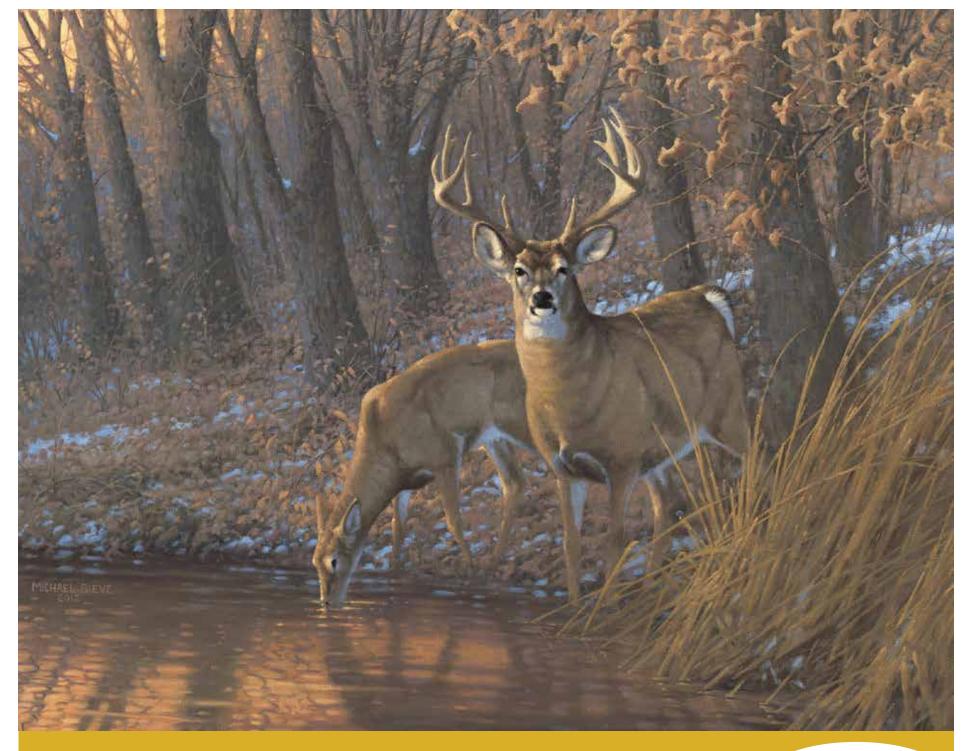
# Fishing&Hunting



- 36 POINT BUCK!
- LOVE POINT RED DRUM
- AUTUMN BASS ON CONOWINGO
- BAY'S STRIPED BASS POPULATION GROWS





Bad day for Mr. Crow who landed in the pasture while Roger Everett was groundhog hunting with his Remington model 700 rifle in .223 caliber. Mr. Crow met his demise from 164 yards.



(Very) Still life photo of Cecil County woodchuck assassinated during the Summer of 2017 with a Remington model 700 rifle in .222 caliber.



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#### "Campbell's Catch"

#### Keeping a Fishing Log

By Tim Campbell who has fished the Chesapeake Bay for many years and is an award winning member of the Mason-Dixon Outdoor Writers Association.

There was a time when I thought keeping a fishing log was not worth the effort. Fishing is supposed to be fun and I didn't want to make work out of it. However, I learned that keeping a log made one a better angler, and that's what I wanted to be, so I started logging my fishing trips. At first I simply wrote notes in a little datebook of when, where, what I caught, how many hours and with whom I fished. Later I added air and water temperatures, and weather conditions such as cloud cover, wind

speed and direction. Experienced anglers know current and tide plays a big part in when and where the fish are biting. Therefore, the time of high and low tides were noted in my datebook too. I soon realized my logbook would be a more useful tool by adding extra information such as water clarity and moon phase, particularly if there was a full or new moon.

Types of baits or artificial lures were also noted, especially if one worked better than another. The fishing method was jotted down as well, i.e. chumming, jigging, live-lining or trolling. Abbreviations helped, for example, CH = chumming, LL = Live-lining, Jig = jigging, etc. But it wasn't long before I had too much information to fit the small space in

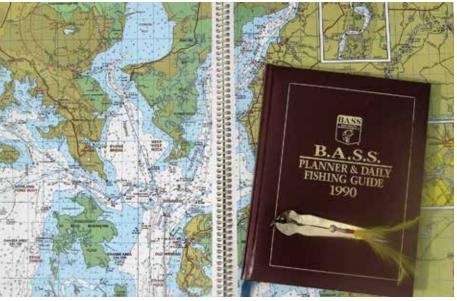


Photo by Tim Campbell.



Talking Tim Burnum and Dave Wilder with Upper Bay stripers caught light-tackle jigging. Photo by Tim Campbell.

my datebook. As a result, I created a spreadsheet, made copies and put them in a three-ring binder. There are lots of good examples of fishing log spreadsheets online or you can make your own. Nowadays there are even smartphone apps for easier record keeping.

Observing wonders of nature like bald eagles soaring above, blue heron wading on the shoreline or any other bird or animal activity not only enhances the outdoor experience, they are important to note. These signs all factor into the entire equation when figuring out seasonal patterns. Besides, these details also come in handy when telling fishing stories to your buddies at the local tackle shop. The old adage is true; sometimes the journey can be as exciting as the destination. It's all part of the adventure of fishing and enjoying the experience of being outdoors.

Some anglers like to jot down notes immediately after they catch a fish. These are the guys that keep an easy to reach notebook in their boat or tackle bag. Most people prefer to wait until they get home. That's what I like to do. But truth be told, I don't always document my trips right

away. Don't procrastinate, stick with it and you'll soon see how valuable your records can be. It may take some time, but after a while you'll begin to recognize patterns and thus become more in tune with nature. It was as if a light bulb came on for me. That's when I became a true believer in keeping a logbook.

Before a fishing trip, I like to do some pre-planning. In addition to checking my favorite websites for wind and tide, I review my log. Oftentimes I go back to the same spots where I found fish before and try to duplicate my previous successes. Serious anglers keep separate logbooks for each lake or river they fish. They know the information in their logs is priceless when it comes to catching fish. Don't hesitate to develop your own system of record keeping, take it from me - it's worth the effort.

