

Arkansas Game & Fish Commission

[Site Search](#)Keywords **FIND**

News

[HOME](#) » [News](#) » [Weekly E-Newsletter](#) » [Arkansas Outdoors Newsletter](#)

April 8, 2009 Edition

Keith Stephens (501) 223-6342, e-mail: kastephens@agfc.state.ar.us
[Sign up to receive this newsletter via e-mail each week.](#)

Today's Topics

[Fishing tips](#)[The current state of the Arkansas River largemouth bass fishery](#)[Rules changes for 2009 are minor and mostly local](#)[Avoid the crowds by going to the lesser known waters](#)[Master Angler program provides challenge to fishermen](#)[It's the time for hunting bullfrogs – all across Arkansas](#)[Successful trotlining means keeping bait on the hook](#)[Small line keeper is an asset when using cane poles](#)[Being a line watcher can result in more catches](#)[Boating education class schedule](#)[Hunter education class schedule](#)[What's open for hunting](#)[Coming up in the outdoors](#)

Fishing tips

LITTLE ROCK -- Anyone who fishes likes to acquire a bit of skill, a secret, a way to better catch things in the water. Most anglers learn from other anglers – a tip here, a tip there.

Here is an assortment of tips gathered here and there and in no certain order:

- When the fishing is slow, try slowing down. Many anglers, especially those using lures like spinner baits and crank baits, tend to work them too fast. Try slow retrieves. If you are bait fishing with minnows, worms or crickets, let them sit longer than usual. This may give a sluggish fish a little more time to get into action.



- Add a couple of safety pins, preferably a small one and a large one, to your tackle box or fishing vest. They come in handy to clear the paint-clogged eyes of jigs, lures and flies. The point can also be used to help untangle backlashes and knots in fishing line.
- A small finishing nail inserted in the body of a soft plastic lure will change the action of the lure. Try this without other weight on your rig. The lure will slowly sink just under the water's surface.
- What color spinner bait should you use? For starters, think light in daytime, dark at night. Light-colored spinner baits are white, chartreuse and yellow. Dark means black or purple. All sorts of variations are possible and may catch bass – blade colors can contrast with skirt colors and head colors.
- When pole fishing, keep the length of your line about the same as your pole's length. Too much line makes the rig harder to control when a fish is on the other end. Too short a line, and you can't reach some spots that may hold fish.
- Don't throw away plastic worms that have been damaged by a fish or from some other cause. Most times, the damage is near the front of the worm. Cut off the damaged portion, and you are left with a shorter worm, a six-inch worm becoming a four-inch worm – effective in many fishing situations.
- When you check over your fishing rods, run a Q-Tip around the inside of each guide. Tiny nicks may not be seen but are deadly for fraying fishing line. A nick will catch the cotton strands of a Q-Tip. Replace any nicked guides.
- A cocoa fiber doormat will be useful in your flatbottom fishing boat, mini-boat or canoe. It'll keep your keep out of water that often accumulates in the bottom of a boat, and it'll be a bit of insulation from cold water and thin aluminum or plastic. The mat is also heavy enough to keep from blowing out when the boat is trailered down a highway.
- A paddle bumping against the gunwale of an aluminum boat or canoe can be loud enough to spook fish. A length of old rubber or plastic garden hose, split down the middle and fastened to the gunwale, can silence these bumps.
- On a windy spring day, try fishing a bank into which the wind is blowing. Wind-driven water often pushes food fish and insects toward the bank, with feeding fish following down underneath.
- Hook sharpening is overlooked by most anglers except the professionals like tournament fishermen and fishing guides. A small whetstone should be in your boat or tackle box. Just a few short strokes will eliminate problems like burrs on hook tips cause by punching into something like an underwater snag.
- If you haven't been fishing for a while, spend a few moments before leaving home to spool new line on to your reel. If not, at least cut off the last several feet of old line, which may be worn, nicked and brittle. It may prevent a break and a lost fish.
- If you are pole fishing for crappie, bream or something else, try working two rigs when first starting out. Use one bait at one depth, another bait at a different depth until you locate the fish.



