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News

Arkansas Outdoors

February 25, 2009 - Keith Stephens (501) 223-6342, e-mail: kastephens@agfc.state.ar.us

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Commission considers revised deer zone boundaries

LITTLE ROCK – At last week's monthly meeting in Little Rock, commissioners for the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission were presented with proposals for the 2009-2010 hunting seasons. The commission will study the proposals and make a final decision at its March meeting.

One major proposed change is to revise several of the current deer zones. The proposal calls for modifying the existing boundaries for deer zones 1, 2, 3, 14 and 15; dividing deer zone 6 into three zones and splitting deer zone 8 into two zones. The proposals were introduced to address goals of the Strategic Deer Management Plan. The new zones will be 1A, 6A and 8A.

Another major proposal for deer season is to remove the zone doe quota permit requirements for zones 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, and 11 in order to manage the doe harvest utilizing doe days. The zone doe quota permits would be replaced with doe days to manage the doe deer herd in Arkansas.

A proposal was also introduced to change the antler restrictions from a 3-point rule to a 4-point rule in deer zones 16, 16A and 17. The proposal also allows for a buck with at least one main beam 18 inches or more in length, regardless of the number of antler points, to be harvested.

A proposal to add telephone checking was presented to the commission. The proposed change would eliminate all county check stations as well as check sheet programs. Deer Management Assistance Program camps will continue to receive check



sheets so biological data can be collected. If approved, the new checking option would begin with the October archery season. Along with the phone checking, on-line checking will still be available as will the check sheets at DMAP camps. The change will allow more real-time, accurate data for the AGFC biologists.

Proposed season dates for the 2009-2010 deer hunting season:

Archery – All zones: Oct. 1 to Feb. 28.

Modern Gun - Zones 1, 1A, 2, 3, 6, 6A, 7, 8, 8A, 10 and 11: Nov. 14-Dec. 6.
 Zone 4: Nov. 14-15.
 Zone 5: Nov. 14-15 and Nov. 21-22.
 Zone 4A, 5A, 13, 14 and 15: Nov. 14-Dec. 13.
 Zones 4B and 5B: Nov. 14-22.
 Zones 9 and 12: Nov. 14-Dec. 20.
 Zone 16, 16A and 17: Nov. 14-Dec. 25.

Muzzleloader - Zones 1, 1A, 2, 3, 4A, 5A, 6, 6A, 7, 8, 8A, 10, 11, 13, 14 and 15: Oct.17-25 and Dec. 19-21.
 Zones 9, 12, 16, 16A and 17: Oct. 17-25 and Dec. 29-31.
 Zones 4, 4B, 5 and 5B: Closed.

The statewide Christmas holiday modern gun deer hunt is proposed for Dec. 26-28 with two special youth modern gun deer hunts proposed. The first would be Nov. 7-8 with the second Jan. 2-3, 2010. The January hunt will be either-sex in deer zones 9, 12, 16, 16A and 17. The other deer zones will be buck only. Unlike the November youth hunt, Hunters 65+ years old would not be allowed to participate in the January hunt.

In other business, the commission:

*Approved a memorandum of agreement with the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality to use just over \$1 million from AGFC oil and gas lease money. The money is earmarked for use in providing frequent inspection and monitoring of drilling in the Fayetteville Shale Play area as a way to protect fish and wildlife habitat.

*Approved the purchase of a 40-acre tract located in the Shirey Bay Rainey Brake Wildlife Management Area.

*Approved \$350,000 to purchase a conservation easement on Buck Island. The island is located on the Mississippi River near Helena-West Helena



Arkansans urged to report sightings of swans in state

LITTLE ROCK – More young trumpeter swans have been brought into Arkansas and released into the wild.

The Iowa to Arkansas relocation project, a three-year experimental effort, needs reports of sightings of swans to help track their movements. Reports of any swans seen in Arkansas – trumpeters, tundras or mutes – should be sent to Karen Rowe, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission non-game migratory bird program coordinator. Her e-mail address is krowe@agfc.state.ar.us.