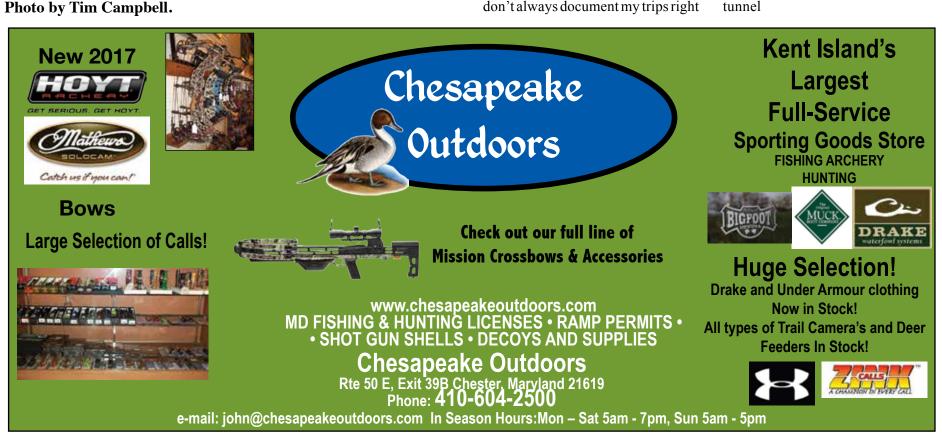
Favorite websites:

http://dnr.maryland.gov/Fisheries/Pages/Tide-Finder.aspx

www.nws.noaa.gov/om/marine/ zone/east/lwxmz.htm

https://buoybay.noaa.gov/

http://www.tides4fishing.com/ us/virginia/chesapeake-bay-bridge-





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**November 2017** 

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#### FAITH OF OUR FATHERS

A word from our Pastor-

Romans 13 is an amazing passage. It teaches us how to honor God by showing respect to our government. You see, God ordained government. There are many distorted views in this area. We must understand that government has a two-fold responsibility - Godward and manward. The Bible teaches that God frowns on civil disobedience and is always on the side of constituted authority. Human government derives its authority from God.

Wilbur Smith says, "Four words describe our society, revelings, insulting, ravaging and lawlessness." Many in our society have thrown off the restraints and have no regard for decency. Many have no fear of the law.

In recent days, we have been inundated with NFL Players not standing during our National Anthem. It has caused much controversy and the worst has yet to come. It reminds me of when I was a young boy, in the mid 1960's and my Dad took me to Yankee Stadium for a game. As we stood for our National Anthem, there were two young men seated in front of us who remained seated. Without hesitation, my Dad a, Korean War Veteran, reached down, clutched their collars and said, "Boys, when they play our National Anthem we ALL stand up!" As people around us applauded my Dad's action, I stood, watched and learned a great truth that day. That cloth with the stars and stripes isn't just any piece of cloth, that cloth represents who we are as a people. Not to stand is to dishonor those who fought and died so we could stand.

Our flag represents freedom, pride and justice. Freedom because of the many lives given to fight for this right. Pride in what we are as a God-fearing people. And, justice for each one of us, regardless of race, color or creed.

Romans 13 tells us the powers that be are ordained of God. Yes, to be an American means we're free, but to not respect our flag is to put your fist in the face of God! This goes much deeper than not standing...it's high treason against Heaven. I love America and I believe it's the greatest nation on the face of the earth. I will stand when our Anthem is played. I will honor our nation and our God. Will you join me?

MEL BRINDLEY Pastor Chestertown, Md., Baptist Church





Charlie Fegan chased this buck all last season, he finally arrowed him on Sept. 13 this season. Photo courtesy of Fegan's Taxidermy



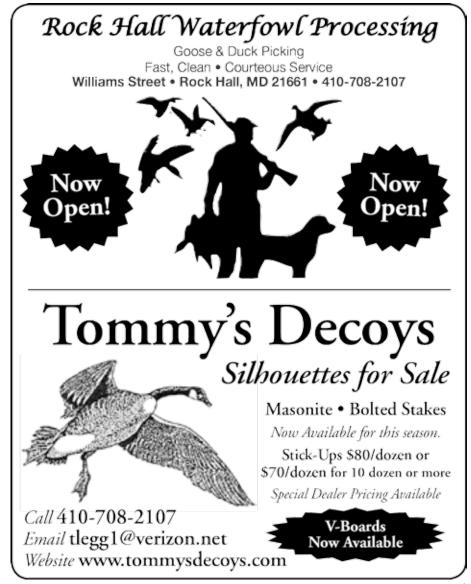
Talking Tim Burnum and Tim Campbell with upper bay stripers caught on 10-14-2017.



MARCO Hunting and Fishing Club Members with upper bay yellow perch caught 10-14-2017.



Wayne Baker of Rock Hall, MD with his buck harvested in early October.



#### "Tackle Box Tim"

#### Autumn Bass on Conowingo

Admittedly, at this time of year. I am in full striper fishing mode. I'm flinging topwater plugs rattle traps, jerkbaits, and soft plastic jigs at the rockfish in the upper bay. However, if there is a hot bite from another species going on somewhere else in the region, I'm all for it. This was definitely the case recently when I got a call from John Hansen III, or J3, as he is also known in bass fishing circles. He has finally gotten a change to get in tune with local fisheries after being on the road all spring and summer on the FLW Costa Series tours and Bassmaster Elite Series Marshal program. He called me to say that the fall feed was on in Conowingo Reservoir.

Over the last few years, the small-mouth and largemouth bass fisheries on Conowingo have flourished. Sure, there are good days and bad days on the water, but many fishermen have been plying the waters north of the dam on a regular basis from spring thaw through late season frost. The reservoir is one of the most unique places in central Maryland where you can run a full-fledged bass rig for both species of black bass.

Hansen finds that, like most other bass fisheries, the transition to autumn patterns starts on the lake with a slow but steady fall in water temperature. He says that when that decline has the water temps in the low 70s down to the high 60s, bass hit their fall stride. On the reservoir, being consistent with our tidal fisheries, the fall feed was late-occurring this year. John doesn't let bluebird skies and interspersed warm days bother him. Smallies will still be active, but he may have to

work a bit for the largemouth bass.

With bass actively feeding, J3 casts moving baits. He'll cast crankbaits, jerkbaits, topwaterplugs, and Alabama rigs (bass-gear-size umbrella rigs) to the aggressive minded bass. His favorites are crankbaits and the A-rig. In shallow water he casts the Luck-E-Strike RC 1.5 square bill. Along deeper holes and ledges he uses the Rapala DT20 plug. He uses Eco Pro Swing Shad swim baits on the A-rig, which is great when you find the large active schools. John will break out topwater lures if he notices surface feeding activity.

Hansen is an advocate for using small lures on Conowingo. He says that the amount of forage available to the bass on the lake, mostly shad, is immense. However, he is adamant that the baitfish run on the small size. He feels that the largemouth and smallmouth bass are so keyed into the baitfish that it is hard to get them to strike a large lure. Thus, the swimbaits on his A-rig are 3 ½-inches long; and his choice of hard baits rarely surpasses 4 inches.

Bass can be found in numerous places throughout the lake. Shoreline rock and wood, lower end and midlake grass beds, and upper end river rock cover all hold bass. The northern, rocky end holds mostly smallies, but both species can be found through the rest of the lake.

John always looks for spots that hold numbers of bass. He has mastered reading his sonar to find the unique spot within a particular form of cover. In bass fishing terminology, he looks for the "spot with the spot". This is where he often finds the schools in fall.