The current state of the Arkansas River largemouth bass fishery

By Ben Batten and Michael Eggleton, Ph.D.

LITTLE ROCK – Bass fishing remains a popular recreational activity here in the natural state, and the Arkansas River is one of the state's best destinations. The sport also equates to big business for the state.

In 2007, the eighth annual "Big Bass Bonanza," the largest amateur bass tournament in the country, awarded \$100,000 to Johnny Holder of Hot Springs for catching a 6.33-pound largemouth near Dumas. Also, the second annual Bassmaster Legends tournament was held on the Arkansas River. This professional contest awarded \$250,000 to winner Boyd Duckett.

Scientists with the Aquaculture/Fisheries Center at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, in cooperation with Arkansas Game and Fish Commission personnel, have been working hard over the last three years to characterize



the population of largemouth bass on the Arkansas River.

Armed with knowledge of the population, AGFC can make the best management decisions for the fishery. Some of the key elements under examination are the abundance of fish in the different pools of the river and their growth and death rates.

Abundance is assessed by scientists using boat-mounted electrofishing equipment. Fish are collected at night, as studies have shown that this is when the greatest concentrations of fish are using in-shore habitats. Abundance is measured as catch per unit effort, as the number of bass caught per hour of electrofishing time. CPUE from other bass studies have suggested that 100 bass caught per hour is extremely dense. By comparison, the average abundance of the entire Arkansas River system (Pool 2 through Pool 13) was found to be 38 fish caught per hour. The greatest concentration of largemouth bass was found in the Little Rock pool. The next most densely populated pools were Dardanelle (Pool 10), Redfield (Pool 5) and Pine Bluff (Pool 4). Overall, the abundance of largemouth bass in the river was good.



In order to assess growth, a small number of bass of all sizes are sacrificed and a bone known as the otolith is extracted from the skull. This bone lays down annual growth rings, like trees, and allows scientists to determine the fish's age. The growth rate measure used for comparison was the length of three-year-old largemouth bass.



In the Arkansas River, the average three-year-old bass was around 13.6 inches in length. This is on par with what AGFC classifies as a "high potential" bass fishery. From this information, researchers also were able to determine that the average fish becomes harvestable (or 15 inches total length) sometime between the third and fourth year of life.

Finally, mortality rates of largemouth bass were determined. Overall, the average mortality was found to be around 50 percent per year. Though this may sound high, it is considered average for largemouth bass populations. The greatest mortalities were found in Pools 4 (Pine Bluff), 5 (Redfield), and 10 (Dardanelle). Not surprisingly these pools most likely experience some of the greatest levels of fishing pressure throughout the Arkansas River system.

Overall, the largemouth bass fishery in the Arkansas River appears to be a healthy one. There are a good numbers of bass that grow fast, and mortality is not at the level that might suggest the fishery is being overexploited. Further research is being conducted by the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff to quantify fishing pressure and gain further information that will help AGFC better manage the Arkansas River bass fisheries. This could mean either knowing that the current regulations of 10 bass/day creel limit and 15-inch length limit are effective, or that some alternative management schemes may improve the population. Stay tuned for further results.

Ben Batten has a master's degree in fisheries management from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff and is an ecologist for the

Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality. Michael A. Eggleton, Ph.D., is assistant professor in the Aquaculture/Fisheries Center at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff.

Rules changes for 2009 are minor and mostly local

LITTLE ROCK – Each year in Arkansas, rules for fishing include some changes as managers adjust and fine-tune the resource, those fish so many Arkansas love to go after.

One change this year affects yo-yo and snagline fisherman. Now they can only use wood or cane poles poked into a lake bottom to anchor yo-yos and snaglines. What the new rule did not say was what is significant. It means you can't use metal poles for this purpose.

One other statewide rule change is the rule on how to measure a fish received the additional words "on its side." You measure a fish's length from the top of the nose to the tip of the tail with the tail's lobes pressed together. And you do it with the fish lying on its side, not upright.



