial woods. These efforts took their toll on the Elk population.

Elk were exterminated in southeastern Pennsylvania, and becoming rare in the mountains of the state by the opening of the nineteenth century. By the 1850s, what remained of Pennsylvania’s once mighty elk population was limited to sections of north central Pennsylvania, predominantly in Cameron, Elk and McKean counties. Stories of the last Elk being taken by a hunter are dated to be



around 1877; however, it appears the species was certainly extirpated from the state by the late 1870s, and more than likely, earlier.

In 1913, Pennsylvania’s first shipment of Yellowstone elk arrived by train. The 50 elk cost about \$30 each. Half of the Wyoming Elk shipment went to Clinton County, the other half to Clearfield County. An additional 22 elk were bought from a Monroe County preserve that year. Twelve were released on state lands in Monroe County and the remainder on a Centre County preserve.

In a bold move for the time in 1912, the Game Commissioners and agency Executive Secretary Joseph Kalbfus began talking about re-introducing elk in Pennsylvania. The idea originated from a federal government effort to reduce the mushroom-

ing elk herds at Yellowstone National Park and the Jackson Hole Refuge Area. The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Bureau of Biological Survey and Department of Forestry, unwilling to sanction a hunt for the overabundant animals, opted to relocate some and winter feed the rest. Hunting was seen as the cause for much of the extermination of the wildlife that once roamed the American landscape and it would many years later before hunting would be seen as a positive means to control an animal population.

In 1915, two years after the first elk were released; the Game Commission bought 95 more from Yellowstone. They were released in six counties: Cameron, 24; Carbon, 24; Potter, 24; Forest, 10; Blair, 7; and Monroe, 6.

The elk herd grew and found life east of the Mississippi pleasurable and the return of Elk hunting in 1923 to PA came none too soon to the farmers effected by the crop stealing beasts. However the hunting was short lived due to the pressure on the herd, but losses to poaching and those relocated or shot because of nuisance complaints all played a role in the ensuing decline that occurred.

From the early 1930s to the early 1970s, the PA Game Commission did very little with the state’s small remaining 20 to 70 elk herd during that period.

Then in the 1970’s things got interesting on the PA Elk front. Farmers wanted the Elk killed for eating their crops. One study showed that one Elk eats the same in a day as eight Whitetail deer. The local authorities where the Elk roamed looked to the Elk as pets and enjoyed the added tourism. And even the Game Commission was divided as to what to do with the few, but now growing PA Elk.

Sportsmen spoke up and got involved. Working together, sportsmen, farmers, local politicians and the PA Game Commission, began the efforts to rebuild the population and maintain it at a level the land and people could live with. This was no easy task lead by the sportsmen. Many public meetings were held, with some very hotly debates. But in the end, the Elk and the local residents won out. Today the Elk of PA are a tourist attraction, and a limited Elk season is held each year in PA.

Population Survey

In the winter of 2010 PA elk program personnel conducted the minimum number of elk count within the Elk Management Area. A total

See Aughenbaugh Page 11



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Captain Mitch Quillen (left) and crew won the Fish for a Cure 2011 tournament out of Annapolis, MD.



Renee Larrimore strikes again with this nice Speckled Trout caught with Captain Chris Sewell of Fishead Charter service in Swansboro, N.C.

Aughenbaugh ...

Continued from Page 10

of 636 elk were counted during the survey. (350 adult cows, 125 calves, 110 branched bulls, and 51 spikes). This is an increase of from the 2009 count of 103 elk, the biggest changes in the herd appear to be from cow (females >1 year of age) segment of the herd. However the elk program personnel were aware of elk that we were unable to find during the count in the winter of 2009 and therefore were uncounted. Because of the type of study they use to count the herd is a minimum number study, only those physically confirmed are counted. Generally, they seem to believe that there seemed to be no significant increase in the number of calves being produced from the herd over the last two years of the MNA survey, thus indicating that some were uncounted the previous year or survival was higher in 2009.

Overall, it appears the increase in the herd is mostly coming from the Pottersdale subpopulation. This herd is mainly elk from the 2000 elk trap and transfer project and their offspring; therefore, the majority

of the cows in this herd are likely in their prime reproductive years.

HUNTERS HARVEST 53 ELK IN 2011

During this year's Pennsylvania elk season 53 of the 57 licensed elk hunters were successful. Of that total, 19 were antlered elk and 34 were antlerless elk.

The heaviest antlered elk was taken by William G. Zee, of Doylestown, Bucks County. He took a 930-pound (estimated live weight), 9x8 on Nov. 1, in Goshen Township, Clearfield County. It's unofficial Boone & Crockett green score was 426 and five-eighths inches. If this score holds up after the required 60-day drying time, it would be ranked second on Pennsylvania's Big Game Records for non-typical elk.

Other high-scoring antlered elk (all estimated live weights) were: Jesse M. Heiple, of Somerset, Somerset County, took a 772-pound, 8x7 on Nov. 1, in Jay Township, Elk County, which green-scored at 399 and three-eighths inches; Ken Kastely, of Carroll, Ohio, took a 780-pound, 9x9 on Nov. 1, in Covington Township, Clearfield County, which green-scored at 386 and

five-eighths inches; and Calvin E. Wallace, of Kylertown, Clearfield County, took a 711-pound, 6x7 on Oct. 31, in Jay Township, Elk County.

The heaviest antlerless elk was taken by Garry L. Foreman, of Hershey, Dauphin County, who harvested a 601-pound (estimated live weight) antlerless elk on Nov. 5, in Jay Township, Elk County.

Michael McGinnis, of Lyndhurst, Virginia was the successful bidder for the Elk Conservation Tag. McGinnis harvested a 7x9 on Oct. 19, in Jay Township, in Elk County. McGinnis purchased the

Conservation Elk Tag during the Safari Club International's national conference in early 2011, and was able to hunt from Sept. 1-Nov. 5.