J3 works the points of grass beds. He also looks for areas along the vegetation for quick drops in depth. At the north end, he looks for changes in depth and varying rock cover. Casting around boulders will get you a bite; but he says that if you can find that run of chunk rocks around the boulders, you are likely to find a better bite. He also looks for drop offs where the rock cover changes from large rocks and boulders to gravel. This could be in the middle of the upper end or along the bank. John says that finding a school on these unique pieces of cover, rock or grass, can give you a clue to start working a pattern. However, you may only find a few fish on similar habitat. Large schools are not always a given.

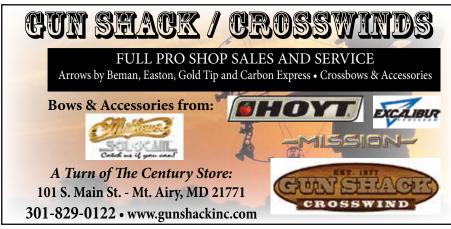
When the bite slows down, Hansen does not immediately abandon an area.

He slows down with the fish. He lays down the power fishing lures and takes a finesse approach. He's become very proficient at using the drop shot rig and will fish in the deep, rocky north end and along the mid- and lower lake grass beds. When the shoreline bite along rock and wood dissipates, he works Texas-rigged stick worms and wacky-rigged finesse worms.

As blessed as we are to find the full on, fall feed on Conowingo, all go things come to an end. Hansen says that when the water temperature hits the mid- to low 40s, the aggressive bite slows down. There is still plenty of fishing to be had, but the metabolism of the bass in the lake is surely slowing down. Enjoy it while it lasts. Given this year's weather patterns, we may be enjoying it deep into fall.



Maryann Ruehrmund from Rock Hall, Md. with her Red Snapper last month from the Great Barrier Reef.





John Hanson shows a Conowingo smallmouth bass.



#### "Tuna The Tide"

#### **Trolling Spoons**

#### By Captain Mark Galasso

For many years in the Chesapeake Bay there were basically three types of trolling lures, Buck tails, hoses and spoons. There were many variations on these lures but all in all they worked fine for ninety percent of the trolling we did. Basically, hoses and buck tails were trolled at fairly low speeds, generally 1.5 to 2.5 knots while spoons were often trolled at 3.5 knots or more. Spoons and hoses became extremely popular in the seventies due to the large numbers of Bluefish that swarmed in the Bay back then. The main advantage was they had large single hooks toward the rear of the lure and were made of durable materials that could withstand numerous bluefish attacks. Spoons being made of metal could go a whole season whereas even heavy duty hoses would eventually get destroyed by a Blues sharp teeth.

During my season I tend to switch to a combination of hoses and spoons about early July when Bluefish invade our area. The problem I have is I like to troll my spoons behind down planners at 3 to 4 knots, a little too quick for the hoses. I tend to use number 2 or 3 Drones in various colors. I always

with green or gold reflector tape has been my hot color. The spoons come in many different colors and I've tried them all. You can buy the reflector tape precut at your local tackle store. I experiment often. Especially when fishing is slow.

I find spoons that are about the size of Peanut Bunker work the best in the fall. Generally 5 or 6 inches. That would be a number 17 Tony Acetta spoon or a number 2 Drone spoon. In the Tonys I like to use a silver with yellow tail feathers. You can purchase extra hooks as the feathers do wear out, or tie your own like I do.

I like to troll my spoons behind number 2 or number three planners. I find at 3.5 knots the spoons run about 15 feet down if you let the number three planners back 40 feet and the number twos back 60 feet. If you dig the bottom check the lures. They will sometimes pick up grass or seas squirts and will still have the same action even though they are fouled.

So far this year we have caught Blues, Rock, Fluke and even a Red Drum on spoons. They are a diverse lure that can be fished easily. On numerous occasions we have had every



Dave Schulte with his girlfriend Megan Higgins accepting his award from The Ocean City Marlin Club for Most First Billfish Caught by a Private Boat.



tie an in line swivel a few feet up the leader from the lure. This helps prevent the spinning spoon from twisting the line. If you notice the line starting to twist check the swivel. They do fail. I never use a snap to the spoon. I also never use a loop knot as the spinning spoon will wear out the loop. Some people use a split ring attached to the ring that is on the spoon. It does give the spoon a bit more action. I always use a 15 foot leader from the swivel to the weight or planner.

Color can be key. In really dirty water black and gold or darker spoons work well. As the water clears lighter spoons work well. This year white rod go down. One time we even had a fish grab a spoon that was hanging in the water getting ready to be set back. One trick we learned recently is not to reset a tripped planner right away. Sometimes the fish will actually follow the lure to the surface and hit it a second or third time.

So the next time you see Rock busting Peanut Bunker on the surface put on a few spoons. I think it's the closest thing you can do to "Match the Hatch".





#### **Baltimore County Hunter Fined after Shooting Robo-Deer Decoy**

A Sparrows Point man who thought he bagged a buck in North Point State Park paid hundreds of dollars in fines instead after he shot a Maryland Natural Resources Police robo-deer decoy.

On the evening of Oct. 7, Thomas Ervin Minton, 45, was spotted by officers patrolling a field where the robotic decoy had been placed. He fired a crossbow at the faux deer and sped away when officers tried to stop him.

As officers searched the area, Minton approached one of them and asked what the fine would be for illegally shooting a deer. He then turned himself in and led officers back to his home, where the car matching the description of the one used by the shooter was parked.

Minton received citations for having a loaded crossbow in a vehicle, hunting at night, shooting wildlife from a vehicle, and for using a light for hunting or jacklighting. He also received six written warnings, including attempting to elude a uniformed officer. He pleaded guilty in Baltimore County District Court Oct. 12 to three charges and paid \$1,500 in fines. The charge of using a light to hunt remains active on the docket.

His crossbow, scope and arrow were confiscated. The robo-deer was unharmed.

An Essex man was flown to Peninsula Regional Medical Center last month for treatment of injuries sustained when he fell 20-feet from a homemade tree stand on leased land in Worcester County.

Joseph Patrick Hughes, 63, was checking his stand in Chesapeake Forest Lands at about 7 p.m., when one of the wooden steps pulled away from the tree and he fell. He was not wearing a safety harness.

Members of the hunting club heard his cries for help and helped him back to the camping area and drove him to the Stockton Fire Department, where he was assisted by Snow Hill first responders. A Maryland State Police helicopter flew him to the hospital due to possible back and neck injuries.

An Essex man is scheduled to appear in Queen Anne's County District Court Dec. 7 on charges he illegally caught several fish from the Chesapeake Bay.

An officer conducting surveillance at the Kent Narrows boat slips earlier this month stopped a vessel with four men aboard who said they had not caught any fish. While talking to the men, the officer noticed a man in the cabin taking fish from a bucket and hiding them.

Kenny Alexander Bono, 26, received citations for keeping six undersized striped bass and one undersized spotted sea trout. If found guilty, he could be fined as much as \$2,000.



