

# Fishing & Hunting Journal



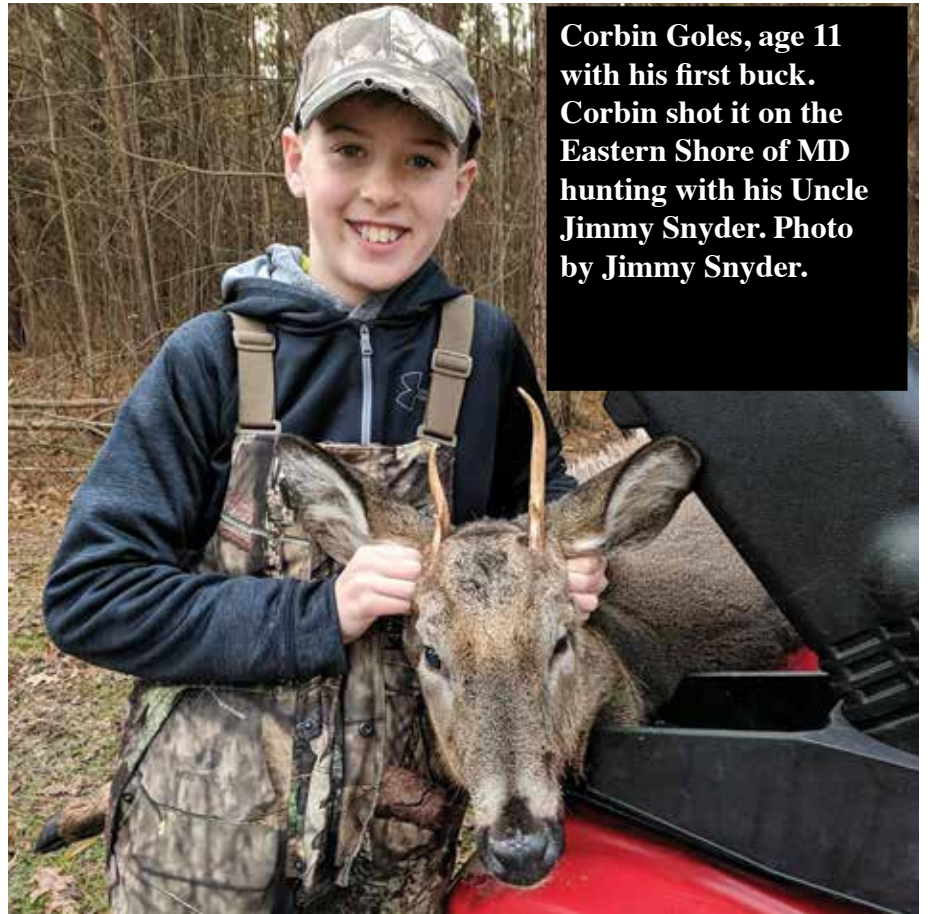
## IN THIS ISSUE...

- STRIPED BASS FISHING IN MARYLAND  
WHAT IS THE FUTURE?
- LOOKING FORWARD TO 2019
- THE NEXT GENERATION OF HUNTERS

FREE



Knollan Munro harvested this Buck in Caroline County with Schrader's Outdoors.



Corbin Goles, age 11 with his first buck. Corbin shot it on the Eastern Shore of MD hunting with his Uncle Jimmy Snyder. Photo by Jimmy Snyder.



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## “Campbell’s Catch”

### Yellow Perch Possibilities

Yellow perch fishing has been good in the upper bay rivers this year. Hungry gangs of little fire-tigers swimming along the shorelines searching for food made easy targets for savvy anglers. Two guys fishing a few hours could catch 24 perch with half measuring above the 9-inch keeper size. Granted, many of the yellows were small males, but it is a lot of fun. Sometimes a largemouth bass, a toothy pickerel or a little striper would make a surprise appearance. White perch are around too. My friend Tim Burnum caught and released an impressive 14 1/2 inch black crappie while yellow perch fishing last month.

Winter is prime time to catch big yellow perch. One February I got my personal best yellow perch, a 14 1/8 inch fish. Fourteen inch citation size yellow perch are a rare catch. I don’t know anybody who has got one that big yet this year. Time is running out. The moon phase and increasing daylight hours are major triggers to the spawn. On March 6, 2019 we will have a new moon. Typically, soon after that date, the easy yellow perch fishing is over because after the spawn the perch scatter, and are harder to catch.

Longtime Marco Hunting and Fishing Club member Tim Burnum is a fanatical angler, especially when it comes to his favorite species, yellow perch. By the time this

article comes out, Tim will have surpassed his goal of catching at least one yellow perch 30 days in a row. He fishes after work and on weekends, rain or shine, from the bank or by boat, with or without bait. On December 1, 2018, Tim caught a 13 1/2 inch fertile female. He hooked her fishing from shore on a simple minnow and bobber rig. After a quick measurement and photo, Tim let her go as he does with most of his catches. That fat fish put him in the lead for the biggest yellow perch of the year among club members. The day after Tim released his prize catch, a funny thing happened. He was on a boat perch fishing with his friends John Duarte, John’s son Michael, and Mike Lutz when John caught the exact same 13 1/2 inch yellow perch! Tim knows it was the exact same fish because it had a red sore spot plainly visible on its side. Mike Lutz took a picture of the incredible catch as Tim pointed to the perch in amazement. Who’d have thought it possible to catch the same fish two days in a row? The guys let her go with glee. Now it’s possible for someone else to enjoy catching that big yellow perch again. It’s also quite possible for her to spawn this March.

How to and where to catch yellow perch are the next questions readers may ask. The technique is as easy as casting a bobber

and a minnow near the shoreline. Tim uses light rods and reels spooled with clear, 6-pound test monofilament line. In contrast, I use slightly stronger 8 or even 10 pound test line. Yellow perch are not line shy. Besides, the rivers are not gin clear and there are many snags which could cause nicks in the line. When the bite is on, yellow perch will hit just about anything. Grass shrimp, minnows or worms can be used instead of artificial lures. Minnows are very effective, but once the perch are found, artificial lures often out-fish live bait.

