

Arkansas Game & Fish Commission

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April 29, 2009 Edition

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Ozarks' wildlife thrives on Gulf Mountain WMA

SCOTLAND – If someone called for a miniature of the Ozark Mountains, Gulf Mountain Wildlife Management Area could answer.

It has characteristics of the entire upland region. It's got history, the remains of early settlers who struggled to make a living from the thin, rocky soil. And it's got an abundance of wildlife benefiting from man's manipulation of the habitat over several decades.

Gulf Mountain WMA is far from the bustle of city life or even small towns, yet it's not difficult to reach. Travel inside the area, though, is at a slower pace. Gravel roads take visitors into many of the corners of the WMA, but some are narrow and visitors have to pull over if another vehicle is met.



One attraction of Gulf Mountain is that it's a place for walking. Park the car or truck, take some water and get out and roam. Yes, it is mountainous but not to the extent of the more rugged areas of the Ozarks. Move around, and you'll find scenic views, particularly along the corridor of the South Fork of the Little Red River that runs through the management area west to east en route to Greers Ferry Lake.

The river has been used for generations as a fun spot with wading, swimming, day-camping and some fishing except in dry parts of the year.

Covering 11,571 acres, Gulf Mountain is mostly forested, but it is a variety of wooded areas. It's second-growth timber, and much is low quality for lumber, but this doesn't lessen its value to wildlife. They don't make saw logs out of dogwood, but the small tree's berries are eagerly used by animals and birds.



Arkansas Game and Fish Commission biologist Eddie Linebarger said about 1,500 acres of the WMA is classified as oak savanna, meaning trees are spread out and intersperses with undergrowth. There are areas of quality pine trees with wildlife food plants underneath. And the old fields where small farms once were are managed with plantings, disking and burning. Linebarger said mixed grains are planted in the spring and wheat, rye, orchard grass and clover in the fall. About a hundred miles of fire lanes are kept open for controlled burning, and most are planted in attractive forage for wildlife.

Hardwoods on the southern sides of hills are predominantly post oak and blackjack oak. The northern slope hardwoods are predominantly red oak and white oak. Gulf Mountain's terrain ranges from 700 feet above sea level along the river to 1500 feet at its highest points.

In the early days, cotton was grown on the small farms, and a gin operated at Scotland, just outside the WMA's southeast corner.

Name a species of upland wildlife, and Gulf Mountain has it, mostly in good numbers. Hunting is a highly popular activity during the fall and winter seasons – in addition to spring for turkeys and squirrels.

Gulf Mountain WMA, established in 1970, was one of five areas chosen for quail restoration work some years back, and it's the only one with permit quail hunts today. The area is divided into five compartments, and one hunting party, up to three persons, is allowed on a compartment each day. The permits are issued through an application process, and current AGFC hunting regulations guides give the details.

The quail are sufficient in number so the WMA is used for training of dogs. Other dogs are brought in for rabbit hunting, and this is a popular pastime for area residents. Still others work at night with dogs for raccoons.

Archery hunters use Gulf Mountain for both deer and bear, with deer bowhunting open October through February 15 and bear bowhunting October and November. Muzzle-loader and modern gun hunting for deer is by permit. Bear can be hunted with muzzle-loaders and modern guns also but only by permit holders during the deer hunts.

Gulf Mountain is one of the Ozarks' better turkey areas. Birds are scattered throughout the area, but there also are plenty of hunters pursuing them during season.

Squirrels rise and fall with the availability of food, especially acorns and hickory nuts.

Resident and migrating songbirds are numerous on the area because of its diverse habitat, Linebarger said. "Schools come out for field trips," he said, "and really, it's underutilized for birding."



Gulf Mountain WMA adjoins the Ozark National Forest to the west. It is reached off Arkansas Highway 95 between Morrilton and Clinton at Scotland. Gravel county roads also run south from Arkansas Highway 16 near Alread to the wildlife management area. Camping is restricted to six designated primitive camping areas.

Wattensaw WMA: Bountiful bowhunting and much more

HAZEN – So popular among Arkansas archery enthusiasts has been Mike Freeze Wattensaw Wildlife Management Area that the general impression is “bowhunting” and “Wattensaw” are synonymous.

This is understandable, but it shortchanges the diversity and varied recreational opportunities for the easily accessed major management area in east-central Arkansas.

Wattensaw, 19,184 acres, has woods for deer and turkey hunting, open areas for dog training, quail, doves and rabbits, lakes and ponds for fishing and gentle terrain for walking or just roaming by foot or by vehicle. Some spots along the White River on the eastern edge are especially scenic, in addition.

The management area is in the midst of one of Arkansas's richest agricultural areas, yet it was mediocre farming prospects that led to its creation, not the need for more wildlife habitat.