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Josh Bowers with his 29 1/4" - 6.7lbs. Snakehead caught in the Middle Patuxent. Photo courtesy of Clyde's Sport Shop.



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from Captain Brian Councell aborad 'Sea Dux' out of Rock Hall, Md. - I've been blessed with many clients over the years who have become my friends and family. This group of men is no exception. They truly understand what life is about and how to live it. Thanks for another great season.

### Black Bear Hunt Concludes in Western Maryland

Unpredictable weather conditions in "Mountain Maryland" didn't hamper hunters from enjoying time afield last month during the state's 2017 Black Bear Hunting Season.

Preliminary results of the 14th annual hunt reveal that 128 hunters successfully harvested a bruin over the four-day hunt in western Maryland despite battling heavy rains, reduced daylight and dropping temperatures.

"We are thrilled with another successful bear hunt and view it as further evidence that the department is managing the state's black bear population effectively," Wildlife and Heritage Service Director Paul Peditto said. "With such an expanding and healthy bear population throughout western Maryland, this hunt is an essential management tool."

For just the second year, hunters were allowed to harvest bears in all four western counties: Allegany, Frederick, Garrett and Washington.

Preliminary Statistics from the 2017 Maryland Black Bear Hunt:

128 black bears harvested 22 from Allegany County 2 from Frederick County 103 from Garrett County 1 from Washington County 152 pounds average weight of the bears 69 percent of bears taken on private land 5,453 hunters applied for a permit 1,683 hunters participated



#### **Bay's Striped Bass Population Grows**

Results of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources 2017 young-of-year striped bass survey in the Chesapeake Bay shows the fish is reproducing in strong numbers. The annual survey's index is 13.2, above the 64-year average of 11.7

Striped bass, popularly known as rockfish, is Maryland's state fish. The fish spawns in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries each spring. The survey is conducted annually to track the reproductive success of this important species and help predict future abundance. The index represents the average number of young-of-year striped bass – those less than 1 year

old – captured in 132 samples.

"Strong reproduction in three of the past seven years is an encouraging sign for the coastal population and future fishing opportunities," Fishing and Boating Services Director Dave Blazer said.

During this year's survey, department biologists collected more than 33,000 fish of 62 species, including 1,741 young-of-year striped bass. The most productive area surveyed for rockfish was the upper Chesapeake Bay, their largest spawning area.

Results of this year's survey also showed high white perch reproduction in the upper bay and Nanticoke River. Additionally, the survey found American shad reproduction was above average, primarily due to its success in the Potomac River.

The department has monitored the reproductive success of striped bass

and other species in Maryland's portion of the Chesapeake Bay annually since 1954, making it o n e the oldest biological surveys. Twentytwo survey sites are located in

Maryland's Juvenile Striped Bass Index rithmetic Mean (AM) Catch per Haul 60 50 40 ndex 30

major spawning systems: Choptank, Potomac and Nanticoke rivers and the upper bay. Biologists visit each site three times during the summer, collecting fish with two sweeps of a 100-foot beach seine.

### Winners of Fishing **Tournament Will Receive Their**

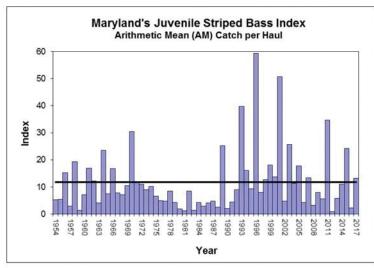
Millions OCEAN CITY, Md. (AP) — The organizers of a multi-millión dollar fishing tournament say they will pay the winners their prize money following an investigation that included lie-detector tests.

The Daily Times reports (http:// delmarvane.ws/2iBOvC4 ) that the Ocean City-based White Marlin Open, billed as the world's largest billfish tournament, released a statement last monthconfirming the winners' validity.

Tournament winners are required to undergo polygraph tests to safeguard against cheating. After the August tournament, directors said one prizewinner failed a polygraph test and that additional investigation was underway.

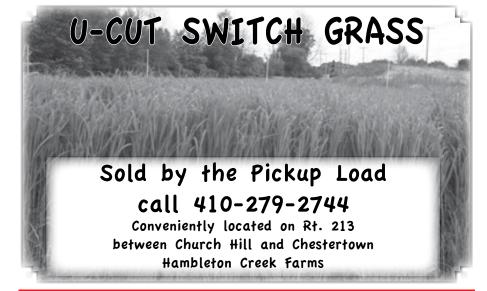
That came after the tournament declined to pay the 2016 winner after a failed polygraph test.

The top prizewinner in 2017 was Glen Frost of Stevensville, who won \$1.6 million after catching a 96-pound marlin. Tournament officials said Frost did not fail his polygraph.





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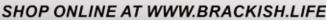




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Ben Eldridge with a nice Red Drum caught trolling a white #2 drone spoon off Love Point on 'Tuna the Tide'.



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We cannot but pity the boy who has never fired a gun; he is no more humane, while his education has been sadly neglected. Henry David Thoreau (1817 - 1862)





### News from **Brackish** life!

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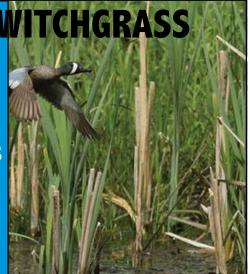
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Officer Dennis McCain. His first striper using a bucktail jig.

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#### "Fishin' Back East"

#### TRICKS FOR COLD **WEATHER CRAPPIES**

By Jim Gronaw

I have often been amazed as to how late in the season, actually well into winter, that the crappie bite will hold up in such a variety of waters. Both tidal and inland waters will host a cold water surge that can often be the best fishing of the entire season. For both quality and quantity, I have discovered that from November thru ice-up, crappies put on the feed bag.

It can be tough to consider cold slabbing with so many other options in town. Yes, stripers are on a roll, late season smallmouths are pounding hair jigs in the rivers and the trout fishing can be good in both stocked and native environs. Throw in brawny blue cats, tidal largemouths and then the on coming deer and small game seasons to keep the outdoorsman busy. For sure, it is a time of plenty.

But the lure and lore of slab-sided crappies and crispy-fried fillets still exist. My own personal records indicate that for seven years running, my largest crappies have come in either November or December. That might change this year with a 2-pound, 8-ounce black crappie I caught this past April from the tidal Potomac River. But the stats indicate that now is the time for more, and bigger, fish. Here are a few tips and tricks to get high quality crappies this late fall season.

FISH STABLE WEATHER.

One thing I have discovered is that crappie, both tidal and non-tidal, do not like cold front conditions and the bite will turn off literally as soon as the northwest winds blow. This doesn't mean that you can't catch them right up to the time the front hits, though, as often they will actually increase feeding activity as a front approaches. This can also occur with strong easterly flows and conditions that are often associated with major coastal tropical events that occasionally hit our region this time of year. This is not to imply to cancel a trip if the weather is coming in later in the day or afternoon. Rather, try to hit your favorite crappie hole just several hours before it arrives.