Under the state law that created the Elk Conservation Tag, of the \$29,000 that McGinnis bid for the tag, \$23,200 will go to the Game Commission's Game Fund and \$5,800 will be retained by Safari Club International.

Are Elk in the future for the Maryland mountains? Only time and the studies will tell. But there are a few Elk roaming east of the Mississippi in the mountains of Pennsylvania.



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Charlie and CJ Fegan, are all smiles last year with this buck. Photo Courtesy of Fegans Taxidermy.

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“FISHIN’ BACK EAST”

ANDREW RAGAS – PERSUING A CAREER IN FISHING

Part II

By Jim Gronaw

Note: This is the second in a series of articles focusing on anglers with outdoors/fishing related jobs and careers.

I think that just about every one who reads the outdoor magazines of today would love to some how, in some way, make a living at either hunting or fishing, as long as it paid the bills and provided for their family. Yes, there are many ways to pursue this...guide, retail, tackle store owner, conservation officer, fisheries biologist, outdoor writer and more. With all the folks who love the outdoors, it's a wonder that there aren't more people seeking the lifestyle and dreams of an outdoor career. We can't all be tournament anglers, so we have to do what we can.

One such young angler who is doing this is 24-year old Andrew Ragas who was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois. Ragas is a multi-species, multi-talented fisherman who has used his knowledge and education of the internet to carry out his ultimate dream...to make a living at fishing, and to literally live a lifestyle that is in constant flow with all angling pursuits. Although trophy smallmouths and muskies are his favorite quarries, Ragas finds time to run down small lake largemouths,



river walleye gigs and jumps at the shot at those salmonoid runs in the Great Lakes areas. Spending 150 days on the water has done well for his angling knowledge.

Ragas is a 2010 graduate of Loyola University in Chicago with a bachelor's degree in Communication Studies, and an associate's in Visual Communication and Graphic Design. He currently designs websites for angling and other related business as well as mainstream

organizations and individuals of great diversity. As the designer and owner of ragasmedia.com, he currently operates his own website called fishing-headquarters.com and contributes weekly fishing reports to the Chicago-Sun Times. He is sponsored by several companies such as

Quantum Fishing, Corland Line and GoPro

Camera. Ragas is a young man who is jumping into the fishing industry at many angles, with the hopes of gaining a career in the fishing industry.

If the Internet and cyberspace has done anything at all to the outdoor world, it has made it a faster educational experience for the vast majority of fishermen. We can find out who caught what, what the hot bait is and where the hot bite is in one evening and a little bit of searching. We can plan that dream trip or find out if the weather will cancel the trip with a couple of clicks of the mouse. We can order all the carp or trout fishing gear we need right from the comfort of our home. And we can pinpoint

specific hotspots on satellite maps with a couple more clicks. Clearly, the web has changed the way we fish and the way we plan to fish...mostly for the good. Yes, there are many

'discussion boards' out there that pose as a cloak of anonymity for folks to bad mouth each other from hundreds of miles apart. But the pluses of cyber angling far out weigh the bad. Ragas has utilized his website as a unique source to key on broad, multi-species topics with a heavy focus on the simple fact that all species are worthy of effort. His bloggers and topics have run the board on species, to include fish like bowfin, alligator gar, carp and cats. Mainstream headlines always get some ink like largemouths, smallies, northern pike, walleye and muskies... all big names in the mid west angling and Great Lakes picture.

Clearly, to make a living at this will be a tall order, and Ragas is fully aware of the effort it will require.

He is open to media productions, publications, promotions television or whatever avenues may open up for a future in the fishing world. Where most up-and-coming anglers believe that the professional bass tournament trails are the only option in 'making it', Ragas utilizes his outstanding skills in graphic and website design to assist emerging tackle companies like Sims Spinners, Bearpaws Handpoured Baits and Stankx Bait Company. Maybe not big names Back East, but these are truly quality baits and products.

See Gronaw Page 12



Recipe submitted by Sportsman's Table, the outdoor enthusiast's resource for preparing, cooking and serving fish and game, located in HellertownPA. For more information Visit www.SportsMansTable.com or Call 1-866-640-6802.

Seminole Venison Stew

Ingredients: Seminole Venison Stew is from Complete Fish and Game Cookbook from Sportsman's Table Catalog. 3 or 4 pounds of venison 4 medium to large potatoes, sliced 4 ribs celery with green tops, chopped 4 medium onions, chopped (divided) 3 large green tomatoes, chopped 1/4 cup cooking oil salt red pepper flakes water

Prep Time: 25 min.
Cook Time: 3 hours
Ready In: 3 1/2 hours
Yields: 6-8 servings



Directions: Seminole Venison Stew is from Complete Fish and Game Cookbook from Sportsman's Table Catalog. In a crockery or other nonmetallic container, mix 2 tbs. of salt into 5 cups of water. Chop onion and add it to the mixture. Trim the venison and cut into 2-inch chunks. Put the chunks in the salt solution, cover, and marinate overnight, or at least 10 hours. Drain the meat. In a large pot or Dutch oven, heat the cooking oil and 1/4 cup of water. Add the meat and vegetables, along with some

salt and red pepper flakes. (If you are not familiar with the impact of red pepper flakes start with 1/8 tsp.) Bring the mixture to a simmer, reduce the heat to very low, cover, and simmer-do not boil-for 2-3 hours, adding more water if needed.

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Gronaw ...