Where to catch yellow perch is a little trickier. Revealing exact spots is taboo. That said, Martin’s Lagoon near Wilson Point Park is one popular perch spot, especially for shoreline anglers. For those with a boat, the park’s free ramp is a great place to launch. On weekends, it’s common to see folks fishing there. Tim might be fishing there too. That’s because he and other local anglers know the yellow perch possibilities.



Tim Burnum with John and Michael Duarte pointing to the sore spot on the same big fish he caught the day before. Photo by Mike Lutz.

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# Fishing & Hunting Journal

Volume 28, Number 8

February/March 2019

## FISHING

**Yellow Perch Possibilities** by Tim Campbell Page 3

**Looking Forward to 2019** by Tim Sherman Page 6

**Striped Bass Fishing in Maryland What is the future?**  
by Mark Galasso Page 7

## HUNTING

**Don't leave home without it** by Grant Soukup Page 17

## REGULARS

**Coastal Report** by Capt. Mark Sampson Page 18

**The Last Word** by Steve Huettner Page 20

**Sportsman's Classifieds** Page 22

*Front Cover -  
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## FAITH OF OUR FATHERS

### A word from our Pastor-

*It is an old cliché but oh how true – “Into each life a little rain must fall.” The Spanish have a proverb, “There is no home without its hush.” The Bible puts it, “The Lord has His way in the whirlwind and also the storm.”*

*Storms or times of crisis come into each of our lives. Often we think that trouble comes only to someone who is running from God, such as Jonah. However, storms and times of crisis also come to those who are faithfully serving God.*

*A storm occurs when three things take place.*

1. When a warm front and a cold front come together.
2. When a high and low pressure system meet.
3. When a humid system comes upon a dry atmosphere.

*There's a clashing of two elements and a storm takes place. Basically a storm occurs when two elements crash together.*

*When problems come crashing down on us and trouble hits our lives, there are various reasons. Quite often, God is proving what we're made of. Trees fall during storms because they are not rooted down. These storms expose our character, our confidence and our capabilities. Great people are made in time of trouble. It grooms and makes them what they ought to be. Show me a great Christian and I'll show you one who bears great scars.*

*Christian, perhaps today you are in the midst of the storm and problems have crashed down on you. Realize God is in control of the wind and weather. The Bible says in Mark 4, "...He arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm." Trust Him; he has it all under control. Rest in His strength and might. May God bless you, is my prayer.*

MEL BRINDLEY Pastor  
Chestertown, Md., Baptist Church



Jason Seman owner of 'The Marylander' this past December during a sea duck hunt: From Left to Right- Gregory Seman, Doug Riordan, and Marshall Cahall.

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## “Tackle Box Tim”

### Looking Forward to 2019

As I look at the first accumulated snowfall of 2019, I am pondering what fishing this year will bring. Last year was horrible for fishing when the opportunity presented itself. A soggy spring, followed by a wet mid-summer through fall stunted the number of days that I fished. It dictated the unfavorable conditions that I encountered when I did get out. Dodging debris in heavily stained water was a concern. The fresh water influx did not allow menhaden to journey into the reaches of the upper bay rivers for a decent fall striper fishery.

Well, enough bemoaning the past. I have great hope for 2019 because I have repowered the old Triumph. I have updated and upgraded to 150 horsepower. True, I will have a higher top end in the miles-per-hour category. However, when there's a 2-foot chop on the bay, I am still going to have to operate under the conditions that are dealt to me.

Having that extra speed on calm to moderate days will allow me more range. When leaving Bear Creek, heading to Seven-Foot Knoll and Man O' War Shoals will be an easy reach. The same holds to for making a run to Poole's Island or Hart/Miller Island from the Mariner Point Park ramp.

These areas aren't new to me. I have

fished them years ago, albeit differently than how I fish these days. Back then, I was on my brother's Grady White, drifting along with baited double bottom rigs for white perch. On other trips, we'd drop anchor and set up a chum line. Those are great memories.

I am set up much differently than that old Grady White. There's no bait cutting station or extra deck space for large bait coolers. What I can do is take my light tackle tactics and try them in old, but new again, locations. I can stay on a spot with the trolling motor instead of drifting over and passed it. I can test to see if my tandem grub rig will work at the knoll or the shoals. With a more shallow draft I can work the shorelines of the upper bay islands with rattle traps, topwater plugs, and paddle tail swim baits. I can also target the humps, lumps, and rips around Poole's Island where we set up our chum line back then.

There will also be days when I can venture a bit farther for bass. If the bass aren't biting in Dundee and Saltpeter Creek, I can make the run out into the bay south to Seneca Creek without spending a lot of time as it would with lesser horse power.

Having my dedicated style of using lures, I've taken it up a notch into

building my own. It's relaxing and bides time over winter until I can get back out on to the water. As much as I enjoy piecing together spinnerbaits, chatter baits, and jigs, or putting a fresh coat of paint on a hard bait; it's even more rewarding when my efforts catch fish. Being able to fish the grass beds in Saltpeter and Dundee, then heading over to the Seneca to fish the piers will allow me to fish a large part of my homemade bass arsenal.

As much as I like fishing my homemade lures, I plan to dust off some of the lures that have been relegated to the bottom of the tackle box. This was sparked by catching those large yellow perch in Bear Creek last November. I hadn't cast a Lit'l Fishie in years – and wouldn't you know it, they still work. I'll be tying on Rapala Shallow Shad Raps, Storm Short Warts, and I can't forget the old Mepps Black Fury. It's been so long, I need to track down those baits. I bet I can find them, though.

What I am also looking forward to really can't be predicted (pun intended) at this time. I really hope that our weather patterns return to some sense of normalcy. If we only have half the precipitation this year than last, it will be a blessing. I'd be happy if only every other weekend was a wash out this spring through fall. That way I'd be able to get and keep up with the fishing patterns. The same holds true for rain and snow amounts this winter. Constant rains will

keep our upper bay waters stained. Heavy snow and run off from the thaw can also keep the waters murky. We need to have good water quality and sunny to days kick start our bay grasses this spring.

Having a crystal ball would ruin what 2019 has in store for our fishing. Sometimes not knowing is half the fun (except for last year). We still have a way to go before many of us will cast our first line. What are you looking forward to with your fishing in the coming year?



A gigantic 6.8 pound sea bass caught by Justin out of Ocean City, MD.



I am looking forward to casting vintage and homemade lures this year.