The other new rules in condensed form:

- Live wild-caught bait can be used on Lake Norfolk if the bait was caught “from the watershed above Lake Norfolk” as well as from the lake itself.
- A 14-inch minimum length limit was placed on largemouth bass on the Ouachita River from Tate’s Bluff near Camden to Felsenthal Dam and on the lower Saline River from Stillion Bridge to its mouth.
- A 20-inch minimum length limit was placed on flathead catfish in the lower Ouachita River between the mouth of the Little Missouri River and Camden. The rule is for both commercial and recreational fishing.
- The boundary was clarified for the Narrows Tailwater Trout Area of the Little Missouri River below Lake Greeson. The boundary is now the Muddy Fork Road bridge at Murfreesboro.
- A 15-inch minimum length limit on largemouth bass on Lake Jack Nolen near Greenwood was removed, and the daily limit recorded from 10 to six.
- Snaglines must be checked daily. The term was added to the rule on daily checks of trotlines.
- Regulations on trout fishing boundaries on the White River below Bull Shoals Dam and Little Red River below Greers Ferry Dam were changed to read :“as indicated by signs.”
- A 24-inch minimum length limit and a daily limit of one was put on brown trout on the white River below Bull Shoals Dam and on the North Fork River below Norfolk Dam.
- Entergy Park Pond at Hot Springs was added to the AGFC’s Family and Community Fishing Program.
- Fish farmers must keep records of sales and shipments for at least three years.
- Shovelnose sturgeon were added to the list of Arkansas sport fish. There is no daily limit on them.
- The boundary of the White River Border Lake area was changed to Houseman Access.
- Hogging and noodling of fish (catching them by hand) will be allowed on Lake Charles and the Strawberry River below U.S. Highway 167.
- Ten blue catfish may be taken on Lake Millwood in southwest Arkansas in addition to the daily limit of 10 catfish of all species, due to an overpopulation of blues in the lake.
- Mobility impaired anglers must have a mobility impaired card on them when they fish Dry Run Creek in Baxter County near Norfolk Dam.

Avoid the crowds by going to the lesser known waters

LITTLE ROCK -- When spring arrives, many Arkansas anglers complain about crowded conditions on lake hotspots.

Others move their action, shifting strategies a bit. They head for the pools and other smaller waters.

Once upon a time, fishing in the state used two venues – one, rivers and streams; two, oxbow and cutoff lakes, natural lakes. Then man built impoundments for one purpose or another, and our fishing focus shifted.

The streams are still out there. Rivers are altered, like the Arkansas River interrupted by a series of dams but much more accessible for fishing now than 40 years ago.

Pools in little creeks and streams are definite possibilities most anytime for some productive fishing.

All parts of Arkansas have these hidden fishing spots – the flatlands, the Ozarks, the Ouachitas, the piney woods. Pick out a stream, maybe close to a camping spot, and go exploring. Take along light fishing gear – light or ultralight rod and reel with 6-pound line. Take some small lures or tiny lures, small hooks and live bait. Take a fly fishing rig if that is in your arsenal of fishing weapons.



Fishing the pools of small streams usually means working on foot, not from a boat. Naturally, the techniques and approaches on mountain creeks aren’t the same as fishing a bayou in east Arkansas flatlands.

One constant, however, is to be quiet and go slow.

Fish don’t have visible ears, but they can hear. They can hear quite well, and an unusual noise, like a rock dislodging or clicking against another can send the fish into hiding for long enough that the angler gives up and moves on.

Shallow places in a creek, shoals, rapids or even dry areas, will be interspersed with pools. Few streams are flat; even the sluggish bayous and sloughs of eastern Arkansas have deeper areas and more shallow areas.

Approach a pool slowly and quietly. Look for hidey holes, like shadowy spots under a ledge. Look for drop-offs in the water. Look around the head of the pool, the place just downstream from a shallow area or shoals. Fish these first – slowly and attentively.

In all likelihood, you won't come up with a dinner-plate-size bream or a four-pound smallmouth bass. But you just might hook into enough green sunfish and other species to complete an interesting and fulfilling day of fishing.

Most fishermen have some degree of explorer in them. They like to find new places to pursue their hobby or sport. Largemouth bass fishermen especially are prone to hook up a boat and pull it hundreds of miles to fish a lake they have never seen before but have heard or read about.