Continued from Page 13

Andrew Ragas hopes to settle down in the Minocqua/Lakeland area of Wisconsin, where his favorite species, smallmouth bass and muskies, are big and in big numbers. He can recall as a child fishing off the dock and shooting to catch and release a hundred sunfish by the days' end. He can also remember the 51 - inch muskie he caught and released last summer. Two extremes, for sure. Taught by his father and grandfather, his desire to learn and catch more fish just exploded to the point where it has almost totally consumed him.

In this day and age, when so many young people are misguided and lost in this world with little or no focus, it is indeed refreshing to see someone who is striving in every way to make fishing, and fishing related options, a future career. Andrew told me "In my mind, fishing is more than just an obsessive hobby...it is a lifestyle. I am a firm believer that if you treat the sport with respect and use your God-given talents on the water, you will be rewarded with great catches."

Check out Andrew Ragas on the web at www.ragasmedia.com or at www.fishing-headquarters.com

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Doug Scott - \$8,100
Marty Simounet - \$2,440

Main Tournament
1st Place - Steve Dodson - 51.65 lbs - \$21,875
2nd Place - Andrew Turner/Lee Tippet - \$13,125
3rd Place - John Patchett - 41.5 lbs - 8,750
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1st Place - Andrew Turner/Lee Tippet - 42.45 lbs - \$2,075



1st Place - Steve Dodson and son Mike - 51.65 lbs

2nd Place - John Patchett - 41.5 lbs - \$1,245
3rd Place - Doug Scott - 41 lbs - \$830

\$100
1st Place - Andrew Turner/Lee Tippet - 42.45 lbs - \$3,850
2nd Place - John Patchett - 41.5 lbs - \$2,310
3rd Place - Doug Scott - 41 lbs - \$1,540
\$150
1st Place - Andrew Turner/Lee Tippet - 42.45 lbs - \$5,175
2nd Place - John Patchett - 41.5 lbs - \$3,105
3rd Place - Doug Scott - 41 lbs - \$2,070

\$200
1st Place - Andrew Turner/Lee Tippet - 42.45 lbs - \$6,100
2nd Place - Doug Scott - 41 lbs - \$3,660
3rd Place - Marty Simounet - 40.25 lbs - \$2,440

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2nd Place - Andrew Turner/Lee Tippet - 42.45 lbs



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Myron Stoltzfus of Sudlersville traveled to Southern Iowa and took this 235 lb. 14 point buck in early November with a bow.

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Bill Short tagged this nice buck during the 3 day muzzleloader season earlier this year. Photo Courtesy of Shore Country Outdoors.

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Maryland DNR certifies new Blueline Tilefish record

Ocean City, Md. Brendan Hoffman, 31, of Seaford, Delaware, caught a 17-pound, seven-ounce blueline tilefish on October 9, setting the State record. The Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) confirmed the catch, naming Hoffman the first blueline tilefish record holder since the species was added to the State's angler award list this year.

"We had never seen a blueline tilefish that big on the boat or in photos, so we weighed it on the boat scale," said Hoffman. "It was over 17 pounds, so we took it back to the certified scale at Sunset Provisions where it tipped the scale at 17 pounds, seven ounces."

Hoffman and his party launched their 33-foot HydraSport from Ocean City to make the 60-mile run to the Baltimore Canyon in search of tuna, dolphin and a white marlin or two.

After about five hours of trolling without a sign of billfish or tunas, they decided they should change their strategy and make good use of the flat of butterfish bait they had brought.

"We weren't rigged or prepared for bottom fishing," said Hoffman. "So, we scrounged around for any sinkers we could find to get the baits down 200 feet to the bottom. We found some inline sinkers and tied them together to drop the baits over a likely spot on the western edge of the Canyon."

On the first drift, Hoffman's friend felt a hit on his line and reeled in a nice blueline tilefish. On the second drift, the big one took Hoffman's bait.

Weigh master Stan Hansen at Sunset Provisions, an official DNR Angler Award Center, confirmed the weight. DNR biologist Keith Lockwood examined the 33 1/4-inch fish and

confirmed the species to complete the certification process for the record.

"Over the last decade, anglers have discovered the potential for great bottom fishing for species such as black belied rose fish, golden tile and blueline tile, as a supplement to other blue water possibilities," said Steve Doctor, DNR Atlantic Coast Program biologist and current golden tilefish state record holder. "It's a great mid-date alternative to pelagic options that are often hard to find when the sun is high."

The current all-tackle

blueline tilefish world record is 20-pounds, four-ounces for a fish caught in 2009 over the Norfolk Canyon off of the Virginia Coast.

For information on Maryland fishing records, the Maryland Angler Award program and the Maryland Fishing Challenge, visit dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/challenge/.



Chad Loyd (left) Brendan Hoffman (right)

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Thurs, Nov 24	Thanksgiving..Sporting Clays Course
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Sat, Nov 26 - Dec 10	Deer Shotgun Season
Tues, Dec 13- Jan 28	Duck Season; limit 6 per person/day
Thur, Dec 15 - Jan 28	Goose Season; limit 2 per person/day
Sun, Dec 25	Christmas..Sporting Clays Course
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Guidance for waterfowl hunting on agricultural lands

Annapolis, Md. The Maryland Natural Resources Police (NRP) would like to remind hunters that State and federal regulations allow waterfowl hunting on agriculture fields only if they have been properly harvested or left in their natural state.

"This year's tropical storms and hurricanes have resulted in some agricultural crops not being harvested. These fields cannot be hunted legally if the un-harvested crops have been manipulated — mowed, knocked down, etc.," said Col. George F. Johnson IV. "The un-harvested fields can only be hunted if the crops remain in their natural state,

only affected by the weather. Manipulated, un-harvested fields must be disked or plowed under, so that the grain is not accessible to the waterfowl for a period of 10 days prior to hunting."