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## “Tuna The Tide”

### **Striped Bass Fishing in Maryland - What is the future?**

*By Captain Mark Galasso*

If I had a dollar for every time I've said or heard someone else say "This has been a weird year for fishing?" I could retire. And the fact is everyone who derives income and or pleasure from catching fish spends hours trying to figure out why things were weird. It's always the topic. No matter whether it's a couple guys bottom bouncing for Catfish in a Jon boat or a fisheries management board trying to determine how many Sea Bass are swimming around off our coast. Fisheries scientists approach weirdness in an organized matter. First, a baseline is required. How many of something is out there? Second, what are the trends? Is the population growing or shrinking? And last but not least we need to come up with a hypothesis as to why the population is going up or down. In the case of Striped Bass along the Atlantic Coast it's the why that has everyone up in arms.

I would propose that everyone agrees the population of large Striped Bass is going down. And I'm not talking the total biomass, I'm talking about the Coastal Brood stock of 36 inch fish and up. I would also hazard a guess that everyone thinks we need to do something about it. I would also say that everyone wants to create a sustainable fishery for this great fish. And that's where the common grounds end.

Striped Bass don't live in a fish tank. They migrate up and down our coast. They spawn in the Bays and Rivers of their range and live all along the Coast. They spend time in a very diverse set of environments from clean cold waters offshore and to the north as well as polluted rivers and highly nutrified warm waters of Bays. The fact that most of their spawning takes place in the Chesapeake Bay creates a problem for the species. The Bay is a shallow sediment trap for the Susquehanna River. And as the sediments have built up behind the Conowingo Dam it no longer gets trapped behind the Dam but flows into the Mid and Upper Bay creating algae blooms that use up all the oxygen as it decomposes. Fortunately the large Coastal Stripers have left the Bay before they become trapped by dead water but their progeny must live the first four or five years of their lives in the Bay until they become large enough to survive predation in the Ocean.

Commercial and recreational fisherman as well as conservationists from North Carolina to Maine are banding together in small groups

to make their voices heard as to their ideas of how we can create a sustainable fishery for Striped Bass. The problem is we all look at the fishery differently and seem to always blame the other guy for the problem. That's not helping.

Let's look at some facts we all can agree on. A Striped Bass over 40 inches is probably a female and IS a spawner whether their full of eggs or not and no matter where they are swimming. The population of these fish is going in the wrong direction. The nursery areas of Striped Bass are in trouble and the states they are in can't afford to make it right without help, either privately or publicly. Just a thought. Through groups like Ducks Unlimited we send tens of millions of dollars to improve nesting areas for waterfowl to Canada. Are Striped Bass less important? Should we be investing in Maryland and Virginia to help spawning Stripers? Economically Striped Bass are just as important to angler's in Maryland as they are to Anglers in Massachusetts or New York both commercially and recreationally.

Recently there have been a few changes that may have an affect on the way impacts are made to stabilize this important fishery. The first is President Trump signing a non partisan bill called the "Modern Fish Act (S. 1520)". This bill that had overwhelming support by conservationists as well as recreational fishing and boating groups is being touted as a big step towards creating sustainable fisheries. Also, Maryland and Virginia, the two states that most Stripers spawn in, both have new Secretaries of Natural Resources. Matthew Strickler in Virginia, is a well know environmentalist and recreational fisherman. And Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio in Maryland is an Eastern Shorewoman very familiar with fisheries and environmental issues.

Captain John McMurray, a well known light tackle guide from New York is organizing a group called the American Saltwater Guides Association. This group will consist of light tackle guides from Maine to North Carolina with hopes of creating a think tank of recreational fisherman who have a vested interest in creating a sustainable population of Striped Bass as well as other important gamefish. They will share local knowledge as to how everything plays out on their stage. Their moto is "Promoting sustainable business through Marine Conservation."

Recently the Maryland Sportsman Foundation sponsored two meetings, one in Annapolis and one in Cambridge, to discuss



conservation measures in Maryland for Striped Bass. The Department of Natural Resources made a number of presentations to about 45 stakeholders and other interested parties each day. At the end of the presentations there was a short comment period opening topics to discussion. The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission analyzes the best science they can get on fisheries statistics. First the baseline, how many fish are out there? Second, what are the trends? Is the population going up or down and why? Environmental conditions, overfishing, poor spawning? Then ASMFC decides quotas for each state. Then each state must decide on how to allocate the fish to the user groups, commercial and recreational. If a state goes over or under they have to make changes. The three tools fisheries managers have are, change season date, creel limits and or size limits.

When fisheries managers talk

about regulating a fishery they have to add in mortality numbers. These are grouped into fishing mortality and natural mortality or F numbers. And much of the discussion in Annapolis and Cambridge were of items related to these numbers. A presentation was made on catch and release mortality as well as circle hooks and how we can educate fisherman on the proper ways to incorporate them into their fishing. A presentation was also made on environmental factors like temperature and dissolved oxygen levels over time in the Bay.

In my mind based on recent events changes are coming. If you have any interest in the future of Striped Bass now is the time to get involved. Join a group. Make your thoughts known. Educate yourself not only on how to become a more conservation minded fisherman but on the process of how you can help guide the people who ultimately make the decisions.



**Carolynn Murphy was not disappointed in her 2018-2019 hunting season.**



Froze to death but it paid off another great hunt with great friends in the books. Brian Thompson, Angie Asmussen, Craig Parks & Erin Spurry. Photo from Good Times catering.



Mr. Tim Ruth finally got his canvasback with Diving Ducks Outfitters out of Tilghman Island, MD.

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**Bobby Buckler with his nice St. Mary's County buck.**

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Artists are invited to submit their original works for the 23rd Annual Maryland Black Bear Conservation Stamp and 45th Annual Maryland Migratory Game Bird Stamp design contests. These popular contests are open until March 8, 2019.

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources will judge the entries March 16, 2019, in conjunction with the annual Eagle Festival at Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge in Cambridge.

The Black Bear Conservation Stamp contest is open to both residents and nonresidents. Each contestant may submit one entry for a nonrefundable \$10 fee. Proceeds are used to compensate farmers who experience agricultural damage caused by black bears.