Early settlers cleared trees and plowed the native prairie of the Wattensaw area for cotton growing then for pasture and hay production. Rice growing arrived in the early 1900s, with soybeans a later development.

But Wattensaw farm families struggled, mostly with small farming operations. Several decades ago, the Federal Housing Authority bought the farms of about a hundred families at Wattensaw then turned the land over to the Soil Conservation Service and the U.S. Forest Service.



After some looking, study and head-scratching, these agencies beckoned the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, and 15,304 acres were sold by the Forest Service to AGFC in 1959 for use as a wildlife management area. Later additions added to the area, and a 1995 transaction brought in land on the northern edge that was once planned for a electricity generating plant of Arkansas Power and Light company, now Entergy. This area, Robinwood, was bought by the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, mostly with funds generated by its annual Arkansas Outdoor Hall of Fame banquet coupled with federal aid through the Pittman-Robertson Act, which is federal excise taxes paid for hunting and shooting equipment.

Mike Freeze's name was added to the management area when the England resident completed his seven-year term as an AGFC commissioner.

Wattensaw's neighbor on the east side of White River is Cache River National Wildlife Refuge. Wattensaw is one of multiple public lands in the wildlife-rich bottomlands of Arkansas stretching from the Missouri border in the northeast corner of the state in an arc to the mouths of the Arkansas and White rivers at the Mississippi River in southeast Arkansas.

From its early days at a wildlife management area, Wattensaw has appealed to bowhunters seeking deer. The Wattensaw Bowhunters Association has been one of the more active sportsmen's organizations in Arkansas and has helped many times to improvement work on the area. The Wattensaw Beagle Club has been active also and helped with building a clubhouse on the area that is used for many activities – hunter education classes, family reunions and assorted meetings.

Construction of the clubhouse was a cooperative and volunteer project. Skilled and unskilled workers donated services, and area businesses donated materials.

Arkansas developed along and liberal bow season for deer in the early 1970s, and so much did Arkansas bowhunters use

Wattensaw that many regarded it as "our area." The area paid off them then in consistently good deer hunting, sometimes resulting in trophy bucks. Wattensaw was one of the first Arkansas management areas to have antler restrictions on bucks, with a 3-point-minimum rule installed in 1982 and increased to a 4-point minimum more recently.

Modern gun deer hunters, along with those using black powder weapons, have not hesitated to take interest in this bowhunting hotspot. But because of its desirability, gun deer hunting is by permit. Archery hunting is open.

Wattensaw is popular for quail hunting as well, and again its popularity has necessitated restrictions. Quail hunting is open only on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

Intensive and diverse management work has added to the richness of wildlife habitat on land once marginal for raising cotton, rice or soybeans.

Game and Fish Commission crews work a system of wildlife openings and food plots with bushhogging, controlled burning, discing and planting of cover and wildlife food crops. Ponds are assets too, with several sizable ones on the middle portion of the management area the results of the building of Interstate 40 that used earth dug out to create the highway base. Oxbow lakes off the White River and along Wattensaw Bayou are also used by wildlife.

When ducks and geese migrate to Arkansas each fall, they use traditional corridors along the White River and spreading out in the northern portion of the Grand Prairie. This puts the mallards and many other species right over Wattensaw. Waterfowlers work mostly near the White River and the bayou, but ducks are also found on some of the lakes and ponds.

The Robinwood Tract that was never used for its original purposes as a power plant site has had many thousands of young hardwood seedlings planted.

The management area has a 28-station archery range for bowhunters to sharpen their skills. Field trials are frequent for the training and competition of bird dogs, beagles and other breeds.

Trappers work the steams and lowlands of Wattensaw for raccoon, foxes, bobcats and other furbearers. Not only are cottontail rabbits found in the more open areas, swamp rabbits are hunted in the lowlands.

Anglers urged to voice opinions at May fishing meetings

LITTLE ROCK - Eleven public meetings are scheduled across Arkansas in May to allow sportsmen to voice their opinions on proposed fishing regulations for 2010.

The input meetings are part of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission's regulations-setting process, according to Mike Armstrong, chief of fisheries. "Staff members will contribute suggestions, recommendations from both the public and the staff. They will be reviewed by the Commission's Regulations Committee, then the rules for the next calendar year will be set by the Commission at its August meeting," Armstrong said.