Late summer stream fishing may run counter to this line of thought. Your chances are better on a creek you have some knowledge about, probably a creek near home. At least, you are likely to know places you can park a vehicle and walk or scramble down a bank to the water. You may know where you can wade or work around the edge of a pool then come out and walk back to the vehicle.

If such knowledge is absent or sketchy, a little homework can help. Call around, ask about fishing on Caney Creek or whatever the nearby stream is called. Check at a bait shop. Better, try to talk someone into letting you tag along if the creek is completely new to you.

The opportunities are out there.

Master Angler program provides challenge to fishermen

LITTLE ROCK - Late winter and early spring are often the big fish seasons in Arkansas. Successful and skilled anglers may earn places in the elite Master Angler Award program of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission.

To qualify, an angler must catch a fish meeting or surpassing the weight standard for that species. This in itself is an accomplishment, as the standards are high. Then, to be certified as a Master Angler, the fisherman must catch qualifiers in three other categories. That calls for versatility as well as skill.

The required four different categories can be chosen from eight classes of Arkansas fish, said Carolyn Ferry of the Game and Fish Commission, who is in charge of the Master Angler Award program. These categories are black bass, sunfish, crappie, pikes and true perches, catfish, trout, true basses, and rough fish.

Ferry said, "Arkansas's Master Angler Award Program was started in 1985 to recognize anglers who catch trophy-size fish that aren't quite state records but meet demanding minimum weight requirements."

Ferry said entry forms are available at most boat docks and bait shops or by writing the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, attn: Master Angler Award, 2 Natural Resources Drive, Little Rock, AR 72205.

Anglers landing a qualifying fish in a single category will receive a beautifully enameled clutch-back pin depicting fish in that specific category and a letter of recognition. Once the fisherman has caught a qualifying fish in four different categories, he or she can claim the title of "Master Angler." As a "Master Angler," the fisherman will receive a hand-lettered certificate suitable for framing and display.

Both resident and non-resident anglers are eligible for the awards, but a person who has been convicted of a fishing violation



in the past three years is not eligible. Persons under 16 who do not need fishing licenses and those over 65 who have lifetime fishing licenses are also eligible to become Master Anglers.

Minimum qualifying weights, by species:

Black Bass: largemouth bass 8.0 pounds; smallmouth bass 3.5 pounds; spotted bass 4.0 pounds.

Sunfish: bluegill 1.0 pounds; redear 1.5 pounds; longear sunfish 0.5 pounds; warmouth 1.0 pounds; rock bass 1.0 pounds; green sunfish 1.0 pounds; hybrid bream 1.5 pounds.

Pikes and True Perches: sauger 2.0 pounds; walleye 14.0 pounds; pickerel 4.0 pounds.

Catfish: bullhead catfish 2.0 pounds; flathead catfish 20.0 pounds; channel catfish 12.0 pounds; blue catfish 20.0 pounds.

Trout: rainbow trout 8.0 pounds; brown trout 12.0 pounds; brook trout 3.0 pounds; cutthroat trout 5.0 pounds; lake trout 5.0 pounds.

True Basses: striped bass 25.0 pounds; hybrid striped bass 13.0 pounds; white bass 3.5 pounds.

Crappie: white crappie 3.0 pounds; black crappie 3.0 pounds.

Rough Fish: bowfin 10.0 pounds; common carp 20.0 pounds; paddlefish 30.0 pounds; grass carp 30.0 pounds; drum 12.0 pounds; buffalo 30.0 pounds.

It's a challenge, as a fisherman can see from these minimums. But no one expects a Master Angler Award to come easily.

There are no time restrictions on catching fish to qualify for Master Angler. A fish caught in years past can be combined with a recent catch to earn an award.

It's the time for hunting bullfrogs – all across Arkansas

LITTLE ROCK – Frog season is coming up soon. It runs April 15 through Dec. 31 in Arkansas, and you need a fishing license, not a hunting license.

The daily limit on bullfrogs is 18, and a day is measured from noon to noon. Possession limit is 36.

