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## News

### Arkansas Outdoors

Jan. 28, 2009 - Keith Stephens (501) 223-6342, e-mail: [kastephens@agfc.state.ar.us](mailto:kastephens@agfc.state.ar.us)

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### Henderson returns to full-time schedule

LITTLE ROCK – Arkansas Game and Fish Commission Director Scott Henderson will be returning to a full-time work schedule. Henderson had been working on a part-time basis since late July 2008 due to an illness. Commission chairman Freddie Black made the announcement at last week's monthly meeting of the AGFC.

During the short meeting, commissioners were provided a harvest report on the state's recent elk season. Cory Gray, the AGFC's new elk biologist, reported that a total of 16 elk were harvested during the state's three seasons. Gray replaces the retiring Mike Cartwright and will be in charge of the AGFC's elk program. Before taking over the elk program, Gray was responsible for Arkansas's deer program.

Gray highlighted the fact that the new January private lands hunt only produced one bull elk during the five-day season. "I thought the quota would be met pretty quickly and the hunt would be finished in a few days, but that's not the way it turned out. We did give hunters in that zone the chance to hunt elk," he said.

During the September hunt, three elk were taken by hunters. In December, hunters took 12 elk. The largest bull harvested weighed in at a dressed weight of 600 pounds. The largest cow weighed a live weight of 572 pounds and the largest antlers were a 6x7. Since the modern Arkansas elk hunt began in 1998, a total of 254 elk have been taken by hunters.

In other business, the commission:

\*Honored Arkansas Outdoor Hall of Fame member Gene Denton of Clarksville for his work



on turkey habitat in the state. On behalf of the National Wild Turkey Federation, former AGFC commissioner Jim Hinkle presented a bronze statue to the Arkansas Game and Fish Foundation in honor of Denton.

\*Honored wildlife officer Michael Gray with the Shikar-Safari Wildlife Officer of the Year award. Gray is based in Mansfield and patrols westcentral Arkansas. Award winners are selected on the basis of their professional relationships with hunters, anglers and landowners in their districts, their job performance and dedication to the wildlife law enforcement profession and participation in activities outside of daily enforcement work.

\*Honored David and Terri Stalnaker of Little Rock for their fishing lure donation that is on display in the Witt Stephens Jr. Central Arkansas Nature Center in Little Rock.

## Needy families benefit from AGFC assault on wild hogs

ARKANSAS CITY – Feral hogs, generally viewed as the most destructive element in Arkansas wildlife habitat, can be combated and even put to some welcomed use.

Arkansas Game and Fish Commission personnel, along with some other participants including hunters, have worked hard on the wild hog problem on Choctaw Island Wildlife Management Area.

They have killed roughly 150 hogs in recent months on the area, but they haven't just dug pits and buried the carcasses.

These hogs have been taken to needy families in the Dumas and Monticello areas, said Roger Milligan, AGFC's district wildlife supervisor in that part of the state.

Milligan said, "We usually gut the hogs, and if we have time we may skin them. People are glad to get the hogs. They'll tell us 'Yes, bring me a hog when you get one.' We do ask them to sign a waiver of liability when we give them a hog."



AGFC bought the Choctaw Island tract in 2001. It is 8,300 acres on the Mississippi River in Desha County, a place with immense potential for wildlife. Along with the rich bottomland, the acquisition included a sizable population of wild hogs. They have increased since.

Hogs are terrors in wildlife habitat. They root up plantings, grasses, shrubs, young trees. They raid and destroy ground nests of turkeys and other birds. They compete with deer for food and usually hold the upper hand in this competition.

The AGFC has a deer research project underway on Choctaw Island that led to the campaign against hogs. Large nets are rigged to trap deer so radio transmitter collars can be fitted on them for tracking and monitoring purposes.

Milligan said, "We use corn for bait under these nets, and the hogs just clean out the corn. They didn't let the deer get to it. So we raised the nets, let the hogs come in then we dropped the nets on them."

The netted hogs were shot, the carcasses field dressed then taken to needed families.

Milligan said 41 hogs were caught with the use of the nets, and others were killed by AGFC personnel and by hunters in various places on the management area.