VARY JIG SIZES.

Most good crappie fishermen have a favorite size jig and they tend to utilize that specific size, all year long. This can, and often is, a mistake. Throughout specific times of the year baitfish dynamics determine the best size jig for the job. In the spring, when many minnow and baitfish are spawning, smaller options from 1/80th to 1/32nd of an ounce can be very good. As time marches on and baitfish grow through the summer and fall, larger jig sizes may be better options. By upping the jigs to 1/16 th to 1/8 th ounce you can more accurately duplicate baitfish profiles. Additionally, various plastic that range from 1.5 to 2.5 inches in length can trigger bites from

those bigger slabs that exceed 12 inches and much more.

Then again, there could be an abundance of smaller shiners that have just survived the summer conditions at your favorite crappie hot spot or perhaps that baitfish species sees a fall spawn. If bigger isn't better than try the small fry.

ČHANGE COLORS.

There are times when crappies can be very picky as to what color they will hit one day as to the next. Traditionally, I like to go from chartreuse, black, white/pearl and then light blue. This is just a basic scheme and there are times when other colors may be the "hot" color of the day. With the variety and vast array of colors on todays panfish plastic market it pays to have a good selection on hand. Pink can be hot, as well as red or lime green. Personally, I like the color options offered by Bobby Garland Crappie Plastics when I am fishing with plastic options. The "baby shad" series has been a real winner so far with me this fall with Bluegrass being the preferred color.

Âlso, if you get tired of having plastic bodies coming off of your jigheads, you can add a drop of either Crazy Glue or Gorilla Glue prior to the trip and they will survive the attack of many crappies and save you a few baits along the way.

CHANGE DEPTHS.

Most of my crappie fishing is done with suspending jigs with a bobber. Throughout the season, the fish tend to suspend at various depths. Traditionally, I'll start at a 4 foot drop from the float and look for active fish as I lower the jig no more than 6 inches at a time. Sometimes, I'll find them as deep as 6 to 7 feet, even close to shoreline structure and along rocky shorelines or wind-blown dam faces. When they are deeper I like to utilize a longer spinning rod like the Shimano Convergence 9 foot spinning stick designed more for stream steelheads or a 10 to 11 foot match rod that allows a fixed bobber presentation. I like the fixed bob-

ber over the slip-bobber option as I believe that you get a more accurate "read" on the float than with the later.

FISH SUN-WARMED STRUC-TURES...

During the fall, and especially into winter, crappies of-

ten scootch up tight to any type of wood or concrete structure that has received several hours of direct sunlightand can afford a few degrees of warm and comfort once the water temperature start to dip below 50 degrees. Big crappies can be vulnerable in the fall, so keep only be bridge what you plan to eat and return some slabs for the Thiscan

pilings, future. wooden

trussle networks, piers, docks, rip-rap shorelines, concrete barriers of many kinds and even metal structures that can heat up and thus offer slightly warmer condition.

Often, crappies will be hugging tight to these areas and exacting and accurate cast will be necessary to get them to bite. In some cases, long, telescoping poles can be utilized to finesse jigs in and around these potentially complex structures to extract the bounty of slabs. Additionally, small sensitive bobbers become your ally as lethargic winter crappies feed lazily on tiny minnows that may also mingle in and around such structures.

TIPPING BAIT OPTIONS...

As colder weather ensues the option of live minnows becomes more and more difficult. I seldom, if ever, use live minnows for crappies, although it has been a standard of the industry since forever. Catching, buying and keeping live bait lively can be a challenge in the winter, not to mention the "cold hand" syndrome.

In recent years, we have had good success with a variety of jig-tipping baits in the "dry bait" department. Mealworms, wax worms and maggots are all popular ice fishing tipping baits that work very well in the ice belt of north central United States. The use of other products such as Gulp! Crappie Nibbles, Waxies, Fish Fry or the Gulp! one inch minnows have also been in our arsenal. Try the Arkansas Shiner or Black Shiner Gulp! Minnows on a

plain 1/32nd ounce round-head jig as a cold weather option. The combination of scent, size and color seem to trigger winter slabs, and this has been one of my "go to" baits over the last several cold-water seasons.

Yes, it will be hard to choose your sport once the leaves all change and hit the ground and colder winds blow. But if you want to cash in on some of the best crappie fishing of the year try these tactics this fall for fish, and fillets, in your future.



Approaching cold fronts in the fall and early winter can trigger a hot crappie bite for big fish and timing is the key.

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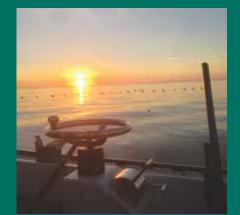


Duane Cooper of Carroll County killed a bear in Garrett County on Oct. 25, 2017, and checked it in at the Allegany County station at Billmeyer on the way home.



### Sea Duck Hunting at it's Finest!









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Richard Wright spent a couple of days on the Angler head boat in Ocean City for the opening of black sea bass season. The action wasn't as fast and furious as everyone was hoping and expecting but we did catch plenty of nice fish. Large sea bass, triggerfish and good numbers of flounder were coming up all around the rail.



Tyler Mayes harvested a 8 point buck last month in Queen Anne's County.

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#### **SPANNING THE GLOBE**

### Hunter bags 36-point freak-ofnature deer with his crossbow

By Brian Broom, The Clarion-Ledger

JACKSON, Miss. — The hunt for a 6-point management buck that spanned four years ended with a Philadelphia, Miss., man taking a rare 36-point giant.
"I hunt there around my house," Stan Ethredge said. "We've got a couple of hundred acres.

"I've been getting pictures of him for at least four years now. He was a big 6-point four years ago. He dropped his antlers and grew six points again. After the second year he was a 6-point, I figured that was all he was going to be. I figured he was a good cull buck, but I never got a shot at him. I just got pictures.'

Ethredge continued to monitor the deer and as expected, he grew into another 6-point the following spring, but during the summer, his antlers began to express abnormalities. The buck started growing drop tines and stickers.

When fall came, Ethredge noticed something else that was odd.

"October came around and he was still in velvet," Ethredege said. "He had



a big drop tine on one side. I knew something was going on with him."

Ethredge had one encounter with the buck last season, but wasn't able to get a shot. However, his cameras were keeping track of the unusual antler growth. He never shed his velvet that winter and when all the other bucks had dropped their antlers, the unusual buck kept his — and they they continued to grow.

When this hunting season arrived, the buck had become a freak of nature. His antlers had grown into a mass of twisted and turned tines with massive bases. And he was still in velvet. Ethredge was almost able to harvest him right off the bat.

"I saw him opening day and it was right at dark and I didn't want to mess him up," Ethredge said. "I just watched him."