It is also unlawful to hunt waterfowl in areas where small grains have been top sown or broadcast on top of the soil, leaving the grain available to feeding birds. Before hunting can occur in these areas, all seeds must be germinated and growing, entirely covered by soil, or completely removed, at least 10 days prior to hunting. These situations are commonly referred to as waterfowl baiting.

Baiting also includes distributing

grain on the land or water to entice waterfowl into hunting situations. It is not necessary for a hunter to know that an area is baited to be in violation of Maryland's migratory bird baiting regulation, which is considered a strict liability offense. It is the hunter's responsibility to take all reasonable steps to ensure that the hunting area is not or has not been baited. NRP recommends the following:

Hunters should become familiar with


normal farming practices in the area (consult with USDA State Extension Specialist);

Hunters should consult the waterfowl hunting guide, and farmer or landowner regarding the farming practices, and any possible baiting on or near the hunting area;

Hunter should thoroughly inspect the area prior to hunting and leave the site if they find grain or feed.


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Howard Fluty blended in well in his camouflage to bag this nice 8 point buck taken this year. *Photo courtesy of Fegans Taxidermy.*

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Coastal Report

By Capt. Mark Sampson

The fall migration of rockfish is "on" and as the fish work their way down the coast Ocean City anglers are taking advantage of every opportunity to get out and fish on days when time-off from work or school coincides with decent weather. As a result, you can bet that on many afternoons and weekends the waters down around the inlet are sporting a slew of boats and fishermen vying to get a hook into the coveted 28-inch or better striped bass. It's certainly no secret that drifting live eels or spot along the bottom of the channels that lead in and out of the inlet is about the most consistently productive technique and perhaps the best way to end up with thick, white, striper fillets for dinner without first visiting the fish market.

But as more and more anglers learn to appreciate the joys of our late season striped bass fishery, there will certainly be times when some will get a bit irked by the busy, bumper-to-bumper weekend conditions that occasionally occur down

at the inlet. A decade ago someone fishing the inlet area in December would not likely see, let alone have to fish next to another boat, even on a weekend. How times have changed! But that's ok, busy fishing grounds indicate a productive fishery and if it gets too crowded to fish in one spot there are certainly other places to catch rockfish.

That's one of the nice things about having the ocean at our doorstep. The fishing may or may not be any better, but no matter how congested the bay waters may get, anglers can almost always slip outside the inlet and at least find a little breathing room between themselves and other fishermen. Fortunately, when it comes to chasing rockfish during this fall migration period, anglers will often find that the ocean waters are far from a second-rate alternative to fishing the busy inlet. Instead, the waters from the surf on out a mile or two can at times actually prove to be the best option for tangling with monster rockfish.

As striped bass migrate down the coast each fall a fair number of them find their way, at least temporarily, into our inlet and bay waters. But by far the lion's share of these fish stay out in the ocean and sustain themselves by feeding on schools of herring, menhaden, and multitude of other natural near-shore prey.

When these fish are actively feeding it's not uncommon for them to push schools of their prey up close to the surface. Such activity does not go unnoticed by throngs of seabirds, particularly large gannets, terns, and gulls. When the fish are active the birds can be so numerous that even from the beach they can be seen as a dark undulating cloud over a mile away. Therefore, anglers trying to locate feeding fish can often spot them from the shoreline, note what street they're offshore of, then hop in their boat and run out to intercept them. However, fishermen will more often simply run out the inlet and either head north or south until they spot the flying targets they're looking for.

When anglers actually reach the feeding birds they must take care not to spook, or as they say "put the fish down" by racing their boats into the middle of the action. Instead fishermen should slow down a few hundred yards away and approach with great caution not to get directly in the middle of the feeding activity. While this may like "no-brainer" type advice, running into the middle of feeding fish probably one of the most common mistakes made by novice anglers. To make matters worse, a lot of times some bone-head will chase down a school of fish that other fishermen who were there first, were already working. Such a move will not help to make friends in the fishing community!

Offshore stripers may be caught while trolling, drifting with bait, or by casting plugs, poppers, or flies. In most cases, trolling will prove easiest and most productive because by dropping their lines far back and making turns outside the birds, anglers are able to get their lines in the "strike zone" without putting their boat into the "spook zone."

Bait fishermen will often find that by watching the birds and getting a feel for the general direction they're moving, they can move ahead of the feeding fish, shut down the boat's motor, and (hopefully) the fish will move close enough to where their baits can be drifted back and intercepted.

Many will agree that casting artificial lures or flies is the most exciting and rewarding way to pursue offshore stripers. But casting often

requires that the boat be positioned quite close to the action and extra care must be given not to blow opportunities as they come along. Here again, fishermen should note the direction of travel of the feeding birds and then run ahead and slightly to the side of them. This will allow the fish to pass beside, rather than directly under the boat and give anglers plenty of occasions to make casts as they pass by. Being off to the side of the school not only lessens the chance of the boat spooking the stripers, it also allows the anglers lures to stay in the strike zone longer during the retrieve because they can crank the offering through the entire school, not just a part of it.

Veteran anglers know that there is often more than just rockfish beneath the feeding birds. Big bluefish will be right in there too, slashing away at the baitfish just as hard as they can. The bluefish may or may not be welcomed by anglers intent on hooking stripers, but sometimes there's no way to avoid bites by the unwanted predators. However, often anglers will find that the rockfish will be feeding down below the blues and if they fish their lines deep and a little farther behind what appears to be the main activity on top, they'll get the bites they're looking for.

Near-shore rockfishing comes with no guarantees. Many times the ocean will simply be too rough or the birds not able to be found. Other times the birds will be feeding but there won't be any stripers under them. But when everything clicks just right, rockfishing just off the beach can be one of the most exciting and rewarding fishing opportunities of our fall and early winter season.