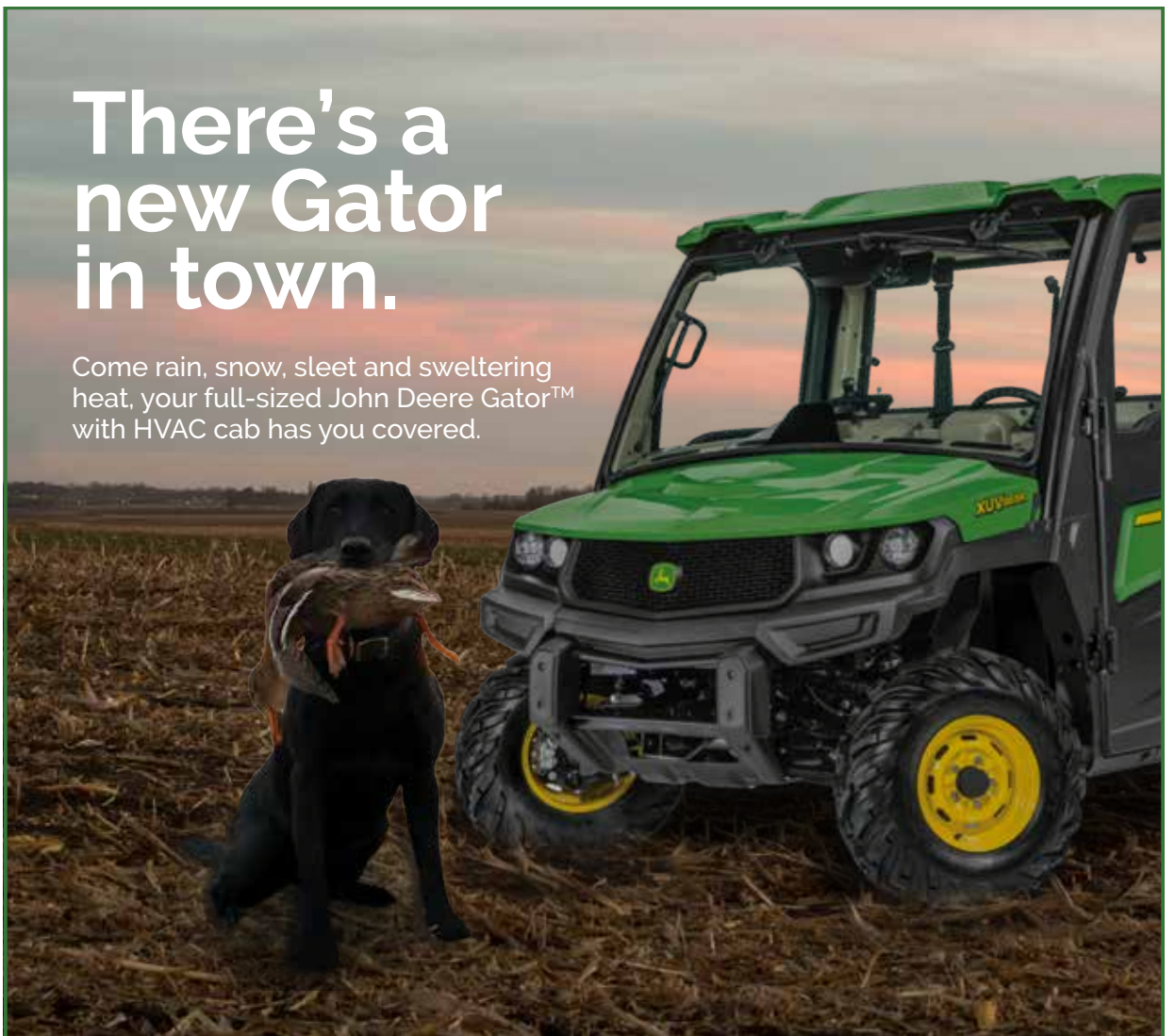
New this year, the Migratory Game Bird Stamp contest is also open to both residents and nonresidents. Each contestant may submit up to three entries with a fee structure of: \$15 for one, \$20 for two and \$30 for three. Proceeds help fund game bird and waterfowl research and projects.

All entries must be original works, neither copied nor duplicated from any previously published paintings, drawings, prints or photographs. To enter, contestants must mail their designs with required fees and forms by March 8, 2019.



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**Carissa Arillo with her 1st fish of 2019, 3 lb pickerel from Hillsboro caught on a live minnow - Photo by her best bud Angelina Watts bottom right - The pair also caught some nice Yellow Perch.**



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Larry Farinetti with his big 110 lb Sika deer he shot with a cross-bow on January 3, 2019 in Dorchester County.



"Little" John Rogers with a beautiful walleye he caught in the lower Susquehanna River in early January 2019. Photo by his dad, John Rogers.

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Ethan Gill, killed youth day with Schrader's Outdoors guide Andrew Farrow in Cecil County.



Bridget Bittner on her nice Frederick county Md buck.



Chris Lingerman and his favorite hunting partner, Brianna Pierce get a quick picture of the ducks they bagged with help of others this past season.

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Kasey Hughes of Annapolis, Md. spent the new year with his wife fishing in Argentina. Check out some of the beautiful rainbow trout he and his wife caught. Thanks for the photos Kasey! Photo's courtesy of Tochterman's Tackle.



Cally Miller waited until the last day of the season to bag her buck..



Dave McCollum with Susquehanna wall-eye.

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**Atlantic Flyway Mallard, Canada Goose Limits  
Approved for 2019–2020**  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has approved changes  
to bag limits for Atlantic Flyway

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has approved changes to bag limits for At-

lantic Flyway mallards and Canada geese for the 2019–2020 waterfowl season. The changes were made at the recommendation of the Atlantic Flyway Council. The council contains representatives from all the agencies that have management responsibility for migratory bird resources in the flyway. The council determines actions required for sound migratory game bird management and makes recommendations to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Ducks Unlimited plays no role in setting bag limits or hunting seasons for waterfowl.

The following harvest regulations changes will take effect in the Atlantic Flyway during the 2019–2020 waterfowl season:

**Mallards:** The bag limit will be reduced from four birds to two. Further, the USFWS approved limiting hen mallards to one daily within the two-bird mallard bag limit.