The problem has been lessened but not eliminated, he said. "We estimate we have 40 to 50 hogs still on Choctaw. If you don't keep working on them, they'll increase in a hurry. They have big litters, and at about six months old, those babies are ready to breed too. You have to keep after them. A lot depends on your neighbors with wild hogs too. If you eliminate them on your land, and your neighbors don't do it too, then

you've still got a hog problem.”

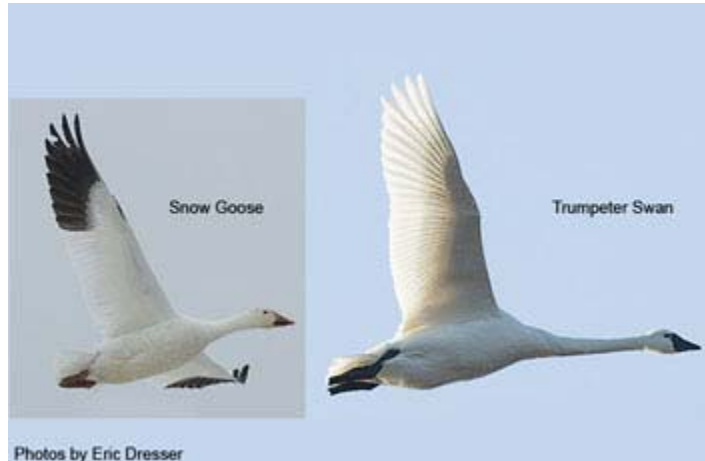
A recent change in AGFC regulations for its management areas allows hunters to go after hogs when other hunting seasons are open. On private land, feral hogs can be hunted or trapped year-round and it is illegal to release them into the wild on public lands or on unfenced private property.

The problem of wild hogs is present in all areas of the state, AGFC wildlife officials said, not just on the agency's management areas.

## Snow goose hunters urged to watch for swans

LITTLE ROCK — Hunters participating in Arkansas's Light Goose Conservation Order are urged to be careful not to accidentally shoot trumpeter swans.

Karen Rowe, nongame migratory bird program leader with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, said, “Increasing numbers of trumpeter and tundra swans are wintering in Arkansas, and some young trumpeter swans brought here last year from Iowa have lived in Arkansas year-round. Goose hunters need to be aware that these swans may be almost anywhere in the state. They roam around Arkansas quite a bit in their daily activities. We have had reports of tundras and trumpeters winter in extreme northwest Arkansas down to the southeastern part of the Delta. ”



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Light Goose Conservation Order extends hunting for snow and Ross's geese until April 30. The term light goose includes snow geese and Ross' geese.

Concern about the swans arose after the killing of five trumpeter swans in central Missouri. The Missouri Department of Conservation said some hunters failed to properly identify their targets and killed five of the swans, apparently mistaking them for snow geese.

Other hunters witnessed the shootings and alerted conservation agents, who confiscated the birds as evidence. A February court date has been set for the resulting cases.



Trumpeter swans bear only a superficial resemblance to snow geese, as the swans are several times larger than snow geese. Trumpeter swans are all white. Snow geese have black wing tips.

Trumpeter swans are the the largest birds native to North America. Adult males measure 57 to 64 inches long and weigh around 25 pounds. Adult females range from 55 to 60 inches and weigh approximately 20 pounds. Their wingspans can approach 8 feet, and they fly with their extremely long necks outstretched.

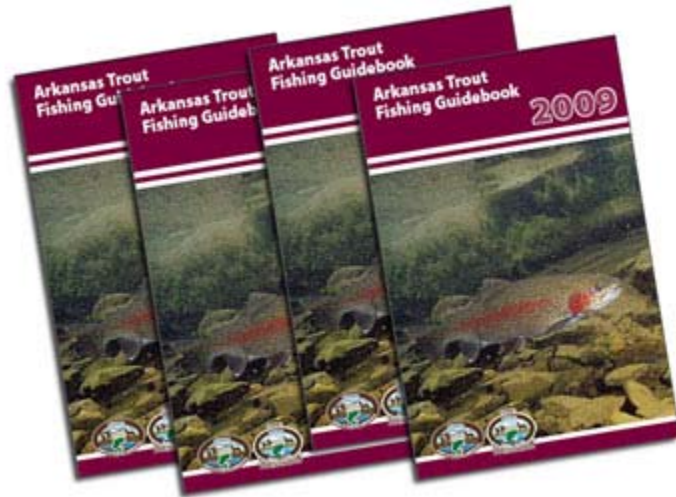
About 5,000 trumpeter swans live in the Midwest area of the United States, most of them in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa and Michigan with some moving south into Missouri.