Pressie Bokyin of Baltimore Maryland caught this Striper in the fall of 2010 aboard the *Kingfish II* in Cape Charles, Virginia.

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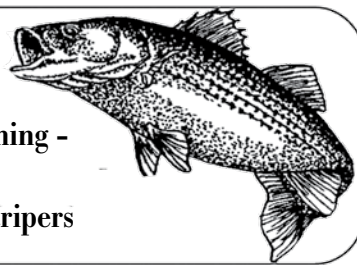
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MILLION DOLLAR DEER ???

Images of this whitetail deer have been floating around the Internet. The fence in the background tells only part of the story.

This buck is claimed to be worth a million bucks, or just \$7500 per sperm straw. It begs the questions such as: what came first, megatron, super-deer or folks who would pay to shoot them; scientifically we have the know how, but why should we; is this buck domestic livestock, and if so is killing him still considered hunting; what does the 73% of those non-hunters who still support hunting think; and has the idea of trophy for some surpassed the satisfaction of the chase?

Whatever your answers are to these questions, or your feelings toward this growing trend of trophy at any cost, you will never see such animals listed in Boone and Crockett records.



Dale Gertz with his unique non-typical Whitetail bagged on September 15th. *Photo courtesy of Macrotech*



Bud Malone with his impressive 6x6 Elk shot out west with a muzzle-loader. *Photo courtesy of Winks Sporting Goods*



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Mid-Bay Report

By Chuck Prahl

I used to love writing the December – January article for the Journal because it was fun to make up a Christmas List for fishermen. It was really stuff that I was hoping someone would

read about and give to me!

Over the years, I've accumulated about all the tackle and related items

that I might even remotely ever need. There are however, a few things that might still turn me on at Christmas.

I have never been fully satisfied with any tackle bag or box, although I've probably had a hundred or so. The big bags with all the plastic boxes inside do not thrill me. I still like the hard ones with lots of drawers and compartments. Manufacturers never seem to run out of ideas and I never find the right one.

The main objection I have with the bags filled with plastic boxes is that small items seem to migrate from one section of the tackle box to another without my help.

Anyway, I would be happy to see a new box under the tree.

Another gift that I still relish,

though it comes in a very unimpressive box, is a folding pocket knife. I've had more than a hundred of them too, but I'm still impressed by a truly handsome folder.

No angler should ever be caught without a pocket knife, fishing or not. I use mine ten times a day. I always have dirty fingernails and nothing cuts braided line like a sharp blade.

Anything larger than 3 1/2 inches is too large to carry all the time. A small pen blade for fingernails and a larger one for line and heavy cutting is fine. Swiss Army knives are too bulky.

I like real bone or stag handles for beauty, but imitation bone is much more durable. Stainless steel is a mandatory blade for anglers.

You can pay 25 to 80 dollars for some American and German knives. Names like Schrade, Case, Hen and Rooster and Buck cross my mind. They make quality folders in hundreds of patterns. You can be truly proud when you pull one of these beauties from your pocket. Other guys are impressed with a really good looking knife.

Knife sharpening tools come to mind as a related item. Special stones and patented sharpening gifts are popular. They give you a quality edge without removing much metal.

I used to spend lots of time getting that elusive razor edge, but they do not hold up well in hard use. I now use a draw sharpener that gives me a wire edge after a few strokes. It's easy, but does remove a lot of metal. A sharp blade is a must.

A knife I have found to be quite durable, well made, handsome, but still inexpensive is made by Frost Cutlery.

My wife gives me a hard time when I buy tackle boxes, knives, and rods and reels. I simply cannot resist the temptation even though there are plenty of things I need more, like cloth-

ing.

When I think of clothing, I think of things that keep me warm and dry or cool. I never think ties.

An angler's coat should be warm and waterproof. Spring and fall mornings can be cold, but the days can be warm so you need a coat that is large enough to house lighter gear that might be adequate when things warm up. Spray and rain can be handled without resorting to full-fledged rain gear, though nothing beats it in a downpour. I hate rain gear, and consequently, I've been soaked on many occasions. My problem with rain gear is that it seldom is big enough to go over cold weather clothing.

Rods and reels for Christmas would be great if they are exactly what I want, but then it wouldn't be a surprise. Still, I could handle that if someone wanted to really make me happy.

My 24-year old boat is coming apart at the seams, but that would be too much to ask.

Our striper season winds down in December. Big boats with warm cabins are following them down the Bay. Good luck!

December and January are for freshwater fishing or going to Florida. Crappies are always willing, no matter how cold the water.

One place that can always be counted on for a few is the Airies Bridge on the Transquaking in Dorchester County. Most of the crappies and bluegill are small, but they are willing, which is all a bridge fisherman needs.

This is bobber fishing in its most delicate form. The float much react to the slightest nibble. I use slender but brightly colored floats. I weight them

See Prahl Page 25

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Prahl ...

Continued from Page 24

so they barely float. On the terminal end, I use a tiny jig head or dart with a 1-inch twister.

Sometimes a ripple will supply all the action necessary. Otherwise, a slight twitch and slow retrieve usually draws a hit. This formula works in

most crappie water. A wax worm in place of an artificial is also very effective.

Another cold weather location where perch, crappie, bluegill, bass and pickerel are available all winter is the Pocomoke River at Snow Hill. Live minnows and grass shrimp catch everything in these waters. Low tide gets most of the fish out of the wood and into the river where you can get at them.

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Boonie Erwin has the gloves and hat on for this cold water Striper. Photo Courtesy of Trophy Bait and Tackle.

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Grandmother shoots moose with 63" spread

LA CROSSE, Wis. -- The autumn weather is probably getting some people in the mood to hunt.

