



## Arkansas Outdoors for June 18, 2008

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### Today's Topics

[Arkansas Big Bass Bonanza rescheduled](#)  
[The 11th Annual Buffalo River Elk Festival has something for everyone](#)  
[It's the time for hunting bullfrogs – all across Arkansas](#)  
[Wearing a hat, using sunscreen essential in summer](#)  
[Boating education class schedule](#)  
[Hunter education class schedule](#)  
[What's open for hunting](#)  
[Coming up in the outdoors](#)

## Arkansas Big Bass Bonanza rescheduled

LITTLE ROCK – Anglers after the big one on the Arkansas River will have to wait. High water and current on the river have forced the Arkansas Hospitality Association to reschedule the Arkansas Big Bass Bonanza to August 1-3.

Originally scheduled for June 27-29, the tournament is the largest amateur tournament in the nation, with as many as 3,000 competitors fishing for the \$100,000 grand prize.

Tournament officials moved the tournament because heavy rains throughout the Midwest continue to keep the river flow well above safe boating levels.

Executive Director of the Arkansas Hospitality Association Montine McNulty said, "We postponed the fishing tournament in the interest of safety. The fishermen support and understand the river situation. We look forward to a great tournament August 1st."

McNulty added that there's a silver lining to those rain clouds.

"By rescheduling for August, we'll have an additional five weeks to promote the tournament and recruit more anglers – meaning more competition and potentially even more prize money to distribute."

All current tournament registrations will be honored for the new dates, and the tournament rules and prize pay-out arrangements will remain the same. Full tournament rules, format, and pay-outs are available at [www.arkansasbigbass.com](http://www.arkansasbigbass.com).

Current registrants unable to participate on the rescheduled August dates can receive a refund of their registration fees. Contact the Arkansas Hospitality Association at (501) 376-2323 or 1-800-472-5022. All refund requests must be postmarked by Monday, July 7.



## The 11th Annual Buffalo River Elk Festival has something for everyone



JASPER – No matter what age you are and what outdoors activity you enjoy, be sure to mark your calendar for this year's Buffalo River Elk Festival, June 27-28, 2008 on the Square in Jasper.

While the award-winning festival focuses on the reintroduction of elk to Arkansas and Arkansas's elk season, it also is a great celebration of the Ozark Mountain lifestyle and the community of Jasper.

The festival features some of the best creative talent in the Ozarks, with an extensive arts-and-crafts area where artisans demonstrate their skill and sell one-of-a-kind handcrafted items. Live music throughout the day will showcase the best talent the area has to offer.

The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission and Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation will hold educational seminars during the two-day festival for those interested in learning more about these woodland giants. Of course, the highlight of the festival is the drawing of Arkansas's public land elk hunting tags, held each hour starting at noon on Saturday. One lucky attendee of the festival also will walk away with a chance to hunt one of Arkansas's elk in the on-site drawing. Registration for this special tag is 1 p.m.-5 p.m., Friday and 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Saturday. The winner must be present at the 4 p.m. Saturday drawing to win.

The elk calling contest is a perennial favorite, with professionals and amateurs trying their hand at mimicking the bugle of the bull elk.

The Dutch oven cook-off is a special treat. Contestants set up camps, dress in Old West style and cook over the coals, just as they did in the 1800s.

There will be plenty of activities to keep the kids entertained. The kid's fishing derby, for children under 12, is always a lot of fun. The Buffalo National River Park Service and the AGFC will host several educational and fun projects.



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



LITTLE ROCK – It may be the least talked about but popular Arkansas outdoor activity. It's frog hunting. Some call it frog gigging. Some just say frogging.

We are referring to the warm weather pursuit of bullfrogs, and it occurs all across the state.

Yes, there are rules, but they are few and generous. There is a season for taking bullfrogs – April 15 through Dec. 31. – the daily limit is 18, and a "day" of frog hunting is noon to noon. You are required to have an Arkansas fishing license, not a hunting license in spite of it often being called frog hunting.

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 cane or bamboo. You can use a long-handled net or a fishing rig with a hook. Old timers 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 grabbing 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, such as 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 (it's easy to underestimate the distance in the dark) 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 because a sharp gig stuck deep into wood is a chore 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.

Typically, a frog outing starts with gathering of gear late in the day then heading out so the action can begin when it's dark. Most frog hunters buy the metal gigs at a sporting goods outlet and cut cane for the poles. Sturdy cane is needed, not the limber type you may choose for pole fishing. Serious frog hunters take along a spare pole or two and maybe an extra gig, safely secured, in case something breaks out on the water.