Rowe asked that persons sighting swans provide as much information as possible. She needs date of sighting; number of swans; swan species (trumpeter, tundra, mute); if the swans are wearing collars, color of collar and alpha numeric code; specific location (GPS location if known, county, nearest town); name of landowner if



known; habitat type (fallow crop field, wheat field, pond, large lake, marshy wetland etc.); and the reporting person's name and contact information.

Fifteen young trumpeter swans were released recently in Arkansas after being brought from Iowa. Eleven were released at Holla Bend National Wildlife Refuge, near Dardanelle, and four were released at the Boxley Valley mill pond on the Buffalo National River in western Newton County.

The latest swan releases were the second segment of a three-year program of Iowa's Department of Natural Resources and the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission..

Ron Andrews and Dave Hoffman of the Iowa DNR brought the young trumpeter swans to Arkansas. Also participating in the project are Buffalo National River and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Iowa to Arkansas translocation of trumpeter swans is an experiment to see if migrating instincts can be encouraged for the birds. In 2008, 20 young trumpeter swans were brought from Iowa to Arkansas. The exact number to be moved in 2010 depends on swan reproduction in Iowa as well as observation of the birds already moved to Arkansas.

Trumpeter swans are increasing in Arkansas, and they are occasionally seen in several parts of the state in addition to Magness Lake, where they have been wintering since the early 1990s.

Some trumpeter swan questions and answers:



How do you tell a trumpeter swan from a goose?

Trumpeter swans are white and the largest waterfowl in North America, weighing 25 to 30 pounds. Wing span is about 8 feet. In comparison, the giant subspecies of Canada geese living in Arkansas is mostly black, gray and white and weigh about 12 pounds. Snow geese are usually white with black on their wings, with some a blue-gray color, and weigh about 7 pounds.

How did trumpeter swans get their name?

If you are ever around these birds, you'll have the answer. It's their call – a loud and melodious "trumpeting."

Are trumpeter swans an endangered species?

In the 1960's, when the Federal Endangered Species Act came into being, the trumpeter swan was considered for this list. At about the same time, a nesting population of about 2,000 trumpeters was discovered in Alaska. The species was then taken off the consideration list. However, various states list the trumpeter as either state-threatened or state-endangered.

What is a male swan called, a female swan?

A male is called a cob. The female is called a pen and the young of the year are called cygnets.

What do trumpeter swans eat?

Adult swans eat aquatic vegetation, including the leaves, seeds, and roots of many types of pond weeds. In captivity, swans will eat corn and other grains provided. Wild swans have also adapted to field feeding, eating left over grains and vegetables that have been harvested by farmers.

How many eggs do trumpeter swans lay?

They lay, on the average, three to eight eggs. Only one clutch of eggs is laid per year. The swans build their nests out of stems and leaves from plants such as cattails and sedges. Trumpeters often nest on top of muskrat or beaver



lodges.

Where can I see trumpeter swans in Arkansas?

The established viewing area from late November to late February or early March is at Magness Lake, a small oxbow off Little Red River east of Heber Springs. Drive east on Arkansas Highway 110 from its intersection with Arkansas Highways 5 and 25 just east of Heber Springs. Go 3.9 miles from the intersection to Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, marked with a white sign. Turn left on Hays Road, a paved county road. Magness Lake is about a half-mile down this road, and a gravel parking area is at an S curve in the road.

Green tree reservoir workshop scheduled for Monticello

MONTICELLO – Want to learn how to attract more ducks to your land? The Arkansas Forestry Association along with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, as well as other groups, will be presenting a green tree reservoir workshop to show landowners how. The workshop will be held at the University of Arkansas at Monticello on March 10.

A GTR is a forested lowland that is temporarily flooded during fall and winter to attract ducks - mainly mallards and wood ducks. It is designed to hold water while trees are dormant. This prevents permanent tree damage and possible tree death.