Joyce Herlitzke, an 82-year-old grandmother from La Crosse, shot a moose in mid-September in the Yukon Territory.

The rack is 63-inches across, or more than five feet. Herlitzke dropped it with a rifle from 250 yards away.

It's rare that an 82 year old would even be on this hunt, much less drop a trophy like this one. But Herlitzke says the guys she was hunting with made her feel right at home.

"When I got up there I thought, oh boy here are all these guys, and I told Keith [her son] if I'm really quiet, it's not that I'm tired or bored, I'm just not going to say too much (or) embarrass myself. Every single hunter gave me a hug,

you know, and a kiss on the cheek and say you can do this," said Herlitzke.

Joyce starting hunting four years ago as a way to spend time with family.

The moose won't even fit in her home. Her son is building a new trophy room for it.



Wade Harris was in Queen Anne's County, MD. when he shot his first whitetail with a bow.

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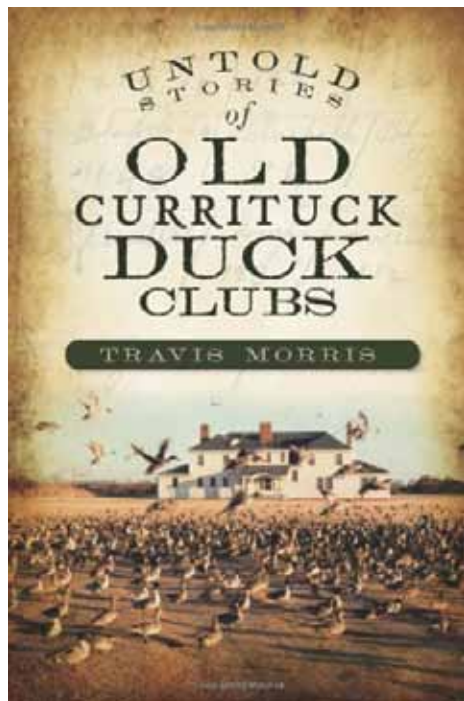
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Book of the Month

Untold Stories of Old Currituck Duck Clubs (NC)

By Travis Morris

In this fourth installment of stories about the tradition of duck hunting on Currituck Sound, local resident Travis Morris delves into the history of the Currituck, Pine Island and Narrows Island private hunting clubs. These fascinating untold stories of the clubs weave together documents from old files with a variety of firsthand interviews and accounts. From



stories of the clubs' prestigious members and guests--such as J.P. Morgan and William Vanderbilt--to tales from local guides of some of the old float box rigs, fans of Morris's Currituck books won't be disappointed by this latest volume, and first-time readers will find themselves transported out to the marshland, drifting along to the sound of duck calls.

About the Author

Travis is a lifelong Currituck resident, a respected gunner and fisherman, and the author of Duck Hunting on Currituck Sound. He also runs Currituck Realty.

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Kree Engel with her first deer back in September with a bow. Photo Courtesy of Macrotech.

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New report forces council to reconsider summer Flounder recommendations

2012 stock size lower than previously estimated

A Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) report released last month (<http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/publications/crd/crd1120/>) indicates that the summer flounder stock was rebuilt in 2010. However, the updated assessment predicts that the threshold fishing mortality rate will be exceeded in 2011 and that overfishing is occurring. The new information also suggests that the commercial quota and recreational harvest limit recommended by the Council for 2012 are too high and may need to be reduced substantially.

The new information became available only now because NEFSC scientists were unable to provide a comprehensive update earlier in the year. The Scientific and Statistical Committee, Monitoring Committee, and Council had developed 2012 recommendations in July and August, which were based on a projection from a 2010 assessment update.

"The timing of this report from the Northeast Fisheries Science Center highlights the importance of making more resources available to conduct Mid-Atlantic species assessments when we need them," said Executive Director, Chris Moore. "More often than not, we find ourselves in a situation where Mid-Atlantic species are not a top priority and we're left with little or no information for our stocks. It is unfortunate that instead of focusing on the success we've had rebuilding summer flounder, we

are now in situation where we have to address and explain reductions in harvest limits."

"The current situation is an unfortunate consequence resulting from the redirection of Science Center resources to New England groundfish," said Rick Robins, Council Chairman. "We appreciate the difficulty of beginning a new specification process for summer flounder but are committed to working with our management partners to provide a recommendation to the National Marine Fisheries Service as soon as possible."

The Council is scheduling meetings of the Scientific and Statistical Committee and Monitoring Committee to review the new information on summer flounder and provide recommendations at the December Council meeting.



NEXT GENERATION!



Andrew Houck with his 9.5 lb., 24" long Sheepshead caught in Ocean City. Photo Courtesy of Clyde's Sports Shop



Reese Johnson 14, was on target during Muzzeloder season earlier this year.



Allen Elkins 1st buck during Youth Day - Photo Courtesy of Shore Country Outdoors.



Kyleigh Hessian with her first deer on youth day. The 6 point weighed 110 lbs. and was taken on the "Littleworth" farm in Caroline County.



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Scott Walters with his Harford County Buck taken with a Matthews Reezen bow back in October. Photo Courtesy Deer Creek Archery.

DNR and partners stock Largemouth Bass in Middle River

Middle River, Md. - The Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Inland Fisheries Biologists along with volunteers from the Maryland Bass Federation Nation released 250 largemouth bass on October 21, into several high-quality locations in Middle River as part of DNR's bass fishing enhancement program.

"This partnership between DNR and avid largemouth bass anglers will hopefully teach us something about the behavior of the fish. We hope that these bass will stay in Middle River for a long time," said DNR Tidal Bass Program Manager Joe Love. "We encourage anglers to release their largemouth bass catch to help with the efforts to restore a sustainable population in Middle River."