The method of getting a bullfrog is open to debate. You can't shoot them with a gun, but you can use a bow and arrow. By far the most common method is to use a gig, which is a needle-sharp pronged metal tool fastened to the end of a long pole, usually a cane or bamboo pole. You can use a long-handled net or a fishing rig with a hook. Oldtimers say a strip of red flannel on the hook is a good bait.

Some folks will puff out chests and tell you that "real" frog hunting is to grab them with bare hands. There are two drawbacks to hand grabbing of bullfrogs – it's hard to get close enough to them, and bullfrogs tend to inhabit the same areas as cottonmouth snakes.

Other needs are a shallow draft boat, like an aluminum flatbottom, and a strong light since nearly all frog hunting is done after dark.



A common practice is to use a 12-volt marine battery in the boat with alligator clips connecting it to a quartz beam or similar spotlight. Two hunters work together – one using the light and the other the gig.

Frogs tend to sit on a bank very close to the water. A quiet approach is needed with the light shining squarely on the frog. Get close enough, and it's easy to underestimate the distance, then use a quick thrust with the gig.

Experienced frog hunters know that an open stretch of

bank is much preferred to one choked with brush, fallen logs and other obstacles. They shy away from frogs sitting on logs for the simple reason that a sharp gig stuck deep into wood is a real problem to extract.

Another necessity is a container of some kind to hold the frogs brought to the boat. Burlap bags or other kinds of cloth bags, like feed bags, have long been used. A cooler with a hinged lid can work, but some frogs may not be dead when put into the cooler – and frogs have amazing jumping ability.

Best frog territories tend to be where water is quiet. Slow-moving creeks are good as are oxbow or cut-off lakes in lowlands. All along the Arkansas River is good for frogs but with a caution. Rocks on the shoreline can be hard on gigs just as logs are.

Successful trotlining means keeping bait on the hook

LITTLE ROCK -- Mention trotlining in a fishing conversation, and you may get some frowns. But it is an effective method of getting good catfish on the dinner table – and an occasional crappie, bass or something else.

A problem for some trotliners is keeping liver on a hook. Liver catches catfish, but they have a tendency to get it off without being hooked. The bait gets mushy too.

The trick is to find a discarded pair of panty hose or nylon stockings. Cut a supply of pieces about three inches square. Cut your pieces of liver, put each in the center of a mesh square, then pull all four corners together and slip them over the hook, either a single hook or a treble hook.

In the water, the smell oozes out and attracts catfish, and the liver stays on the hook. This also works with chunk dog food and cheese curds, the later another effective catfish bait that's hard to find.



Small line keeper is an asset when using cane poles

LITTLE ROCK -- People still fish with cane poles. The various casting rods, reels and assorted lines have taken over the fishing world for the most part, but pole fishing can still be effective and enjoyable.

Once upon a time that was what nearly everyone used – bamboo or cane poles, either purchased or cut in a cane thicket and hung to dry before use.

A valuable asset with a cane pole is a small metal “line keeper.” You tape or tie it near the butt of your cane pole then wind line around it in a figure eight pattern. It isn't for casting but for storing line, which in those days was black and braided.

A good feature about this simple gadget was you can easily let out line if you hooked into a big fish. The line spins off that figure eight pattern effortlessly.

Being a line watcher can result in more catches

LITTLE ROCK -- Fishing many times is a game of watching the line. Anglers often talk about feeling a fish hit or waiting for the bobber to disappear, but sometimes it's a case of looking for the line to move.

There are times when the fish's strike is so light we can't detect it. There are also times when we don't use a bobber; we tight-line.

The technique of tight-lining is simply dropping a lure, like a jig, or live bait like a minnow, a worm or a cricket in a spot then waiting for a fish to hit. Many times this is fishing for small species like bream and crappie. It can mean bigger stuff like catfish, too.

Anglers look at their lines in the water, where the line goes into the water, for movement. That indicates a fish has the bait, although the fishermen may not feel a thing at the end



of the line.

Debate begins when you talk about color or non-color of the fishing line. "If you can see it, the fish can see it, too" is one argument. The pitch is for colorless line. The, if the line is so colorless that you can't see it, how can you fish by watching your line?