Biologists studying swans in northern state often mark swans with colored collars with alpha numeric codes.

Observers should note the exact location of collared swans, and write down the number and letter code off the collar and send that information to Rowe at [krowe@agfc.state.ar.us](mailto:krowe@agfc.state.ar.us). Because it can be difficult to tell the difference between tundra and trumpeter swans in the field, the public is encouraged to visit <http://www.trumpeterswansociety.org/id.htm> to learn the key differences in bill shape and other physical characteristics of these two species.

## 2009 Arkansas trout fishing guidebook now available

LITTLE ROCK – The latest edition of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission’s trout fishing guidebook is now being distributed to AGFC offices and license dealers around the state. The guide is free and contains a few changes from the 2008 guide.



Changes in the 2009 guide include:

- \*Clarification of the downstream boundary for Narrows Tailwater Trout Area.
- \*Clarification of special regulation area boundaries on Bull Shoals and Greers Ferry Tailwaters.
- \*24-inch minimum length limit and 1 fish/day creel limit for brown trout on the Bull Shoals and Norfolk Tailwaters.
- \*Clarification of language on “How to Measure a Fish.”
- \*Clarification of the White River Lakes Agreement from Highway 62 bridge to Houseman Access.
- \*Clarification that mobility-impaired anglers must have a mobility-impaired card when fishing Dry Run Creek.

## Boating education class schedule

Click here for boating education information: <http://www.agfc.com/education-class/boating-education.aspx>

## Hunter education class schedule

Click here for hunter education information: <http://www.agfc.com/education-class/hunter-education.aspx>

## What’s open for hunting

Current and approaching seasons in Arkansas:

Deer: Archery – All zones: Oct. 1, 2008 to Feb. 28, 2009.

Projected opening dates for the 2009-2010 deer hunting season.

Archery: Oct. 1, 2009

Muzzleloader: Oct. 17, 2009

Modern Gun: Nov. 14, 2009

Duck: The youth waterfowl hunt will be Jan. 31-Feb. 1.

Statewide Canada goose season: Dec. 26-Jan. 30

White-fronted goose season: Dec. 26-Jan. 30 with a bag limit of two.

Snow, blue and Ross' goose season: Dec. 26-Jan. 30 with a bag limit of 20.

Snow goose Conservation Order: Feb. 2-April 25 with no bag limit.

Spotted Skunk, Weasel Hunting: Closed

Fall Turkey: Archery: All Zones: Oct. 1, 2008-Feb. 28, 2009.

Furbearers:

Trapping (other than coyote, beaver, muskrat, nutria): sunrise, Nov. 15-sunset, Feb. 22.

Coyote trapping: sunrise, Aug. 1-sunset, March 31.

Beaver, muskrat, nutria trapping: sunrise, Nov. 15-sunset, March 31.

Gray fox, mink, opossum, red fox, striped skunk hunting: sunrise, Sept. 1-sunset, Feb 28.

Raccoon day or night hunting: sunrise, Sept 1-sunset, March 31.

Raccoon night hunting: sunset, July 1-sunrise, Aug. 31.

Bobcat hunting: sunrise, Oct. 1-sunset, Feb. 28 and from the first day of spring turkey season through June 8.

Coyote hunting: sunrise, July 1-sunset, Feb. 28 and from the first day of spring turkey season through June 14.

River otter hunting: sunrise, Nov. 15-sunset, Feb. 28.

Muskrat, nutria, beaver hunting: sunrise, Sept. 1-sunset, March 31.

Badger, spotted skunk and weasel hunting: Closed.

Quail

Statewide: Nov. 1-Feb. 8.