Ethredge said the deer on his place have him patterned better than he has them patterned. In fact, he said that judging by the photos he sees of bucks near his stands while he is away, he's pretty sure they know his work schedule.

Ethredge would have normally been at work Oct. 20, but he took a vacation

day. He figured the schedule change might fool the deer.
"I decided to hunt that evening because the deer thought I was at work," Ethredge said. "It was about dark and a doe stepped out.

'She walked toward me and he stepped out. He got about 30 yards from me. I was telling my self to keep my composure. My heart was beating out of

And he managed to calm himself enough to make the shot with his crossbow. "As soon as I got the crosshairs on him, I shot," Ethredge said. "He's eluded me for years, so I didn't want to let him get away. I shot him as soon as I got the chance. I felt pretty good about the shot. He turned and ran away the way he came. I sat there a while and it was the longest hour of my life.

Still shaken by the heart-pounding experience, Ethredge got out of his stand and began tracking the animal. He immediately found blood on the ground...

"I started blood-trailing him and the blood got better," Ethredge said. "I got about 75 yards and there he was.

"The first thing I did was thank God. It was amazing. There was just unbelievable stuff on his head. He had a couple of really big drop tines.

The buck had 36 points and a 16-inch spread. He measured 227% inches according to the Buckmasters scoring system.

As unusual as the antlers were, so were the buck's reproductive organs, or lack thereof.

"Usually when their testicles are damaged, this happens," Ethredge said. "He really didn't have any. He had a slight bulge, but not like they should be."

William McKinley, deer program coordinator for the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks said the deer's antlers were consistent with a lack of testosterone production. "Something caused the deer to stop producing



testosterone," McKinley said. "Sometimes bucks castrate themselves on a fence.

'It's not common, but it's not uncommon. It could have been disease. It could have been a number of things. If a deer doesn't have testosterone the antlers continue to grow. They never harden and they never lose velvet.

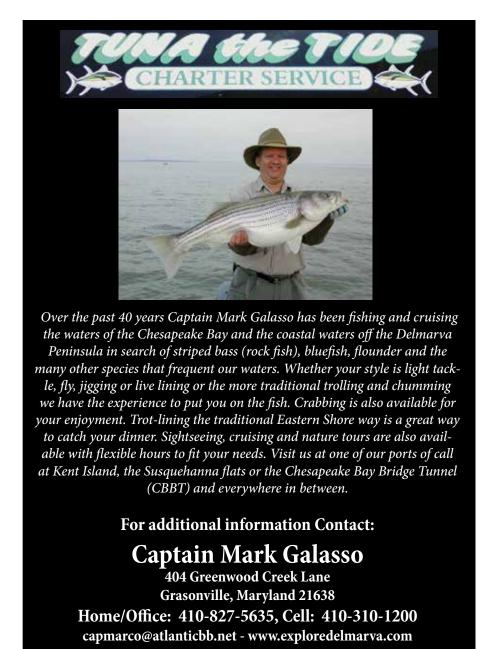
Depending on when a buck loses the ability to produce testosterone, one of two things will happen, but the outcome will be the same.

"If it happens in velvet, the antler growth will slow down, but never stop," McKinley said. "If it happens when he has hardened antlers, he'll shed his antlers and grow new ones that will never harden.'

McKinley may never be able to pinpoint exactly what caused the buck to stop producing testosterone, but one thing he's sure of is that Ethredge harvested a truly rare deer.

I told him this wasn't a deer of a lifetime," McKinley said. "It's a deer of several lifetimes.

Follow Brian Broom on Twitter: @BrianBroom



#### "Montana Grant"



By Grant Soukup

#### ON TARGET TIPS!!!

Every deer hunter has been given, learned, or shared a few golden tidbits of knowledge that were on target. Some may have learned in the field, through trial and error. Others may have come from a hunting camp sage, or from just doing your deer hunter homework.

Successful hunters learn, retain, and practice these tips. As a young deer hunter, I looked up to the hunters that routinely filled their tags. These hunters were often quiet, independent, and kept their information close to their vest. Once they took me on as an apprentice, I was all ears.

Deer hunting mentors teach by example. When I first began bow hunting, I passed on dozens of small bucks and does. Only one deer was allowed each year in my state, so I wanted to harvest a big buck. After a few seasons, I begged for guidance.

"The only way to learn how to shoot deer, is to shoot deer. Take the next legal deer that comes by. Big bucks will come over a lifetime". My first bow harvest was a big doe. My mentor was right. Being a "blooded"

hunter changed how, when, and where I hunted. The next bow deer would be a buck. Putting food on the table was more important than hanging antlers on the wall. Now don't get me wrong, I love antlers, but harvesting deer every season requires hunting, shooting, and learned skills. After a lifetime as a hunter, that doe remains one of my most memorable trophies.

most memorable trophies.

"Take your one, best shot". So many hunters carry boxes of ammo afield. I leave mine at the shooting bench. Practice makes perfect and shooting more teaches you to shoot better. Marksmanship is a perishable skill. Eyes, age, and our bodies change over time. Great shooters adjust and adapt. This means practice. That one perfect shot is the result of hours at the shooting bench.

"Take the first shot you are comfortable with". We have all had deer coming into range. Our crosshairs are set, the deer is moving, trees and grass are in the way, and... When should you pull the trigger? After practice and experience, you will know, and sense, when to shoot.

Shoot when you know you can do the job. Practice will determine the range and challenge. If you wait too long, something will always go wrong. The wind, another hunter, other deer, a tree will fall, something always can go wrong. You know what you will get if you don't shoot.

"Don't look for a deer, look for a part of a deer". This tip came from a mentor that swore by using binoculars when hunting. He would find a nice perch near a ridge line, and scan all day. Most of his shots were well over 100 yards away. How could his old eyes even see a deer at half that range? "Look for eyes, noses, antlers, tails, and horizontal lines. Eyes shine and blink, noses are wet and shine, antlers shine and move, tails are white and twitch, and horizontal lines are the belly or back of a deer in a forest where the trees are mostly vertical."

"If you celebrate the hunt, you will always fill your limit!" Hunting for the joy of the hunt is so important. Enjoy the trip, whether you pull the trigger or not. This mentor told me how he went onto stand at daylight on opening day. 30 minutes into the season, several deer came in gun range. He looked at the 2 nice bucks and several does. "I hadn't even eaten my lunch yet". He let them pass. "I enjoy the hunting, time at camp, and seeing lots of deer".

nice 10 point buck hanging on the meat pole was his.

"Show respect, honesty, and sportsmanship!" Hunting is a brotherhood. Keep your distance, for safety and courtesy. Follow the rules, laws, and model sporting hunting for others. Anyone can trespass, poach, cheat, and lie. My mentor told me, "I am too old to remember any lies that I may have told, but I can always remember the truth!"

Hunt for Life!