Join southeast Arkansas landowners, hunters, wildlife managers and land managers for a workshop on the benefits of managing green tree reservoirs. A \$15 registration fee covers lunch and handouts.

Workshop topics include:

- What is a Green Tree Reservoir?
- Historical Perspective
- Waterfowl: Uses and Needs
- Responses to Water and Forest Manipulation
- Consequences of Mismanagement
- Management Planning and Evaluation of Green Tree Reservoirs
- Green Tree Reservoir Construction
- 404 Permits and Guidelines
- Assistance Programs



Speakers

- Phil Covington - Regional Biologist, Ducks Unlimited
- Jody Pagan - Chief Biologist, Five Oaks Wildlife Services
- Luke Naylor - Waterfowl Biologist, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission
- Martin Blaney - Statewide Habitat Coordinator, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission
- Jim Baker - State Biologist, Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Anthony Lobred - Biologist/Senior Environmental Specialist, US Army Corps of Engineers

For more information on the workshop, call (888) 698-7337.

Want to learn more about bucks and ducks? *Wildlife habitat program scheduled for Walnut Ridge*

WALNUT RIDGE - The University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service and the

Arkansas Game and Fish Commission will be sponsoring a "Bucks and Ducks" Wildlife Habitat Program in Walnut Ridge on Feb. 28. The program will be presented at 115 W. Walnut Street in Walnut Ridge at the Lawrence County Meeting Hall from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m.

Presenters include representatives from the Cooperative Extension Service, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, Ducks Unlimited, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Farm Service Agency and Green Trees.

Topics to be discussed include habitat management practices used for waterfowl, deer, turkey and quail. Other topics include general wildlife habitat establishment, soil sampling, cost share programs to include the Continuous CRP, and a presentation given on hardwoods and cottonwoods.



Farm producers interested in establishing wildlife habitat on their marginally productive croplands and getting rental payments and other incentives should find this workshop very helpful, AGFC private lands coordinator David Long says. "Each participant will receive fact sheets from the Cooperative Extension Office and other wildlife management publications to help guide them in proper management of their property for wildlife," Long explained.

Each year more and more hunting clubs, private landowners and communities try to implement better strategies to manage the wildlife in their area, Long said. "This program would greatly benefit anyone who is interested in or is already trying to improve wildlife habitat by using such things as food plots, buffer zones, timber management, prescribed burning and many other practices to numerous to mention here," he said.

The workshop is free of charge to anyone who wishes to participate. Lunch will be served. Pre-registration is not required, but strongly encouraged in order to prepare for the meal. For more information or to pre-register please call Bryce Baldrige at the Lawrence County Extension Office (870) 886-3741.

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

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:

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.

Rabbit

Statewide: Sept. 1-Feb. 28.

Squirrel

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

Coming up in the outdoors

Feb. 27-March 1 - 22nd Annual Hot Springs Boat, Tackle and RV Show. Hot Springs Convention Center and Summit Arena. Admission is \$5 for adults. Children 12 years and under get in free. For more information call Ken or Kelly Griffey at (501) 765-1423 or (501) 225-6177 or by email at griffeyinc@sbcglobal.net.

Feb. 28 – Totally Trout free seminar. Educational seminars, demonstrations, biology lessons, door prizes and a free lunch. Classroom schedule begins at 9 a.m. at the C.A. Vines Arkansas 4-H Center in Ferndale.

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 or Lee Fields of Russellville at (479) 331-0399 or (870) 577-7289 or by email at leefields@centurytel.net, or Paul Schweyer of Barling, 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 5 – 4th Annual Wild Game Dinner, Immanuel Baptist Church in Little Rock, 6 p.m. Tickets are \$5 per person. For more information call (501) 376-3071.

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 "Outdoor Photography."

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 – Wild game chili and cornbread challenge, Landers Harley Davidson in Little Rock. Proceeds benefit central Arkansas local charities. For more information contact Mike Brewer at (501) 568-3252.

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 10 – Green tree reservoir workshop, University of Arkansas at Monticello School of Forest Resources, 9 a.m. For more information, call (888) 698-7337.