Rabbit

Statewide: Sept. 1-Feb. 28.

Squirrel

Statewide: Sept. 6, 2008-Feb. 28, 2009 and May 16-June 14, 2009.

Crow

Statewide: Sept. 6-Feb. 23.

## Coming up in the outdoors

Jan. 30 – Arkansas State University Chapter of Ducks Unlimited Membership Dinner at the Moose Lodge in Jonesboro. For more information call: Jonathan Higgins at (870) 821-1306.

Jan. 31 – Outdoor Sportsmen Banquet, Greenwood High School basketball arena, 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Jan. 31 - Talkin' Turkey and Whistlin' Quail Workshop, 9 a.m. - 1:30 p.m., Eagle View in Searcy. Topics are habitat and management of turkey and quail. For more information and registration, contact White County Cooperative Extension Service, (501) 268-5394.

Jan. 31 – University of Arkansas Razorback Chapter of Ducks Unlimited Membership Dinner at the Fayetteville Town Center. For more information call: Dane Harris at (501) 977-4762.

Jan. 31 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Late Season Duck Hunt."

Jan. 31 – Calhoun County Chapter of Ducks Unlimited Membership Dinner at the Calhoun County Fairground Building in Hampton. For more information call: Cody Strickland at (870) 818-5032.

Feb. 6-8 – Arkansas Sportshow presented by the Rotary Club of Jonesboro. The Sportshow will be held at the Convocation Center on the campus of Arkansas State University. For more information, go to <http://www.arsportshow.com/home.php>.

Feb. 6-7 – Arkansas Ducks Unlimited state convention at the DoubleTree Hotel in Little Rock. For more information contact Vince Callahan at (870) 735-5813 or [vcallahan@sbcglobal.net](mailto:vcallahan@sbcglobal.net).

Feb. 7 - Wildlife Habitat Improvement Workshop, 3 p.m. - 7:30 p.m., Janet Huckabee Arkansas River Valley Nature Center, Barling. Topics include deer, duck, quail and turkey habitat. For more information and registration, contact Crawford County Cooperative Extension Service, (479) 474-5286.

Feb. 7 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "The Art of Knife Making."

Feb. 8 - 12 - The Nature of Agritourism Retreat, sponsored by the Business of Birding Institute, Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas, DeWitt, Arkansas. Farmers, landowners, lodge owners, hunting guides, community leaders or anyone with an interest in starting or expanding Nature Tourism needs to attend this retreat. Topics include habitat management, business planning, risk analysis and marketing. Participants stay in lodges, interact with a variety of experts, go on field trips, and leave with a business plan for their land or community. The birding community as a potential market is explored. Information including registration is available at <http://www.aragriculture.org/aai/retreat/default.asp> or contact Kathy Radomski at (870) 946-3506, ext. 1617.

Feb. 12 – Arkansas Tech University Chapter of Ducks Unlimited Membership Dinner at the Lion's Den in Dardanelle. For more information call: Micah Tindall at (870) 421-5167.

Feb. 14 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Run, Rabbit, Run."

Feb. 19 – AGFC Commission monthly meeting at the AGFC Little Rock central office, 2 Natural Resources Dr., beginning at 9 a.m. Topics include the 2009-2010 general hunting regulation proposals.

Feb. 21 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Quail for Kids."

Feb. 21 – Fly-tying class, taught by Donnie Hyslip, will be held at the Little Red Fly Shop in Heber Springs. The cost of the class is \$100 and includes everything needed to learn how to tie the flies useful in the White River system. For more information call the Little Red Fly Shop at (888) 442-4022 or (501) 887-9988 or e-mail at [shop@littleredflyshop.com](mailto:shop@littleredflyshop.com).

Feb. 28 - Bucks and Ducks Habitat Improvement Program, Lawrence County Community Room, Walnut Ridge, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Topics include waterfowl, deer, turkey and quail. For more information and registration, contact Lawrence County Cooperative Extension Service, (870) 886-3741.

Feb. 28 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Zig-Jigging for Trout."