Montana Grant

For more Montana Grant, visit his website at www.montanagrantfishing.com.



time at camp, and seeing lots of deer". Later that week the Buck. Photo courtesy of Ron's Bay Pro Shop



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#### Coastal Report

By Capt. Mark Sampson

We were fishing about five miles off the coast when a school of big menhaden or "bunker" as most folks around here call them, popped up close to the surface and started working its way past our boat. It was just one of many schools we were witness to that day that were inclined to spend their time closer to the top rather than the lower depths of the water column for "whatever" reason.

My clients stared in fascination as school after

My clients stared in fascination as school after school, each made up of thousands of fish, swam past our boat close enough that we actually could see their little mouths opening and closing as they sucked in water that would both oxygenate their blood and provide nourishment in the form of microscopic plankton.

Occasionally as a school would go past we could see and hear some of them splash the surface of the water, which would prompt one of my clients to repeat that, "There must be some kind of big fish attacking them from below"! Never wanting to dash the optimism of an angler, I didn't comment one way or the other on his assessment, opting instead just to let him and his fishing partners think, and hope, that big fish were chasing the little fish and at any time we might get a bite by one of the bigger fish! I was thinking, however, that despite the occasional flit on the surface by a bunker, there was no indication that the bait was being perused.

The optimistic angler was correct that the actions and reactions of baitfish are worth paying attention to because they can be a good indicator of whether or not there are bigger predator fish in the area, he was just misinterpreting the signals a little. Just like boaters who are able "read" the water can look for subtle variations in its surface to give them an idea if it's safe to travel over, anglers who can "read" the actions of bait they observe can sometimes have a better understanding of the presence or absence of fish they hope to catch.

In the case of the bunker that day, the different schools were just swimming about in different directions, and didn't appear that they were being harassed by anything. We knew that there were other fish in the area as we were having pretty good action with the sharks. Maybe sharks down deep were why the bunker were up close to the surface, but we never saw any indication that they were being chased by anything. The little splashing is pretty common any time those fish are up close to the surface. So in this case, the bait we were seeing wasn't really telling us much about what other fish were or were not there. However, the simple knowledge that baitfish were in the area had us optimistic that the fish we were looking

for might be there too; it's always good see life in the neighborhood!

A school of bait that is actually being preyed upon by bigger fish might react in a number of different ways. For instance, sometimes the bait just rises close to the surface. Small fish don't usually want to be close to the surface because it makes them easy targets for birds and why anglers pay attention to such feeding activity. Feeding birds indicates little fish – little fish might be an indicator of big fish. Pay attention to birds!

Unlike the bunker we watched that day that were simply splashing a little at the surface, when actually being attacked, a school of baitfish will usually explode from the water in a very frantic attempt to escape from what's trying to make a meal of them. Known as "showering", this activity usually produces a lot of white water that can often be seen from far away as well as heard by anglers who are within earshot of the frantic fish. While showering fish is usually an great indication of big fish below, anglers should not be

fooled when a large gull or pelican flies over a school of bait and creates a kind of "reverse shower" as the little fish are spooked by the bird overhead and make a sudden splash as they attempt to dive down and out of harm's way.

When being attacked, a school of bait will sometimes "ball-up" swimming very close to each other and usually in a circular motion like a spinning ball. Because none of the little fish want to be on the outside of the school and get picked off by a big fish, they all keep trying to work their way in to the center of their school which creates the spinning action which is an almost sure tip-off of big fish feeding activity.

Another thing to watch for are "fish boils" near schools of bait. Fish boils are little upwellings of water at the surface that sort of look like boiling water without the bubbles. A boil is created when a fish rises close to the surface and then quickly turns and darts back down as when a fish is attacking bait from below. The fish never breaks the surface but the push of water from its tail reaches it creating the boil.

A school of baitfish that is moving erratically from side to side or that seem to be crowding each other up to the surface usually indicate good things for the fisherman. Anglers can also attempt to look down in the water around and below a bunch of bait to see if they notice any flashes from bigger fish that might be working the bottom part of the school.

Predator fish will sometimes follow schools of bait not necessarily because they are hungry but because they want to be close by their food supply when they do decide to feed. A school of bait that is being dogged like this by larger fish will not necessarily show signs of alarm until they actually sense that the bigger fish has gone into feeding mode and then they start getting wacky. And while wackiness might not be good for the "poor little baitfish" who are just trying not be eaten, it's can be a great tip-off to anglers who are hunting the hunters and know how to "read" the bait!



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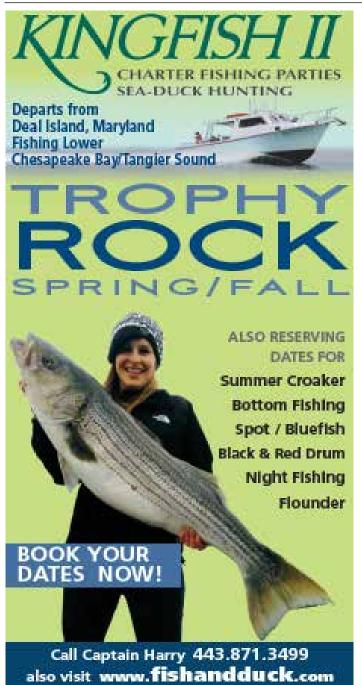
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Sierra Jennings of Saint Michaels MD and her dad Bryan pose with Sierra's beauty of a buck last month.





#### "The Last Word"

By Steve Huettner

"It has always been my belief that one of the things that makes hunting so special is that on any given day things can happen to you that you will remember for the rest of your days. Very few things in everyday life are like that." Lamar Underwood, The

Greatest Hunting Stories Ever Told

As this issue hits the stand, the month of November will be upon us and many of my fellow hunters will be anxiously waiting for the opening day of deer firearms season. One friend referred to it as Christmas morning with guns. Opening day for many is steeped in tradition and stories, a time for family and friends to spend a time afield, and to hopefully add venison to the freezer.

I began to think about the concept of opening day and how it has changed and what it means to hunters in Maryland. We are blessed to have so many opening days, for so many different animals, at times it feels like getting presents for five months.

For die hard bow hunters, the first Saturday in September is circled on the calendar. No concerns about mosquitoes and chiggers, warm days, and thick foliage is enough to persuade the archer not to be perched in his favorite stand come this day. After months of shooting foam filled deer, the draw of an opportunity to kill a buck covered in velvet proves too strong.

#### **Opening Days**

Bird hunters come September first have the opportunity to hunt a double if they are so inclined. Waterfowlers in September mean resident geese.

Liberal bag limits, naïve birds, and pleasant weather are more than enough to get a waterfowler excited about getting out and hunting.

Many hunters associate the true start of the hunting season with one thing, a dove a shoot. Nothing seems to epitomize the arrival of hunting season more than a dove shoot. Friends one has not seen over a busy summer of work and family vacations, gathered around a sunflower patch, with guns in hand is something to behold. At the end of shoot, birds are cleaned, libations drank, and hope about the upcoming season dominates the conversation

the hunter with a deer of a lifetime.

many more opening day gifts. For the duck hunter, the October season affords mild temperatures and a chance for wood ducks and teal (two of the finest eating ducks in my estimation). Just to hear a wood duck whistle at first light, or to have teal dive bomb your rig gets the blood flowing and hunters coming back every year.