DNR staff inserted red identification tags into 200 of the fish as part of a study to find out if the bass remain in the river. Any angler who catches a tagged fish and provides the date and location along with the tag number to DNR will earn a collectable Largemouth Bass Program Volunteer hat. The DNR Bass Program return address is printed on the tag along with the four-digit code. Anglers may also call Joe Love with the information at 410-260-8257.

This is the third consecutive year that DNR has released adult, 4- to 12-inch largemouth bass in Middle River. This year, approximately twenty percent of the fish came from the State's Joseph Manning Hatchery in the Cedarville State Forest near Brandywine. The rest of the fish came from a Maryland-certified commercial hatchery in Arkansas using funds provided by the Maryland Bass Federation Nation, M.R. Bass, and local businesses, including Domino Foods, Inc. of Baltimore.

For more information on the program, visit dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/bass/. To learn more about the Maryland Bass Federation Nation, go to MDBASS.com.

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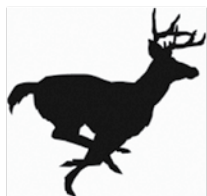


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All-Tackle IGFA striped bass approved

Greg Myerson's 37.1 kg (81 lb 14 oz) striped bass record was approved last month after the IGFA's Record Committee came to a consensus on the catch and its supporting documentation. Myerson's catch created a whirlwind of excitement in early August for striper anglers everywhere, but especially in the northeastern USA.

"After a 15 minute fight on my St. Croix rod and Quantum reel, I got the striped bass close enough to the boat for netting," Myerson shared in the testimony accompanying his world record application. "The fish was bigger than I thought.

I slipped on eel slime and banged my ribs against the gunwale of the boat. But it didn't matter. The monster fish was mine. At this point it was about 8 pm, I put the fish into the hold and fished the rest of the tide.

As I fished, I repeatedly peered into the hold and asked myself 'is this striper really that big?' The following morning, I brought the striped bass to Jack's Shoreline Bait and Tackle to be weighed. The fish measured 54 inches in length and tipped Jack's digital scale at 81.88 pounds. It really was that big."

The IGFA's approval of Myerson's catch marks the end of Albert McReynolds' 29-year reign as All-Tackle record holder for this prestigious saltwater species. In addition to now holding the All-Tackle record, Myerson's catch also landed him the new men's 37 kg (80 lb) line class record, which previously stood at 70 lb. Congratulations to Greg Myerson on this historical record catch – and good luck to you striper fishermen aiming to best it in the future!



Greg Myerson poses with his world record Striped Bass.



The fall 2011 rockfish season kicks off with the Steele family aboard *Kingfish II* with Captain Harry Nield out of Tangier Sound. Parker Steele with his first Rockfish on right.



Our own Capt. Lee Buckel was out hunting for Sika deer on the lower shore when this magnificent whitetail made a wrong turn.

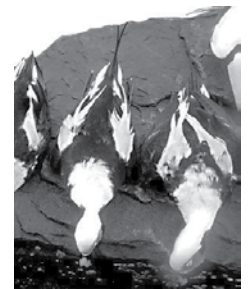
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2011 a banner year for young Striped Bass in Virginia

Source: Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS), College of William and Mary

Preliminary results from a 2011 survey conducted by researchers at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) suggest the production of a strong class of young-of-year striped bass in the Virginia portion of Chesapeake Bay. The 2011 year class represents the group of fish hatched this spring.

The results are good news for the recreational and commercial anglers who pursue this popular game fish because this year class is expected to grow to fishable size in 3 to 4 years. The results are also good news for Chesapeake Bay, where striped bass play an important ecological role as top predators.

The 2011 study, formally known as the Juvenile Striped Bass Seine Survey, recorded more than 27 fish per seine haul, significantly higher than the historic average of 7.5 fish per seine haul. This is a significant increase from recent years, during which catches of young fish were average.

Although survey results show that numbers of young-of-year striped bass in Virginia have been average to above-average since 2003, results from a similar survey in Maryland indicate that numbers of juvenile striped bass there were below average in 2008, 2009, and 2010. Striped bass populations and the fisheries they support depend on the availability of strong year classes to mitigate the effect of less productive years.

Professor Mary Fabrizio, who directs the Juvenile Striped Bass Seine Survey at VIMS, notes that the economic and ecological value of striped bass lends



significant interest to the year-to-year status of their population. "By estimating the relative number of young-of-year striped bass," she says, "our survey provides an important measure of annual and long-term trends in the Bay's striped bass population."

The VIMS Juvenile Striped Bass Seine Survey, managed by Leonard Machut, currently samples 18 stations in the Rappahannock, York, and James River watersheds, tributaries of Chesapeake Bay. Each year, biologists sample each site 5 times from early July through mid-September, deploying a 30.5 m-long (100-foot) seine net from the shore. They count each netted fish, measure its fork length (the distance from snout to the fork in the tail), and return it to the water. These young striped bass generally measure between 40 and 100 mm (1.5-4 inches).

Survey scientists measured nearly 4,200 juvenile striped bass at these stations in 2011. VIMS has been conducting the survey annually since 1967 for the Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC).

The Bay's striped bass population has rebounded from historic lows in the late 1970s and early 1980s, following fishing bans enacted by Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia in the mid- to late-1980s. Since then, the Bay's striped bass population has increased to the point that striped bass are now considered recovered.

For more information about the Virginia Juvenile Striped Bass survey visit the survey's webpage at http://www.vims.edu/research/departments/fisheries/programs/juvenile_striped_bass/index.php

PRICELESS!