**Canada geese:** For Atlantic Flyway states north of Chesapeake Bay (Maine, Vermont, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey), the limit will decrease from three birds to two. In the Chesapeake Bay region (Maryland, Delaware and Virginia), the limit will decrease from two birds to one. The USFWS has approved reducing the season length for all states from 45 days to 30 days. Note that these changes apply only to Atlantic Population zones and not to North Atlantic or Resident Population Canada Goose zones. Check with your local state wildlife agency for details.

The changes reflect declines in populations of mallards and Canada geese in the north Atlantic region.

“The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service uses sound science and input from states in the flyway when making these decisions,” said Dr. Tom Moorman, Ducks Unlimited chief scientist. “The USFWS and the Atlantic Flyway Council deserve credit for making a difficult management decision

informed by input from waterfowl hunters. They have worked hard to accommodate the desire of waterfowl hunters while balancing the need to conserve breeding populations of these two species, while also continuing efforts to understand factors that influence these two populations of birds so that appropriate conservation actions can be taken to sustain levels that will support hunting opportunities.”

Band-recovery information suggests that most mallards harvested from North Carolina to eastern Canada are derived from the eastern population of mallards. In recent years, surveys indicate the breeding population of eastern mallards has been stable in eastern Canada but declining in the northeastern states, especially New York and Pennsylvania. According to the USFWS, the eastern mallard breeding population reached a peak of 1.1 million in 2004 but has declined since then. Last year’s estimate was 650,000 birds.

The cause of the eastern mallard population decline has not yet been determined, but Ducks Unlimited and its conservation partners are continuing to study the trend. If research shows that habitat loss or degradation is significantly influencing the eastern mallard decline, DU will evaluate potential habitat programs in cooperation with its state and federal partners geared toward stabilizing and increasing mallard populations.

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# SPANNING THE GLOBE

## *Maine fisherman reels in rare calico lobster.*

The odds were definitely against a Maine fisherman, who recently pulled a calico lobster from the sea in what some would call the catch of a lifetime.

The crustacean, caught off the coast of Pine Point, ended up at local restaurant Scarborough Fish & Lobster Co., the owner of the establishment, Captain Marty Macisso, told Fox News.

The University of Maine's Lobster Institute estimated the odds of finding a calico lobster are 1 in 30 million.



## **Woman catches 'monster' 88-pound catfish on Kentucky Lake, says it's a 'personal best'**

A Tennessee woman had a lot to celebrate before the New Year after she reeled in an 88-pound catfish on Kentucky Lake.

Paula Cathey Smith of Waverly, Tenn., was pictured hugging the giant blue catfish she caught in a photo shared by the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency.

"River Monster! Paula Cathey Smith shows us you can catch fish in the winter with this 'personal best' 88 pounder caught and released safely back into KY Lake," the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency wrote on Facebook.



## *Kansas Monster!*

Joe was hunting in Kansas where he bagged this impressive buck of a lifetime.



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## “Montana Grant”



man



**This 52lbs 10oz Monster Striper was caught this past December from Cape Charles Fishing Adventure Capt Ken Eshleman.**

*By Grant Soukup*

### **Don't Leave Home Without It!**

“I'll see you later”, Hasta La Vista”, “Have a nice day”, “Watch your top knot” or some form of proper farewell is al-

his wife about where his socks were, and why she did not pack his favorite snacks, and stuff that no one even remembers.

Out the door he went in a huff. A few loud cursing expletives followed him into his truck as he sped off. Several hours later, the wife answered the phone. It was the Pennsylvania State Police. Her hus-

band was dead due to a traffic accident.

The funeral service was hard. The wife was heartbroken and alone. The last spoken words were angry and hurtful, and now eternal.

It Is ok to get angry, lose your temper, or argue. These are hu-

traits. We also have the choice to “Holster our tongues”, choose our words, and act smarter. Never leave angry, in a hurry, or without a true and positive farewell. No one needs to bear the guilt that comes when the last opportunity to say goodbye was wasted.

Let people know where you are going. Leave a phone number, address GPS coordinates, or contact information whenever you leave. It is also a good idea to leave some information on the windshield, or vehicle so others can find you, if needed.

When my Father passed, a few deer seasons ago, he was having trouble speaking.

Age, injury, and a stroke had taken its toll. Before he went into his final surgery, his last words to me were simple, few, and lasting. The surgery did not go well and he was in a coma for a week. I would never hear his voice again. His final words to me were words he rarely spoke. He was a tough, loud, and a hard man. Fighting a World War, mining coal, and a life as a teacher, husband, and Father had measured him. Soft, kind words were not normal in his vocabulary.

His final words to me were simple; “I love you Son!”

Don't leave home without it!  
Montana Grant



ways essential. It only takes a moment and a few breathes. A handshake, hug, or embrace will reinforce what could be your final farewell.

Hunting, fishing, outdoor adventures, and sports are dangerous. Things can go wrong in a hurry. Travelling to or from a location invites accidents. Water, weather, critters, topography, weapons, and just bad luck can quickly escalate into life changing events. That's why it so important to always leave home with a proper farewell.

How would you feel if the last words to someone special were neglected, sour, tainted, or nasty? Always slow things down and make a proper farewell. Put your anger aside for a few moments. You can always fight later, after you come home safe. What is the positive comment that you would like to hear? That is what you say in return.

Years ago, a friend left the house to head to deer camp. He was in a hurry and arguing with



**Jake Brown, Rich Bohle and company were on the snows with Tuscarora Outfitters along with Clydes Sport Shop supplying the guns and ammo. Check out their Big Sale from Mar 8th-17th.**



## Coastal Report

By Capt. Mark  
Sampson

As I write this, the morning has already “warmed up” to a balmy 23-degrees with a 25-knot wind. I’d go outside to check the mail but it takes so long to get properly dressed to make the 100-foot hike to the box that I’m not sure that paying my bills on time is worth the effort. Besides, I’ve always had this fear of being eaten by a polar bear and it just seems like such prime conditions for them right now that I’m not sure that a maintaining a good credit rating is worth the risk. Besides, my wife will eventually get tired of waiting and just go out and get it herself - she doesn’t worry so much about bears.