"Match the line to the sky" is another argument. Many monofilament lines come in some hue that does this, something like a faint blue, so the claim is a fish doesn't see this line when looking up with the sky in the background. But the angler can see it because the water is a darker color.

Today there is fluorescent line, really bright line that an angler can easily see in dim light conditions. Does this spook a fish? Maybe. Maybe not.

Also coming into play with line watching are wind and wave conditions. If the surface of the water is choppy from wind or from current, then the line may be hard to see, especially where it enters the water.

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:

Spotted Skunk, Weasel Hunting: Closed

Furbearers (2009)

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

Bobcat hunting: from the first day of spring turkey season through June 8.

Coyote hunting: from the first day of spring turkey season through June 14.

Badger, spotted skunk and weasel hunting: Closed.

Squirrel (2009):

Statewide: May 16-June 14.

Turkey (2009)

Special Youth Turkey Hunt: Zones 1, 2, 3, 4, 4A, 4B, 5, 5A, 5B, 6, 7, 7A, 8, 9, 9A and 10: April 4-5. Zone 1A: Closed.

Only hunters under 16 may hunt turkey during these days. Youths who have completed a Hunter Education Course must be accompanied by a mentor who is 18 or older. Youths who have not completed a Hunter Education Course must be under the direct supervision of a mentor who is 21 or older. Turkeys taken during the youth hunt count toward the youth's spring bag limit and must follow all statewide bag limit requirements.

2009 Spring Turkey Season Dates: Zones 1, 2, 3, 4B, 5, 5B, 6, 7, 7A, 8, 9 and 10: April 11-May 1.

Zones 4, 4A, 5A and 9A: April 11-24.

Zone 1A: Closed.

Zone 17: April 4-26

Deer

Archery (2009-2010)

Statewide: Oct. 1-Feb. 28

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

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
Zones 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
Zones 16, 16A and 17: Nov. 14-Dec. 25

Christmas Holiday Modern Gun Deer Hunt is Dec. 26-28 statewide.

The Special Youth Modern Gun Deer Hunt is Nov. 7-8 and Jan. 2-3 statewide excluding certain WMAs where a modern gun or muzzleloader permit is required to hunt.

Bear

Archery

Zone 1: Oct. 1-Nov. 30
Zone 2: Sept. 15-Nov. 30
Zones 3, 4, 5, 5A, 6 and 7: Closed

Muzzleloader

Zones 1 and 2: Oct. 17-25
Zones 3, 4, 5, 5A, 6 and 7: Closed

Modern Gun

Zones 1 and 2: Nov. 9-30
Zone 5: Dec. 5-13
Zone 5A: Nov. 28-Dec. 13
Zones 3, 4, 6 and 7: Closed

Special Youth Modern Gun Bear Hunt

Zones 1 and 2 (does not include WMAs requiring a deer permit to harvest a bear): Nov. 7-8
Zones 3, 4, 5, 5A, 6 and 7: Closed

Turkey (2009-2010)

Archery

Statewide: Oct. 1-Feb. 28

Firearms

Zones 3, 5B, 6 and 17: Oct. 26-Nov. 1
Zones 1, 1A, 2, 4, 4A, 4B, 5, 5A, 7, 7A, 8, 9, 9A and 10: Closed

Elk

Zones 1, 2, 3, 4 and A: Sept. 21-25
Zones 1, 2, 3, 4, A and B: Dec. 7-11
Zone A: Sept. 21-25 and Dec. 7-11
Zone B: Dec. 7-11

Quail (2009-2010)

Statewide: Nov. 1-Feb. 7

Rabbit (2009-2010)

Statewide: Sept. 1-Feb. 28

Squirrel (2009-2010)

Statewide: Sept. 5-Feb. 28 and May 15-June 13

Crow (2009-2010)

Statewide: Sept. 5-Feb. 20

Furbearers (2009-2010)