Best frog territories tend to be where water is quiet. Slow-moving creeks are good as are oxbows of cut-off lakes in lowlands. All along the Arkansas River is good for frogs, but use caution. Rocks on the shore can be hard on gigs just as logs are.

The end product of a successful frog outing is on the dinner table. Fried frog legs are regarded by legions of Arkansans as some of the finest eating you can find. Around the dinner table or even a campfire, the flavor of the fried frog legs is enhanced by recollections of the recent hunt that produced them.

## Wearing a hat, using sunscreen essential in summer

LITTLE ROCK – You've got a chance to do some fishing, go camping or just roam around in the outdoors. You've got the necessary gear together. What's next?

Be sure you take along a hat and adequate sunscreen, advise the personnel of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, who spend much time outside in summer.

Arkansas's summer sun can be brutal right along with benefiting crops, encouraging swimming outings and warming tired bones. The hot sun brings dangers in the form of potential skin cancer and heat exhaustion – two situations no one wants to encourage.

Young, old and in-between Arkansans do not need to risk so much activity in the sun that they become exhausted. Slow down and drink water.



Virtually any liquid can fill the need, but plain, clean water is at the top of the list. Physical activity raises the need for replacing fluids in the body, so don't be stingy with drinking water and other beverages when the weather is hot. Whether your refreshment is iced or cool or even tepid is much a matter of choice, although most medical authorities don't recommend downing large amounts of icy cold beverages when you are extremely hot.

Protection against the sun begins with wearing a hat. This is a vital first step in keeping healthy, as it guards against overheating and overexposure to the sun. The preferred head covering is a hat, not a cap. Although the popular and seen-everywhere ball caps help some, a hat with a full brim will protect the head, face, neck and ears.

Aside from bringing on heat exhaustion, sun on skin can lead to cancer. It can happen to anyone, but dermatologists and scientists can point to groups in our population who are more susceptible than others to skin cancer. Whether you are in a high-risk group or a low-risk category, the potential danger is there, and it's not worth taking a chance.

If you are going to be outside in the prime sunburn hours of 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., wear a hat. It will fend off harmful ultraviolet rays and keep you a little cooler.

Liberal use of a good sunscreen on skin is a partner to wearing a head covering. Most medical authorities say that a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15 is needed. Most go on to recommend SPF 30. A wide variety of creams, lotions, oils and gels meeting this requirement are available at drug stores, grocery stores, sporting goods outlets and boat docks.

Take care of kids in your group, keeping in mind that water washes off sun protection. Apply more after you and the kids come out of a swimming spot.

Also keep in mind that water reflects sun. It intensifies the effect of the rays and even brings them up from the water surface to

your face that is under a hat.

The essential Arkansas summer precaution strategy is three-phased – drink liquids, cover heads, use sunscreen.

## 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.

**Modern Gun:** Zones 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 11: Nov. 8-30.

Zone 4: Nov. 8-9.

Zone 5: Nov. 8-9 and Nov. 15-16.

Zone 4A, 5A, 13, 14 and 15: Nov. 8-Dec. 7.

Zones 4B and 5B: Nov. 8-16.

Zones 9 and 12: Nov. 8-Dec. 14.

Zone 16, 16A and 17: Nov. 8-Dec. 25.

**Muzzleloader:** Zones 1, 2, 3, 4A, 5A, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14 and 15: Oct. 18-26 and Dec. 13-15.

Zones 9, 12, 16, 16A and 17: Oct. 18-26 and Dec. 29-31.

Zones 4, 4B, 5 and 5B: Closed.

The statewide Christmas holiday modern gun deer hunt will be Dec. 26 to 28 with the special youth modern gun deer hunt in all zones (excludes certain WMAs where a modern gun or muzzleloader permit is required to hunt) scheduled for Nov. 1 to 2.

#### Spotted Skunk, Weasel Hunting:

Closed.

#### Fall Turkey:

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

**Firearms:** Zones 3, 5B, 6, and 17: Oct. 11-17.

Zones 1, 1A, 2, 4, 4A, 4B, 5, 5A, 7, 7A, 8, 9, 9A and 10: Closed.

#### 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 18-26

Zones 3, 4, 5, 5A, 6 and 7: Closed

**Modern Gun:** Zones 1 and 2: Nov 3-30

Zone 5: Dec 6-14 Zone 5A: Nov 29-Dec 14

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. 1-2

Zones 3, 4, 5, 5A, 6 and 7: Closed

#### Furbearers (2008 Season):

Raccoon night hunting July 1-Aug. 31.

Badger, spotted skunk and weasel hunting is closed.

**Furbearers (2009 Season):**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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.

**Elk:**

Zones 1, 2, 3, 4 and A: Sept. 22-26.