(Right) - PJ Kilchenstein, 15, of Westminster with his Grandfather, Jay Beigel, PJ shot this 6 pt Buck in Preston County, West Virginia, on opening day, of rifle season, Nov. 22, 2010

(Below) - PJ Kilchenstein, 15, of Westminster, shot this 125 lb, 7 pt Buck, in Baltimore County, on Youth Day, November 13, 2010, while hunting with his Granfather Jay Beigel"



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By Steve Huettner

Ever since Maryland reopened black bear hunting in 2004, I dutifully mailed my application and \$10 check, in the hopes of being able to hunt bears in my home state. Every September I would log onto the DNR website to see if my number had

been chosen, only to have my hopes crushed.

I was in my office working in early October (yes I have real full time job) when I saw a phone call from Oakland Maryland. Thinking quickly if I had owed anyone money up in that neck of the woods, I answered the phone. It was Maryland DNR informing me that a chosen hunter was unable to use his tag and I was on the alternate list. I began to think, 3 weeks before the season, a busy work and home schedule, and no idea where to hunt; sure I'll take the tag.

Once I got a pass from my wife, I then had to think about whom I would take as my hunting partner. I have several friends who have hunted bears throughout North America and were willing to go. After much thought I decided the ideal person for this hunt would be someone much younger, stronger, in better shape, and had a newer truck than myself. The person to who fit this bill was my friend Dan who enjoys taking a week off and hiking into the mountains out west to hunt with everything he needs to survive on his back.

Once I had talked Dan into going, next came where to hunt. Bear season was in less than 3 weeks and due to previous engagements, I would need to focus my scouting. Thankfully I had a cell phone full of people who had told me that if I ever drew a tag they would “take care of me”. After ten days of being avoided like an insurance salesman, I realized I'd better switch to plan B, public land.

After talking with Maryland's black bear guru Harry Spiker, I was able to “narrow” my focus to a few thousand acres of land to scout in one day. The Sunday before the season found Dan and I arriving in Garrett County armed with maps, GPS, and charts. Twelve hours and several miles

of walking had us thinking we had perhaps found a spot to hunt bears.

Opening morning had us hunting the edge of our bear area. We saw plenty of deer, turkey and

grouse, but nary a bear did we see. We decided to hike more into the heart of our spot. Descending into the valley we entered a nasty, wet, smelly bog; surrounded by dense stands of hardwoods, laurel thickets, and berry bushes. It was a place you would wish you worst enemy to get lost in, and thus was prime bear habitat. The area was full of bear droppings (yes a bear does really poop in the woods), trees with claws marks, and plenty of food.

The next morning began our 2 mile trek in the dark to our spot (thank you GPS). I must admit hiking into a bear swamp in the dark with nothing but a headlamp makes one question their sanity. Somehow we managed to find the clearing we would be hunting and we set up 50 yards apart on the ground.

Three hours into our morning sit, Dan texted me and suggested we try blowing on some predator calls, in which I replied it couldn't hurt any. Fifteen minutes later after doing my best impersonation of a dying rabbit I heard a sound in the thicket behind me. As I looked over my shoulder and in the thicket 12 yards away staring at me was a black bear. I soon realized that sounding like a free meal while sitting on the ground was perhaps not the smartest idea. After about 2 minutes the bear thankfully caught my scent, realized I wasn't too easy of a meal, and blasted out the thicket. I let Dan know about my close encounter and to be ready.

Ten minutes later I heard the report of Dan's .338 bark. I could see Dan's face was completely white and he began to stammer that he had just



finished reading an article on this phone about hunting bears with predator calls. As he finished the article it said not to use predator calls while sitting on the ground. After finishing the article he heard a splash and looked to his right where a black bear was staring at him from 6 yards. The bear realized Dan was not a rabbit, and Dan realized the bear was what we were hunting. The bear decided to get a meal somewhere else and Dan did his best impersonation of close quarter shooting. The bear never made it ten yards after one shot from the .338.

After tagging, field dressing and taking photos we began our trek back to the truck. 500 yards of bog separated us from terra firma. Every third step found us sinking up to our knee and pulling each out of soft spots, all while dragging a bear. 2 1/2 hours later we finally made it back to the truck with trophy in tow.

It was a great, inexpensive, DIY adventure in our home state. The final lesson we learned was that before heading afield ensure you have quick download speed on your phone. It might just prevent you from becoming a bear snack.



It took Dan and Steve two and half hours to get this trophy black bear back to the truck

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MD DNR announces early deer season and fall turkey harvest results

Annapolis, Md. — Maryland deer hunters wrapped up the early portions of the bow and muzzleloader seasons by harvesting an estimated 24,324 deer during September and October, down 4 percent from last year's harvest of 25,324 deer for the same period.

The antlered harvest decreased 4 percent from 9,079 deer to 8,753 deer, while the antlerless harvest also decreased 4 percent from 16,245 to 15,571 deer. Included in the totals were 532 antlered and 337 antlerless sika deer. The two month harvest total was comprised of 7,813 deer taken with vertical bows, 3,732 taken with crossbows and 12,600 harvested with muzzleloaders. An additional 179 deer were reported during managed firearm hunts.

Turkey hunters reported harvesting 167 wild turkeys during the one week fall season that ended on November 5. The harvest is similar to the 171 turkeys taken in 2010 and to the average harvest over the last 10 years. Fall turkey hunting is only permitted in the three westernmost counties. Allegany County reported the highest harvest (72), followed by Garrett (64) and Washington (31).



Billy Ho will no doubt have the Liberty Reservoir population down again this year with this nice 10 pointer. Photo Courtesy of Clyde's Sport Shop

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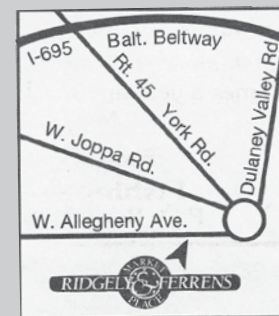
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