

**Arkansas Game & Fish Commission**[Site Search](#)Keywords **FIND****News**[HOME](#) » [News](#) » [Weekly E-Newsletter](#) » [Arkansas Outdoors Newsletter](#)**May 6, 2009 Edition**

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**Today's Topics**[AGFC begins second round of elk management plan overhaul](#)[Looking for spring squirrels? Seek out the mulberries](#)[Bass tournament will support scholarships at U of A](#)[Boating education class schedule](#)[Hunter education class schedule](#)[What's open for hunting](#)[Coming up in the outdoors](#)**AGFC begins second round of elk management plan overhaul**

LITTLE ROCK – The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission has started the second stage of writing a new state elk plan this week. This second stage consists of four public workshops. Two of the workshops were held earlier this week in Ponca and Jasper. The two remaining workshops will be held later this week in Marshall and Little Rock. The first rounds of public workshops were held in February.

These workshops will serve as a means to gather public input concerning the draft of the state's elk plan, according to AGFC elk biologist Cory Gray. "We want as much input as possible before we put the plan together. It's important that people provide us with comments on the direction they'd like to take our elk herd," Gray explained. The goal is to gather ideas and suggestions from hunters and the public, to be incorporated with wildlife biology essentials into a new Arkansas elk



management plan.

Each workshop participant will be given the opportunity to share what they like or don't like about the draft plan, Gray said. "These meetings will also be a way to double-check what we heard them say during the February workshops," he said.

As they did with the February workshops, the AGFC will again use an outside facilitator to help with administering the public scoping workshops.

The new elk management plan will provide goals and set direction for the management of the state's elk resource. The final plan approval will be the responsibility of the AGFC commissioners.

The workshops are set-up to allow anyone to put forth ideas and suggestions. All meetings will begin at 6:30 p.m. The dates and locations of the remaining meetings are as follows:

The remaining second round of public workshops will be held:

**May 7**, Marshall Elementary School.

**May 8**, Arkansas Farm Bureau, 10720 Kanis Road in Little Rock.

An elk summit will be held during the Jasper Elk Festival on June 27.

### Looking for spring squirrels? Seek out the mulberries

LITTLE ROCK – "Round and round the mulberry bush" is an old nursery rhyme. But a savvy Arkansas squirrel hunter in the spring will take a slightly different route.

The hunter will find that mulberry, a tree, back off a ways and wait quietly. The mulberry is a squirrel magnet in spring, according to a veteran wildlife biologist with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission.

Mike Widner, AGFC's small game program coordinator, offers a short and simple spring squirrel game plan: "Find a big mulberry tree with ripening fruit and camp out. Go no farther. Collect eight squirrels. Come back tomorrow."

Squirrels are hunted by many more people in the fall and winter than in spring in Arkansas. Squirrels commonly are associated with nuts, a favorite food. Hickory, acorn, pecan, walnut – squirrels love them, but these are absent in the spring.

In spring, squirrels eat the buds and flowers of red maples, elms, oaks and other trees and later feed on fruits like mulberries and the winged fruits of red maple. These foods have high energy contents and also high moisture contents that supply squirrels' water needs, although most squirrels will also drink from available ground water sources. Nuts are still on the squirrel menu, as they also smell out nuts which they buried in fall and winter.

Widner said, "Often, mulberry doesn't start to ripen until later in the spring squirrel season, but it's probably the No. 1 late spring squirrel food in areas where it is available. Trusten Holder (former AGFC wildlife researcher) was an advocate of planting mulberry trees for wildlife. Birds love mulberries also. Birds do a good job of planting as the seeds are spread in their droppings. Fox squirrels are still digging up walnuts they have buried, but most acorns are long gone.

"Other foods eaten by squirrels in spring are other early fruits, mushrooms, some buds and green twigs, seeds, insects and insect larvae, bulbs and roots of herbaceous plants, and later, developing crops such as corn and soybeans. Salt is also craved during spring months."

Spring squirrel season in Arkansas this year is May 16 through June 14. Daily bag limit is eight. Dogs are allowed.