Zones 1, 2, 3, 4, A and B: Dec. 8-12.

**Quail**

Statewide: Nov. 1-Feb. 8.

**Rabbit**

Statewide: Sept. 1-Feb. 28.

**Squirrel**

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

**Crow**

Statewide: Sept. 6-Feb. 23.

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

Oct. 1, 2009

**Muzzleloader:**

Oct. 17, 2009

**Modern Gun:**

Nov. 14, 2009

## Coming up in the outdoors

**June 19** – AGFC Commission monthly meeting at the Janet Huckabee Arkansas River Valley Nature Center in Fort Smith beginning at 10 a.m.

**June 21** - The Paragould Chapter of Ducks Unlimited is hosting their Waterfowl Hunter Party at the National Guard Armory. For more information please contact: Bryan Murray at (870) 335-6049 or by email at [bejmurray@grnco.net](mailto:bejmurray@grnco.net).

**June 21** - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Smallmouth bass fishing on War Eagle Creek."

**July 26** - Arkansas Catfishing Association (ACA) Tournament at Bull Shoals (night) 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, contact ACA president James Freeman of Pochontas at (870) 810-3294 or by email at [big\\_vato98@yahoo.com](mailto:big_vato98@yahoo.com), or Lee Fields of Russellville at (479) 331-0399 or by email at [leefields@centurytel.net](mailto:leefields@centurytel.net).

**June 28** - The Benton County Chapter of Ducks Unlimited is hosting their 11th annual David Bain Memorial Ducks Unlimited Golf Tournament, 1 p.m. shotgun start at the Kingswood Golf Course in Bella Vista. For more information please contact: Blayne Estes at (479) 721-3394 or by email at [baestes@cox.net](mailto:baestes@cox.net) or Jay Johnston at (479) 531-7632 or by email at [jkjohnston42@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jkjohnston42@sbcglobal.net).

**June 29** - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 10 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Fishing Free for All."

**July 17** – AGFC Commission monthly meeting at the AGFC Little Rock central office, 2 Natural Resources Dr., beginning at 9 a.m. Topics include: early migratory bird season approval, proposed late migratory bird seasons

(waterfowl seasons) and proposed general fishing regulations.

**Aug. 21** – AGFC Commission monthly meeting at the AGFC Little Rock central office, 2 Natural Resources Dr., beginning at 9 a.m. Topics include: late migratory bird season (waterfowl season) approval and 2009 fishing regulation approval.

**Aug. 23-24** - Arkansas Catfishing Association ACA Charity tournament at Lake Millwood and Lake Earling in southwest Arkansas. For an ACA application form, constitution and bylaws, local conditions and information along with the rules and regulations, contact ACA president James Freeman of Pocahontas at (870) 810-3294 or by email at [big\\_vato98@yahoo.com](mailto:big_vato98@yahoo.com), or Lee Fields of Russellville at (479) 331-0399 or by email at [leefields@centurytel.net](mailto:leefields@centurytel.net).

**Sept. 18** – AGFC Commission monthly meeting at the AGFC Little Rock central office, 2 Natural Resources Dr., beginning at 9 a.m. Topics include the 2009 spring turkey season regulations proposal.

**Sept. 20** - Delta Wings Chapter of Delta Waterfowl will hold it's third annual banquet on at Southland Park Gaming and Racing in West Memphis. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. with dinner at 7 p.m. Contact Gary Harlow at [gjharlow@aol.com](mailto:gjharlow@aol.com) for more information.

**Oct. 22** – AGFC Commission monthly meeting in Pine Bluff, beginning at 9 a.m. Topics include: the 2009 spring turkey seasons regulations approval and special fishing regulations proposal.

**Nov. 20** – AGFC Commission monthly meeting at the AGFC Little Rock central office, 2 Natural Resources Dr., beginning at 9 a.m. Topics include: special fishing regulations approval.

**Dec. 18** – AGFC Commission monthly meeting at the AGFC Little Rock central office, 2 Natural Resources Dr., beginning at 9 a.m.

**Jan. 22, 2009** – AGFC Commission monthly meeting at the AGFC Little Rock central office, 2 Natural Resources Dr., beginning at 9 a.m.

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

**March 19, 2009** – 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.

**April 16, 2009** – AGFC Commission monthly meeting at the AGFC Little Rock central office, 2 Natural Resources Dr., beginning at 9 a.m.

**May 21, 2009** – AGFC Commission monthly meeting at the AGFC Little Rock central office, 2 Natural Resources Dr., beginning at 9 a.m.

**June 18, 2009** – 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 o [www.agfc.comomm](http://www.agfc.comomm) or call the Wildlife Information Hotline, (800)440-1477.

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