I’m sure that our recent run of frigid weather has had more than just a few folks seriously contemplating a trip south for a chance to thaw out under a palm tree, where the water isn’t “solid” and dressing for cold weather means putting on a t-shirt. With hunting seasons winding down and fishing pretty much on hold at least until the ice leaves us, the next few months are primetime for local sportsmen and women to escape to lower latitudes, warm up and brush up on their fishing skills so that when spring finally arrives on Delmarva they’ll still know how to bait a hook and crank a reel. Florida has always been a popular winter getaway for a lot of anglers. And for good reason; it’s warm, has plenty of water and countless fishing opportunities.

Of course Florida is so large that just crossing the boarder into the state doesn’t mean that visitors have arrived in the kind of tropical destination they might be looking to escape to. The north part of the state can be cold, like below freezing kind of cold, so those who want the best chance of enjoying real summer-like weather 12-months out of the year should head south about as far as they can which means all the way down to the Keys.

If you think you know Florida but have never been to the Keys then you don’t know the half of it. Miami, Palm Beach, Ft. Lauderdale, Daytona and so many of the other big coastal cities of the state have their share of beaches, water-sports, including fishing, and a whole lot more to keep folks busy. But for some of us, it’s the “whole lot more” part of the big cities that has us bypassing them altogether as we beeline our way straight for the Keys. Those who want to have the opportunity enjoy miles of sandy beaches and everything that goes along with a big-time city will be disappointed if they go to the Keys. But for those looking to enjoy a vacation in a slower more relaxed atmosphere where fishing is their number one objective and everything else that goes that on is there to support the fishing activities – there is no better place to be than the Florida Keys.

You know you’re in a place that caters to fishermen

when you can buy ballyhoo and chum in the grocery stores or a mixed drink in some of the bait and tackle shops! Yea, leave the glamour and the glitz up in Miami - the Keys are all about fishing. And when it comes to fishing, the opportunities are about endless. The Keys are a chain of Islands that stretch about 120-miles from Florida’s mainland to Key West with the Overseas Highway linking Island to Island and allowing travelers to drive across some of the most beautiful waters in the world. Heading south the ocean is on the left side of the highway and the Gulf of Mexico on the right.

On the ocean side it’s about a 5-6 mile run to the main reef which is a great place to bottom fish for snapper, grouper, yellowtail, and countless other structure oriented species. Just beyond the reef the water drops right down to a few hundred feet and has anglers in the zone for catching sailfish, dolphin, tuna, wahoo, and king mackerel. Running “way out” in the Keys might involve going 15-25 miles to get in the Gulf Stream and target blue marlin or even swordfish.

On the Gulf side of the highway the water stays relatively shallow, like 1-12 feet, until you get 6-12 miles out and then it starts to slope down to 30 or more feet. The shallow water zone is where anglers do the “flats fishing” and target bonefish, tarpon, redfish, permit, sharks, barracuda, jacks, and other fish that frequent the shallow water. Much of this is “sight fishing” whereby the angler stands on the bow of the boat as someone else stands on a platform at the stern and quietly pushes the boat ahead with a long pole. Lines don’t go into the water until a fish is spotted and the boat is moved to within casting range. Big fish in shallow water on light tackle is what brings anglers from all around the world to fish the flats of the Florida Keys.

Anglers also find that the channels between the Gulf-side flats hold a variety of fish including snapper, grouper, yellowtail, tarpon, cobia, sharks, speckled trout, jacks and mackerel. Since many of these channels are somewhat sheltered from the wind by surrounding mangrove Islands they are particularly attractive to anglers on windy days when the ocean-side reefs are too rough to fish. The Keys are certainly not immune to rough sea conditions, but with so many big and little Islands sprinkled about there is always a sheltered place to fish no matter how much the wind blows.

While the waters of the Keys offer opportunities



that attract and challenge some of the best fishermen in the world, they also provide simplistic fishing where even the most novice angler can sit on a dock with nothing but a hand-line, a hook, and a little bait and catch fish after fish, and perhaps even bring home dinner. In fact, there are so many bridges, piers and shorelines to fish in the Keys that some folks successfully fish for years down there without ever stepping into a boat.

So if you’re looking for a place to thaw out for a while - head to south Florida. But if you also want to enjoy some exceptional fishing in a naturally beautiful environment rather than tall buildings and neon lights - be sure to make it all way down to the Florida Keys. By the way, in February, March, and April I work as a backcountry flats fishing guide in the lower Keys and always happy to answer calls or emails from folks who are looking for local fishing information or want to talk about a light tackle or fly fishing charter. I can be contacted through my BigSharks.com website.



Tyler and Katie Hill from Queenstown Md with a big permit Tyler caught while fishing with Capt. Mark Sampson in the Florida Keys

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# Fisheries on MD legislative agendas for 2019

By Jeremy Cox & Timothy B. Wheeler

Oysters will be on the legislative menu in Maryland in 2019, while Virginia lawmakers will have menhaden on their plates. But for legislators gathering in both states in January, many of the environmental issues confronting them will be leftovers from previous years.

Rules for harvesting menhaden will be an issue for the Virginia legislature in 2019. (Dave Harp) Rules for harvesting menhaden will be an issue for the Virginia legislature in 2019. (Dave Harp)

In Annapolis, environmentalists hope to capitalize on an infusion of dozens of newly elected legislators to push through bills that have failed to gain traction in years past. In Richmond, activists face a different situation, seeking to make headway in an election year, with all of the legislative seats up for grabs.

Here are some of the environmental issues lawmakers in each state can expect to face.

## Maryland

Oysters: In the wake of a troubling scientific assessment of Maryland's oyster population, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation is seeking legislation to

protect the five Bay tributaries selected for large-scale restoration from being reopened to harvest and to lay out a framework for the development of a new fishery management plan for the species.

A Department of Natural Resources stock assessment found in November that the number of market-size bivalves last season was half of what it had been 15 years earlier, and that the shellfish were being overfished in roughly half of the state's waters. The assessment had been ordered by the General Assembly in 2017 after the DNR moved to open some state oyster sanctuaries to supplement a faltering commercial harvest. Lawmakers blocked the DNR move until the assessment was complete.

Maryland and Virginia have each pledged to restore oyster populations and habitat in five tributaries. In Maryland, reef restoration is complete in Harris Creek and under way in the Little Choptank and Tred Avon rivers. The DNR has preliminarily identified the St. Mary's and Manokin rivers as its final two restoration sites. Environmentalists worry that the state may reopen them to harvest at some point and hope to codify their status as sanctuaries under the law.