Spring squirrel hunters, though comparatively few in number, tell of some advantages.

The weather is better, excepting rain showers and thunderstorms. The woods tend to be damp, making for more silent moving around for hunters in contrast to fall hunts which can be over crunchy dry ground and brush.

Looking up into green tree tops sometimes lets a hunter see a squirrel more readily than in the fall when leaves are brown,



and a reddish brown or gray squirrel blends in.

The woods are nearly empty of people. Turkey season has ended. For most of spring squirrel season, school is underway, making youngsters not likely to be roaming around on weekdays.

When a hunter bangs one or more squirrels this time of year, keeping the carcass cool is more of a factor than in cooler weather. A mesh bag like an onion sack is one choice over putting the squirrels into a game bag or pocket that doesn't allow air circulation.

## Bass tournament will support scholarships at U of A

FAYETTEVILLE - The University of Arkansas Department of Agricultural and Extension Education will host a benefit bass fishing tournament Saturday, May 16.

The tournament is open to the public said Jeff Miller, associate professor of agricultural and extension education. He said the tournament is intended to become an annual event.

Miller said proceeds from the event will help provide scholarships for students in the department, which offers degree programs in agricultural education, agricultural communications and agricultural systems technology management. Two of the most prominent scholarships that will benefit from this fundraiser are the Nolan Arthur Memorial Scholarship and the AEED Alumni Scholarship.

Boats will launch from the Hickory Creek Recreation Area ramp on the south end of Beaver Lake near Springdale at 6 a.m. Check-in will begin at 5:15 a.m. Weigh-in will begin at 2 p.m.



Registration fees for the two-person team tournament are \$80 per boat. Individuals are also welcome to participate for the same \$80 per boat fee. A five-fish per boat limit will be in effect, and culling will be allowed. Prizes will be 20 percent of the entry fees collected for first place and 10 percent for second place. Prizes will be awarded to the top six teams. Donations of cash or merchandise for prizes are being solicited.

To register or to donate cash or merchandise, call Miller at (479) 575-5650.

Agricultural and Extension Education is a department of the Dale Bumpers College of Agricultural, Food and Life Sciences at the University of Arkansas. The department prepares students for careers in agricultural education, communication and technology.

## 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

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.

**Spring Squirrel Season**

Statewide: May 16-June 14.

**Spring Turkey Season**

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.

**Deer****Archery**

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

**Fall Turkey Season****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**

Statewide: Nov. 1-Feb. 7

**Rabbit**

Statewide: Sept. 1-Feb. 28

**Fall Squirrel Season**

Statewide: Sept. 5-Feb. 28

**Spring 2010 Squirrel Season**

May 15-June 13

**Crow**

Statewide: Sept. 5-Feb. 20

**Furbearers**

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](http://www.agfc.com).

**Coming up in the outdoors**

**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](http://www.huntfest.com) or call (501) 227-0010.

**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](mailto:paul@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](http://arkcats.org/Home_Page.php) or Melissa Davis of Siloam Springs at (479) 957-5424 or by email at [cozydranch@yahoo.com](mailto:cozydranch@yahoo.com), or Paul Schweyer of Barling, [paulschweyer@sbcglobal.net](mailto: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](http://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 13** - National Wild Turkey Federation Wild Turkey Woodlands Landowner Workshop at the Thomas and Rhonda Baker farm north of Pocahontas. This event is jointly sponsored by the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, NWTF, the Arkansas Forestry Commission and the National Resources Conservation Commission. There is no charge and lunch will be provided. To register for the workshop, contact Dennis Daniel, NWTF regional biologist at (936) 208-9698. Deadline is June 10.

**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](http://arkcats.org/Home_Page.php) or Melissa Davis of Siloam Springs at (479) 957-5424 or by email at [cozydranch@yahoo.com](mailto:cozydranch@yahoo.com), or Paul Schweyer of Barling, [paulschweyer@sbcglobal.net](mailto: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](http://www.agfc.com) or call the Wildlife Information Hotline, (800)440-1477.**

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