All the public meetings will start at 7 p.m. Dates, locations and phone numbers are:

May 5

AGFC Brinkley Regional Office
1201 Highway 49 North
Brinkley
(877) 734-4581

McMullan Lecture Hall
ASU Mountain Home Campus
1600 S. College
Mountain Home
(877) 425-7577

May 7

AGFC Monticello Regional Office
771 Jordan
Monticello
(877) 367-3559



Stone County Public Library
326 W. Washington Rd.
Mountain View
(870) 269-3100

May 12

AGFC Jonesboro Regional Office
2920 McClellan Drive
Jonesboro
(877) 972-5438
AGFC Camden Regional Office
500 Ben Lane
Camden
(877) 836-4612

AGFC Russellville Regional Office
1266 Lock and Dam Road
Russellville
(877) 967-7577

May 14

Bystates Justice Building
100 N. State Line Ave.
Texarkana
(877) 777-5580

May 19

Beaver Lake Regional Office
455 Dam Site Road
Eureka Springs
(877) 631-6005

Camp Robinson SUA Club House
331 Clinton Road
Conway
(877) 470-3309

May 21

Maurice C. Lewis, Natural Resources Complex
2 Natural Resources Drive
Little Rock
(800) 364-4263

Andrew Hulseley State Fish Hatchery Visitor Center
350 Fish Hatchery Road
Hot Springs
(877) 525-8606

Big Lake WMA carries long history of ducks, hunting

MANILA – Nowhere has Arkansas's face been changed by man more than in the northeast section of the state.

Massive clearing of forested land coupled with enormous drainage projects for more than a century have resulted in a completely different complexion.

But the ducks still come.

Big Lake Wildlife Management Area in northern Mississippi County covers 12,320 acres and provides attraction for wintering waterfowl plus good hunting opportunities in the 21st Century as the tract did in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Big Lake WMA's next-door twin is Big Lake National Wildlife Refuge. Both trace their origins to the New Madrid Earthquakes of a three-month period in the winter of 1811-



1812. Few people lived in the area then, but the earth sank along Little River, along the St. Francis River, along the Mississippi River and dramatically changed to the environment. Northwest Tennessee's Reelfoot Lake was one result. Big Lake is another.

Unlike Reelfoot, Big Lake is a series of connected waters, some seasonally dry. This is on the federal refuge. Water on the state WMA is maintained by impoundments.

Ducks are the top attraction – but not the only one – at Big Lake WMA, and they have used the area since prehistoric times. Northeast Arkansas was the state's top duck region before Stuttgart, before the Grand Prairie turned to rice growing early in the 20th Century.

When railroads developed extensively after the Civil War, with the invention of ice making following, market hunting of ducks, geese, deer and other game was a major activity in the Big Lake area. Meat went to St. Louis, Chicago and other northern cities.



Wealthy sportsmen, most of them from out of state, bought and leased land for hunting clubs and conflict with the market hunters arose. The "Big Lake War" lasted off and on for about 40 years, with shootings, some fatal, along with beatings, burnings and threats. Big Lake National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1915 by President Woodrow Wilson, and gradually the violence subsided.

The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission was also established in 1915, but the prospect of federal troops arriving on railroads that hauled out ducks and other game was much more a factor than the half-dozen state game wardens in Little Rock.

Conflict garnered headlines, but drainage work was more of a wildlife habitat factor. With much work by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and local drainage districts, land was cleared and planted – and flooded by nature nearly each year.

The timbered wetlands adjoining the federal refuge were not suitable for farming, and the creation of Bayou Meto WMA between Stuttgart and Pine Bluff was soon followed by Big Lake WMA. About 7,000 acres were bought by the AGFC from a drainage district in 1950, and several other purchases in the years that followed brought the total acreage to 12,320.

Big Lake WMA lies in the throat of a funnel of lowlands draining from the Missouri Bootheel south to the St. Francis River. AGFC biologist Robert Zachary said, "We don't have a flowage easement, so this is used as a sump area. The water comes from Missouri."

Ditches and cross levees help with the water flowing on Big Lake WMA. Three-fourths of the area is flooded in late fall and winter on two impoundments, one of 6,160 acres and the other 3,100 acres.

This is what the ducks like. There is water, there is food from hardwoods and from easy-to-reach farmlands. Squirrels and raccoons also are numerous on the WMA, with squirrel populations rising and falling with the acorn crops. Big Lake WMA is popular with coon hunters wanting to train dogs.

Deer are not plentiful on the area, and modern gun hunters are limited to shotguns or handguns only.

Primitive camping is permitted at several sites and at Mallard Lake at the southern end of the WMA. Fishing is popular at 300-acre Mallard Lake, the home of Arkansas's state record largemouth bass. This 16-pound, 4-ounce eye-opening fish was caught in 1976 by Aaron Mardis of Memphis.

Area anglers know, too, that some excellent catches of crappie, bass, bream and catfish are made sometimes on the borrow ditches and other waterways in the management area to the north of Mallard Lake. The area is a cross-hatch of ditches, most accessible by boat and most fishable.