The foundation is also asking legislators to spell out a timeline and process for the oyster fishery management plan that the DNR is charged with developing and expects to complete in 2019. Conservationists say they want to be sure that the public has a chance to participate, and that all management options are considered.

"We want a plan that balances truly bringing the population back with [allowing a continued] harvest," said Alison Prost, the foundation's Maryland executive director.

Renewable energy: After falling short last year, environmentalists plan a renewed push to raise the state's renewable energy goals, making it a top priority of many groups. In 2016, they succeeded in setting the bar for 25 percent of statewide energy use to come from renewable sources by 2020. Now, the Clean Energy Jobs initiative wants Maryland to get 50 percent of its energy from solar, wind and other renewable sources by 2030 and to reach 100 percent by 2040.

Foam packaging: Legislation to ban the use of polystyrene foam food containers will make a return appearance this session, after failing twice before. Activists hope the shakeup in committee leadership, as well as its new members, can make this try the charm.

"We feel the changes in the Senate and House are favorable to passing environmental legislation in coming years," said Karla Raettig, executive director of the Maryland League of Conservation Voters. With foam bans adopted by Baltimore city and Montgomery and Prince George's counties, Raettig said that "it just makes sense to have it be statewide."

Environmental rights: After failing to make headway last year, activists expect to mount a more concerted push for a state constitutional amendment guaranteeing Marylanders the right to uncontaminated water, breathable air

and a healthy environment for present and future generations. The legislation is modeled on environmental rights amendments adopted in some other states, notably Pennsylvania.

"We want people to have healthy and healthful lives and to have a future that is as promising as the one that was passed down to them," said Tamara Toles O'Laughlin, executive director of the Maryland Environmental Health Network.

Advocates hope the amendment would give individual residents the legal status to challenge in court the state and local governmental actions they deem harmful to the environment. Citizens have only limited standing to sue in Maryland when aggrieved by regulatory decisions they believe harm the community.

A proposed "green amendment" failed to advance after being introduced late in last year's General Assembly session. Environmental groups have coalesced around it to make it a priority this year, though some acknowledge it may take longer still to persuade lawmakers to act on it.

"It's definitely not a slam dunk, but it's good to get into people's minds," Raettig said.

*Reprinted with permission - About Jeremy Cox & Timothy B. Wheeler*

*Jeremy Cox is a staff writer for the Chesapeake Bay Journal based in Salisbury, MD. Timothy B. Wheeler is the Bay Journal's associate editor and senior writer. He has more than two decades of experience covering the environment for The Baltimore Sun and other media outlets.*

# EVERYTHING MUST GO!!!



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# EVERYTHING MUST GO!!!



## “The Last Word”

### The Next Generation of Hunters

By Steve Huettner

“There are many types of people in this world, you get the ‘jawbones’, always mouthing off and doing nothing, you get the ‘funny bones’, always laughing at what other are trying to do, you get the ‘neckbones’, always looking around to see what everyone else does and you get the ‘backbones’ the people who get out there are do stuff for the hunting community.”  
Unknown Professional Hunter

Last February I wrote an article called The Next Generation which questioned where we are going to recruit the next generation of hunters from. A few months later while attending the Maryland Hunting Coalition (MHC) Banquet I was approached by Russ Leith a volunteer with the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF).

Steve, “I read your article about where are we going to get new hunters and agree. We are putting together a mentor sika hunt at Blackwater refuge this fall. We did a turkey hunt in the spring that was a success. I’ll be in touch in the spring with the details” Russ said as he walked back to his table. In less time than it took me to finish my drink I was going to be a mentoring a new hunter.

The NWTF partnered with the staff at Blackwater Refuge to host a sika deer hunt for mentee hunters. Maryland DNR, the Union Sportsmen’s Alliance (USA), and Young Life/Tudor Farms rounded out the team by contributing time, money and people to what is referred to as the First Shot Hunt.

A few year ago, Maryland passed a

law allowing adult first time hunters to buy a onetime apprentice hunting license for \$10. The apprentice hunter must pass an online safety course and hunt with a resident hunter 18 years or older. The idea behind the apprentice license is to help adults who may be interested in learning about hunting, and pairing them with an experienced hunter. Targeting adults who have an interest makes sense from the standpoint that adults have time, income and transportation.

Press releases were sent out and posted by Blackwater Refuge and DNR looking for both mentees and mentors for the hunt. Over sixty apprentice hunters filled out an application. Twenty three mentors volunteered to act as a mentors and mentees were randomly selected since there were more applicants than openings.

Mentees had to be willing to attend an orientation class on October 21st and the actual hunt on the 27th. In the meantime, mentors were given contact information about their apprentice hunt and urged to contact them before the 21st to discuss all things hunting, necessary gear, and setting up some range time.

The staff at Blackwater worked on selecting areas for the hunt and getting the paperwork needed for the mentors and mentees to scout potential stand locations. Early October saw staff, mentors and mentees hanging stands and setting up ground blinds for the upcoming hunt. The funds for the stands and blinds were generously donated by USA.

The Sunday before the hunt saw mentors, mentees, and staff from Blackwater and MD DNR meeting at Young Life /Tudor farms for a hunt orientation meeting. The men-

tees were a varied group of men and women, of many different nationalities, with a variety of backgrounds, ranging in age from 25 to 70. It was the most diverse groups of hunters I had ever seen assembled. Topics discussed at the meeting covered scouting, deer biology, techniques, why people hunt, the role of hunting and conservation, hunting and social media, using tracking dogs, and tree stand safety. Lunch was provided and included were several different venison recipes.

The following Saturday saw mentors and mentees meeting at their prearranged locations in the dark of the night to head out to their stands. The weather that day was overcast with intermittent showers mixed in. Since it was a sika hunt, most hunters along with their rain gear were sporting hip or chest waders to help them stay dry when getting into their spot. As I have said before, there is no such thing as an easy sika hunt. Despite the weather, the hunters were excited and enthusiastic.