Gray fox, mink, red fox and striped skunk hunting: sunrise, Sept. 1-sunset, Feb. 28
Opossum Hunting: sunrise, Sept. 1- sunset Feb. 28
Bobcat hunting: sunrise, Oct. 1-sunset, Feb. 28 and from the first day of spring turkey season through the last day of spring squirrel season.
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. 4-sunset, Feb. 28
 Raccoon night hunting: sunset, July 1-sunrise, Aug. 31
 Raccoon day or night hunting: sunrise, Sept. 1-sunset, March 31
 Muskrat, nutria, beaver hunting: sunrise, Sept. 1-sunset, March 31
 Badger, spotted skunk and weasel hunting: Closed
 Furbearer trapping (other than beaver, coyote, muskrat, nutria): sunrise, Nov. 14-sunset, Feb. 21
 Coyote trapping: sunrise, Aug. 1-sunset, March 31
 Beaver, muskrat, nutria trapping: sunrise, Nov. 14-sunset, March 31

The 2010 deer season opening dates:

Deer (archery): Friday, Oct. 1, 2010
 Deer (muzzleloader): Saturday, Oct. 16, 2010
 Deer (modern gun): Saturday, Nov. 13, 2010

2009 Waterfowl Public Meetings: Tuesday, June 2, 7 p.m.-9 p.m.

2010 Spring Turkey Public Meetings: Tuesday, Aug. 25, 7 p.m.-9 p.m.

2010-2011 General Public Meetings: Tuesday, Jan. 5, 2010, 7 p.m.-9 p.m.

For further hunting changes regarding bag limits, deer zone boundaries, game checking and other information go to www.agfc.com.

Coming up in the outdoors

April 11 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Best Baits for Bass."

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.charlesalsheimer.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 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "All About Bird Dogs."

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.

April 25 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Fishin' and Giggin' for Frogs."

April 25 – Kids Fishing Derby at Busby Lake in Ward, 8 a.m. to noon. Contestants must be under 16 years of age to compete. For more information contact James Davidson at (501) 259-1443. The derby is sponsored by Charity Baptist Church.

April 25 – Deadline for photos in the 6th Annual Great Arkansas Outdoor Photography Contest sponsored by Bedford Camera and Video. Entries may be dropped off at any of the 6 Bedford Camera and Video locations or: mailed to Bedford's, 11400 N. Rodney Parham, Little Rock, AR 72212. For Additional information visit <http://bedfords.com/>.

April 25-26 – Lake Dardanelle Big Bass Classic. Biggest bass will be worth \$10,000. Largest fish caught each day will be worth \$5,000. Weigh-in at the Lake Dardanelle State Park pavilion. For more information call (479) 968-4322 or (479) 754-5021.

May 2 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Snakeheads."

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 7 – Meet the Pros Night at Little Rock's First Baptist Church, 62 Pleasant Valley Dr., beginning at 5:30 p.m. Tickets are \$10 each with a meal included. For more information go to www.huntfest.com or call (501) 227-0010.

May 8 – Scout Night at Dickey-Stephens Park. The event is co-sponsored by the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission and Kemps Dairy. For more information call (501) 664-1555 or go to www.travs.com.

May 16 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Catchin' Crappie."

May 18 – Outdoor Legacy Dave Duncan Memorial Golf Tournament, County Club of Arkansas in Maumelle. The four-man scramble gets underway at 11 a.m. For more information call Steve "Wildman" Wilson at (501) 821-8887 or Charlie Wilson at (501) 779-1976.

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. This 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 6 - Benton County Longbeards Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation Heritage Banquet at the Northwest Arkansas Quails Unlimited Building, Highway 72 West in Bentonville. Doors open at 4 p.m. There will be archery, the Daisy BB gun trailer and other opportunities for young people and others a like. For more information call James Barger at (479) 531-2359 or Bobby King (479) 295-1911 or Chris Hinkle at (479) 790-3260.

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.

Aug. 8 – Scimitar Shrine Director's Staff Bass Tournament, Arkansas River behind Alltel Arena, 6 a.m. to 1 p.m. Entry fee is \$150 per boat with 75% payback. For more information call Chris at (501) 749-3025 or Tom at (501) 834-6005.

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

© 2009, Arkansas Game & Fish Commission. All Rights Reserved.

2 Natural Resources Drive - Little Rock, AR 72205 - (800) 364-4263 - (501) 223-6300 - www.agfc.com
Aristotle Web Design Services