Feb. 28 - Arkansas Catfishing Association tournament at the Arkansas River in North Little Rock at the Alltel Arena access. For ACA members: rod and reel, catch and release, and alive and well. Open tournament to the general public so come out and lets do some catfishing, or you can join: For an ACA application form, constitution and bylaws, local conditions and information along with the rules and

regulations, visit our website at [http://arkcats.org/Home\\_Page.php](http://arkcats.org/Home_Page.php) or Lee Fields of Russellville at (479) 331-0399 or (870) 577-7289 or by email at [leefields@centurytel.net](mailto:leefields@centurytel.net), or Paul Schweyer of Barling, [paulschweyer@sbcglobal.net](mailto:paulschweyer@sbcglobal.net) at (479) 452-1652 or (479) 719-0474.

Feb. 28 - Ouachita River Chapter NWTF Hunting Heritage Banquet in Malvern. The banquet will begin at 6 p.m. at the Malvern Community Center.

March 7 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Raccoon Hunting."

March 7 – Marion Chapter of Ducks Unlimited Membership Dinner at the Barton Ag Center. For more information call: Irwin Burton at (870) 738-3442.

March 7 – Saline County Chapter of Ducks Unlimited Membership Dinner at the Saline County Girls and Boys Club in Benton. For more information call: Keith Johnson at (501) 840-2379.

March 14 – Springdale Chapter of Ducks Unlimited Membership Dinner at the Parson's Rodeo Arena. For more information call: Steve Delancey at (479) 466-4666.

March 14-15 - Arkansas Catfishing Association tournament at Lakes Millwood (Yarborough Landing) and Earling (Hwy. 53 to Lake Earling Park's Public Ramp) in southwest Arkansas between Hope and Texarkana. Lake Millwood will be a regular tournament but the "catch" will be donated. This will our yearly charitable tournament whereas we suspend the normal rules and "go for the double catch" to donate to a local charity to help feed the hungry. For an ACA application form, constitution and bylaws, local conditions and information along with the rules and regulations, visit our website at [http://arkcats.org/Home\\_Page.php](http://arkcats.org/Home_Page.php) or Lee Fields of Russellville at (479) 331-0399 or (870) 577-7289 or by email at [leefields@centurytel.net](mailto:leefields@centurytel.net), or Paul Schweyer of Barling, [paulschweyer@sbcglobal.net](mailto:paulschweyer@sbcglobal.net) at (479) 452-1652 or (479) 719-0474.

March 19 – AGFC Commission monthly meeting at the AGFC Little Rock central office, 2 Natural Resources Dr., beginning at 9 a.m. Topics include the 2009-2010 general hunting regulations approval.

March 28 – Greenbrier Chapter of The National Wild Turkey Foundation annual fundraising membership drive, dinner and auction at the Boy Scout Camp in Damascus. For more information call: Dave Smith at (501) 335-7240.

April 4 – Twin Lakes Chapter of Ducks Unlimited Membership Banquet at the Big Creek Country Club in Mountain Home. For more information call: Shane Williams at (870) 421-5746 or [shanewilliams@eaton.com](mailto:shanewilliams@eaton.com).

April 16 – AGFC Commission monthly meeting at the AGFC Little Rock central office, 2 Natural Resources Dr., beginning at 9 a.m.

April 18 – Arkansas Catfishing Association tournament at Lake Maumelle launching from the Jolly Roger Marina. For ACA members: rod and reel, catch and release, and alive and well. For an ACA application form, constitution and bylaws, local conditions and information along with the rules and regulations view our website at [http://arkcats.org/Home\\_Page.php](http://arkcats.org/Home_Page.php) or Lee Fields of Russellville at (479) 331-0399 or (870) 577-7289 or by email at [leefields@centurytel.net](mailto:leefields@centurytel.net), or Paul Schweyer of Barling, [paulschweyer@sbcglobal.net](mailto:paulschweyer@sbcglobal.net) at (479) 452-1652 or (479) 719-0474.

May 21 – AGFC Commission monthly meeting at the AGFC Little Rock central office, 2 Natural Resources Dr., beginning at 9 a.m.

June 18 – AGFC Commission monthly meeting in Lake Village. Topics include the early migratory bird season proposals.

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