Over the last 12 years Maryland has offered its hunters the opportunity to head west and hunt black bears. I have



October greets After 17 years in the woods Megan Kennedy gets

had the opportunity to draw a tag and participate several times in this hunt and it has never disappointed. The stunning fall foliage, the back drop of mountains, and the opportunity to hunt black bear in your home state is something I truly hope should experience at least once. Bears are truly the master of their domain and their stealth ability in the woods is without question.

Deer hunters are afforded the opportunity in October to put down the bow and pick up their smoke pole. The idea of being in the field in October with a firearm (albeit a single shot) with the chance to kill an buck getting a head start looking for ladies, or filling the freezer with doe has this as one of Maryland's more popular seasons.

November offers 6 days of goose hunting Atlantic Population geese. That week is truly something to see, especially on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. Pickup trucks towing trailers filled with a small fortune of decoys, dogs fired up to do what they were breed for, and camo clad hunters is a true November experience. With friends and family traveling home for thanksgiving, people off work, and the opportunity to shoot some geese, you have the makings for some great memories.

After thanksgiving, football, and goose hunting the pumpkin army will have their time in the woods. Never are you more aware of hunting than during open day of firearms season. The sheer number of people afield can at times seem overwhelming. Once shooting time is upon us, the volume of shots quickly has you losing count. Deer get wise to the transformation of their normally quiet woods, and those that do not find themselves on the meat pole back at camp.

May you experience many opening days and the memories that are associated with them.

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#### Homemade Jerky: Where Whiskey and Beef Are a Match Made in Heaven

#### WHISKEY PETE JERKY

This is a truly simple jerky, but the flavors of all the ingredients really come through. You'll also have a better understanding of why whiskey drinks sell so well at steak houses. Whiskey and beef are a match made in heaven.



#### **Ingredients:**

½ cup brown sugar
½ cup whiskey
½ cup soy sauce
¼ cup cider vinegar
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
4 drops liquid hickory smoke
1 pound London broil strips or Venison

#### To make:

In a one-gallon resealable plastic freezer bag, thoroughly mix together all the ingredients, except the meat, and allow the mixture to rest for 10 minutes. Add the meat strips to the marinade and mix them around so they get completely coated with the marinade. Remove as much air as possible from the bag, seal, and place it in the refrigerator for eight to 24 hours. During the marinating time, remove the bag from the refrigerator and work the meat around so the marinade is fully incorporated into it. Remove the strips from the marinade and arrange in a single layer in your choice of dryer.

#### To dry jerky:

You can use gas, electric, or convection ovens to make jerky. Ideally, jerky should be cooked at 165° F, but many ovens don't go lower than 200° F, which will still work. If you use a gas or electric oven, there are a couple things you can do to help get more air flowing around the meat as it dries. First, stick a wooden spoon handle in the door opening to keep it slightly ajar—this will also help bring the oven temperature down a little, which will improve the texture of the finished product. Second, lay the meat strips on a cooling rack set on a baking sheet to allow air to flow underneath the strips as they dry.

If you are using a convection oven, begin checking on the jerky after about 90 minutes. With a gas or electric oven, start checking on it after two and a half hours. If you have a dehydrator, you will find that it is even easier to get great results—just set your dehydrator to 165° F and begin checking the results after four hours.

Jerky is ready when it looks dry, but you can bend it without it snapping. If it does snap, that means it's too dried out—just stick it back into a new marinade and dry it again. When your jerky is ready, store it in a resealable plastic bag without excess air. If you see any oil on the surface, carefully pat it dry with paper towel before storing it.

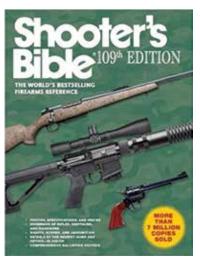
Properly dried jerky will last up to month at room temperature. For longer storage, vacuum seal or freeze it. Homemade jerky is perfectly safe, but if you spot any mold, the entire batch should be thrown out.

#### **Book of the Month**

#### SHOOTER'S BIBLE, 109TH EDITION: THE WORLD'S BESTSELLING FIREARMS REFERENCE

by Jay Cassell

Published annually for more than eighty years, the Shooter's Bible is the most comprehensive and sought-after reference guide for new firearms and their specifications, as well as for thousands of guns that have been in production and are currently on the market. Nearly every firearms manufacturer in the world is included in this renowned compendium. The 109th edition also contains new and existing product sections on ammunition, optics, and accessories, plus updated handgun and rifle ballistic tables along with extensive charts of currently available bullets and projectiles for handloading.



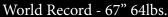
With a timely feature on the newest products on the market, and complete with color and black-and-white photographs featuring various makes and models of firearms and equipment, the Shooter's Bible is an essential authority for any beginner or experienced hunter, firearm collector, or gun enthusiast.

#### About the Author

Jay Cassell, editorial director at Skyhorse Publishing and the editor of this compendium, has hunted all over North America. He has written for Field & Stream, Sports Afield, Outdoor Life, Petersen's Hunting, Time, and many other publications, and has published numerous books. He lives in Katonah, New York.









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984-3614 Three Montgomery County men were charged last month with illegally catching striped bass by an officer on surveillance at Fishing Creek Bridge in Dorchester County.

Deivin Jose Hernandez Perez, 25, of Silver Spring, and Carlos Antonio Cespedes, 37, of Gaithersburg, were each charged with keeping eight undersized striped bass, exceeding the daily limit and keeping striped bass between midnight and 5 a.m. Perez also was charged with fishing without a license. William Edgardo Reyes, 19, of Silver Spring was charged with keeping one undersized striped bass. Their cooler was hidden at the base of the bridge.

All three men are scheduled to appear in Dorchester County District Court Dec. 20. Each violation carries a maximum fine of \$1.500.

Two officers and an agency cadet rescued a man and a boy after their canoe capsized on the Chester River near Jackson Creek.

The Oct. 15 accident began shortly before 2:30 p.m., when the police dispatch center received a call about people in the water, screaming for help. Officers launched a patrol boat from Kent Narrows and reached the overturned boat within minutes. They pulled aboard Nestor Aparicio, 55, of Grasonville, who said his grandson had been fishing with him. The officers and cadet quickly found the 12-year-old boy treading in open water and rescued him.

Queen Anne's County first responders met the returning patrol boat and took the two people to the Queen Anne's Emergency Center, where they were treated and released. Grasonville Volunteer Fire Boat 2 retrieved the canoe and brought it to shore.

Neither Aparicio nor the boy were wearing a life jacket and the canoe did not have the required sound-producing device to use in an emergency.

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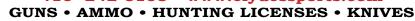


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