Heavily timbered Big Lake WMA has large stands of cypress and tupelo in the wetter areas and much oak, ash and hackberry on the low ridges and less-moist sections.

Birding is popular on the management area and on the refuge next door. Eagles and ospreys have nested on both. Well over a hundred species of songbirds have been counted on the management area alone.

Big Lake WMA is reached off Arkansas Highway 18 east of Manila and west of Blytheville. The northern portion of the WMA can be reached by turning on Arkansas Highway 181 at Dell then taking a gravel county road west to the AGFC's Bois d'Arc Access with its boat launching ramp.

Effective use of jigs should be in anglers' arsenals

LITTLE ROCK – Jigs are tried and true utensils for catching fish of many species in Arkansas, from trout requiring tiny jigs to lead-heavy ones used for striped bass.

In crappie fishing, many of Arkansas's better crappie anglers use only jigs. They wouldn't touch a live minnow with the proverbial 10-foot pole. These folks catch a heck of a lot of crappie, often when others strike out. Still, don't interpret these comments as meaning jigs are superior to minnows for crappie fishing. But jigs are effective for many crappie chasers.

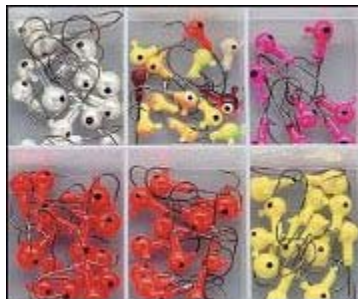
One form of jigs, whether using plastic skirts or trailers or using hair or feathers, is the micro jig. These are the little ones. Very little.

Micro jigs in most fishermen's understanding means those weighing 1/16th of an ounce or less. That includes 1/32nd-ounce, 1/64th-ounce, and apparently 1/128th-ounce jigs have been created.

The very small jigs, the micro type, tend to be associated with trout fishing, but they will work at times on crappie, bream and other species, even largemouth bass.



Professional bass fishermen, at least many of them, usually have a handful of small jigs in one of their tackle boxes. These tend to be 1/8th-ounce in weight, but sometimes the pros will work with 1/16th-ounce. Trouble with them is they are difficult to cast with standard bass fishing reels.



For those fishermen not in the professional bass ranks, micro jigs can be fished with ultralight spinning rigs, including 2-pound or 4-pound line. They also do well with fly rods.

There isn't a discernible time when these tiny jigs should be brought into action unless it falls into the "match the hatch" technique fly fishermen use with trout.

The same game plan can work with bream. Find them dimpling the surface, feeding on small insects, and a micro jig might be just the ticket to get bream hitting for you.

It won't work all the time, but it's a technique worth keeping in mind and gearing up for.

AGFC Scout Night at Dickey-Stephens Park is May 8

NORTH LITTLE ROCK – Kids are always a big part of the season at Dickey-Stephens Park and on May the Arkansas Travelers will feature one of their most unique promotions of the baseball season. It will be a night to remember as kids will be allowed to camp on the field after the Travs game with Tulsa.

The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission is a co-sponsor of the event, along with Quapaw Area Boy Scouts, and will be giving special gifts to the first 1,000 kids through the gate that evening. Although the promotion is being called Scout Night, camping is not limited to Scouts. Any child or family can participate. Sign your child up to be one of the lucky kids who get to camp out on the field after the game. Call (501) 664-1555 or go to www.travs.com for more information. Deadline for registration is May 7.



The AGFC will have a display table set up just inside the entrance to the baseball park and will be passing out assorted information. Visitors to the game may want to come earlier in the day and visit the Witt Stephens Jr. Central Arkansas Nature Center in the Little Rock River Market District.

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

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 16 - Central Arkansas Quail Unlimited Sportsmen's Banquet, Sherwood Forest, 1111 Maryland Ave. in Sherwood. Doors open at 6 p.m. For ticket information call Tommy Borchert at (501) 223-3725.

May 16 – Arkansas Catfishing Association tournament at Beaver Lake, Lowell, Arkansas. For ACA members: rod and reel, catch and release, and alive and well. Open tournament to the general public. 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 Melissa Davis of Siloam Springs at (479) 957-5424 or by email at cozydranch@yahoo.com, or Paul Schweyer of Barling, paulschweyer@sbcglobal.net at (479) 452-1652 or (479) 719-0474.

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.

June 30 - Arkansas Catfishing Association tournament at Blue Mountain Lake (children under 16 are encouraged to attend). For ACA members: rod and reel, catch and release, and alive and well. Open tournament to the general public. 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 Melissa Davis of Siloam Springs at (479) 957-5424 or by email at cozydranch@yahoo.com, or Paul Schweyer of Barling, paulschweyer@sbcglobal.net at (479) 452-1652 or (479) 719-0474.

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.

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