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 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Hooked on Fishing, Not on Drugs."

March 21 - Antique Fishing Tackle and Lures Day at Witt Stephens Jr. Central Arkansas Nature Center, 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

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

March 21-22 - 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 or Lee Fields of Russellville at (479) 331-0399 or (870) 577-7289 or by email at leefields@centurytel.net, or Paul Schweyer of Barling, paulschweyer@sbcglobal.net at (479) 452-1652 or (479) 719-0474.

March 26 – 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.

March 28 - Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation Big Game Banquet, Robinson Center/Doubletree Hotel in Little Rock. Doors open at 5 p.m. For more information call (501) 516-0439 or bettynjacket@gmail.com.

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

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.

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

April 18 – Main Street Siloam Springs will be hosting "Capturing Nature on Film: A

Photography" seminar by Charles Alsheimer at Community Christian Fellowship in Siloam Springs. The seminar will run from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in the chapel and is limited to 50 participants. Charles Alsheimer is a nationally known, award-winning outdoors writer, photographer and lecturer. His photography has been published in Outdoor Life, Field and Stream, and Sports Afield magazines. Tickets are \$40 per person and must be purchased in advance at Local Flair Art Gallery in downtown Siloam Springs (116 North Broadway), or by contacting Main Street Siloam Springs, Inc. at (479) 524-4556. For more information contact Shelley Simmons, Main Street Executive

Director, at (479) 524-4556 or visit www.charleslasheimer.com. Later in the day, Main Street Siloam Springs will be hosting the first Siloam Springs Whitetail Expo at the Community Christian Church in Siloam Springs. The evening will start at 5 p.m. with a deer hunting vendor expo, silent auction and Kenn Young's Monster Whitetails of Arkansas display. Beginning at 6:30 p.m. Charles Alsheimer, senior editor of Deer and Deer Hunting magazine, will present his "Ultimate Deer Hunting Seminar." Alsheimer is a nationally known outdoor writer, photographer, lecturer and whitetail consultant. Tickets will be \$10 per person (children under 12 free) and can be purchased at the door or by contacting Main Street Siloam Springs at (479) 524-4556.

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 or Lee Fields of Russellville at (479) 331-0399 or (870) 577-7289 or by email at leefields@centurytel.net, or Paul Schweyer of Barling, paulschweyer@sbcglobal.net at (479) 452-1652 or (479) 719-

0474.

May 8 - 2009 AGFC Scout Night at Dickey-Stephens Park. For more information contact Paul Allen at the ballpark at (501) 664-1555 or at paul@travs.com.

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

June 5-7 - The 6th annual Arkansas Casting For Recovery Retreat will be held at Gaston's on the White River. The is a two-and-a-half day retreat is provided free of cost to 14 breast cancer survivors in Arkansas who are randomly selected after an application process. The women selected for this retreat will be given the opportunity to learn how to fly fish from well known female fly fishing instructors. Fly-fishing has been known to provide a gentle form of upper extremity mobilization and exercise while allowing for a healing connection to the natural world and relieving everyday stressors. The retreat also offers medical and psychosocial support and allows the participants to focus on wellness while providing an avenue for social support. To apply for this retreat, fill out an application form from www.castingforrecovery.org or call (888) 553-3500. The deadline is March 27. For more information, call the state coordinator Kerri Russell at (479) 640-8319.

June 13 - The Friends of the Norfolk National Fish Hatchery will again sponsor the annual Kids Fishing Derby at Quarry Park below Norfolk Dam on Saturday, June 13. This is the AGFC free fishing day and AGFC staff will be in attendance on the day of the derby to help out. We will have a prize for every child who fishes. The derby is open to all kids between the ages of 3 and 15. Lunch will be provided.

June 25 – AGFC Commission monthly meeting in Lake Village. Topics include the early migratory bird season proposals.

For the latest in Arkansas Game and Fish Commission information go to www.agfc.com or call the Wildlife Information Hotline, (800)440-1477.

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