As the morning wore on, shots

rang out in the hunt areas, with people wondering who had been successful. As teams got out of their stands, the helped others find their deer and help remove them from the field. Lunch found the teams once again back at Young Life for a meal, recapping the morning hunt, and formulating a plan for their afternoon hunt. Despite being new hunters, the conversation over lunch sounded like any other deer camp. Shots made, shots missed, animals seen, the work of getting something out and the sheer adrenaline of hunting.

Long after the sun had all hunters had seen deer, most had an opportunity, there were some misses, and some passed shots. 17 of the 23 hunters were successful, with several having bagged more than one deer.

I have told others with the exception of being with my daughter when she took her first deer, it was my most enjoyable day afield. With programs like the First Shot, the future of hunting looks a bit brighter.



Samantha Snyder with her first buck. She shot it on the Eastern Shore hunting with her dad, Jimmy Snyder. Photo by Jimmy Snyder.

# TUSCARORA



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## GERMAN RABBIT STEW

BY HANK SHAW

Flavorwise, this stew is similar to my recipe for German meatballs, with a little sour cream, capers and lemon. It is a flavor combination common in southern Germany, and really works well with lighter meats. Chicken thighs would work well here, too, as would pheasant. There is another version of this stew in Germany that uses veal, too. It is a two-step stew, meaning you make the base and "mount" it with sour cream, white wine and capers right at the end. Once you add those final ingredients you are committed, so if you want to make this for dinners or lunches for the week, store just the base (up to Step 4) and add the remaining ingredients when you want to eat.

Course: Soup

Cuisine: German

Serves: 4 people

Author: Hank Shaw

Ingredients

2 cottontail rabbits, or 1 domestic rabbit, cut into serving pieces

Salt

2 tablespoons unsalted butter

2 tablespoons flour

1 to 2 cups chicken stock

1 onion, sliced root to tip

Zest of a lemon white pith removed, cut into wide strips

2 to 3 bay leaves

1/4 cup lemon juice

2 tablespoons capers

1/2 cup sour cream

White wine to taste, at least 2 tablespoons

Black pepper

Parsley for garnish

Instructions

Salt the rabbit pieces well and set aside for 10 minutes or so. Set a Dutch oven or other heavy, lidded pot over medium-high heat. Pat the rabbit pieces dry and brown well on all sides. You may need to do this in batches, so don't crowd the pot and don't rush things. Remove the rabbit pieces once they're browned. This may take 15 minutes or so.

Add the remaining tablespoon of butter, then the sliced onion and cook until the edges just begin to brown, about 6 minutes. Sprinkle with flour and stir well. Cook, stirring often, until the flour turns golden, about 5 minutes.

Return the rabbit to the pot and add enough chicken stock to cover. Use a wooden spoon to scrape any browned bits off the bottom of the pot. Add the lemon zest, bay leaves and lemon juice and bring to a simmer. Cover and cook gently until the rabbit wants to fall off the bone, which will take anywhere from 90 minutes to 3 hours, depending on how old your rabbit was.

This is an optional step, but I prefer it: Turn off the heat, fish out the rabbit pieces and let the cool on a baking sheet. Pull all the meat off the bones and return the meat to the stew. I don't like fiddly stews with bones in them, so I do this. You can leave everything on the bone if you want.

You can now store the stew for several days. Or you can serve it at once. Turn the heat to low just to make sure the stew is nice and hot. Do not let it simmer. Add the sour cream, capers and as much white wine as you want -- you want the stew to be a bit zingy. Stir in a healthy amount of black pepper and garnish with parsley.

Serve this with bread or potatoes and a crisp, German white wine. A lager beer would be good, too.



## Book of the Month

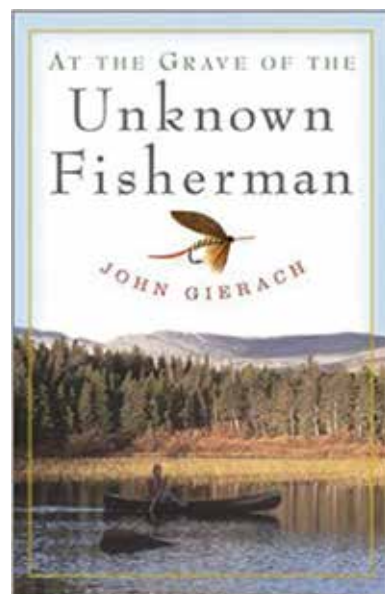
### AT THE GRAVE OF THE UNKNOWN FISHERMAN

by John Gierach

In a whimsical and heartfelt look into the fishing life, the author of *Standing in a River Waving a Stick* takes readers on his travels from the Rocky Mountains to Nebraska, on odysseys with his fishing buddies, to the contemplation and reverence of fishing itself.

From Publishers Weekly

These 20 magazine columns—most from *Field & Stream*—follow Gierach's year of outings in Northern Colorado, Wyoming, Nebraska and Pennsylvania, and include some of his best strokes of style since *Sex, Death and Flyfishing*. Each travelogue plucks the required notes of Gierach's angling country song formula: a conversational, self-deprecating voice; good-humored reporting from the Eden streams of the West; appreciation for his local angling fraternity. Fishing-is-the-antidote-to-real-life is the axis of every Gierach collection, and several of these stories are convincing as well as entertaining. The angling reader already understands perfectly well the real reason Gierach is perched on the back of an ATV with a Labrador retriever riding through heavy May mud to reach remote ranchland ponds. As Gierach gets older, his reach into his angling hat is slower but he pulls out better rabbits: "If you wanted a fish that could sip white wine and discuss Italian poetry, you'd look for a trout. If you need a ditch dug, you'd hire a carp." The title reference is to a streamside marker dedicated to a deceased conservationist that Gierach seems to acknowledge is the epitaph for anyone who, like himself, spends his life in the thrall of something as gloriously inconsequential as fly-fishing.



It is amazing that John Gierach can keep putting out interesting books on essentially the same topic without getting very repetitious. This is another compilation of essays in a long series chronicling his fishing life and the issues that have impact upon it.

His first book, *Trout Bum*, established his persona...a trout-obsessed fly-fisher who puts everything in life second to the sport. Whether or not this is actually true we don't know, but I suspect that it is pretty much accurate. Unlike most of the bums that I've known (ski bums, golf bums, bass bums) Gierach has managed to make a living from his obsession. I guess that this is a good thing for him...it certainly is good for his readers!

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