

Arkansas Game & Fish Commission

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June 10, 2009 Edition

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AYSSP championship continues tremendous growth

By Samantha Holschbach
 Arkansas Game and Fish Commission

LONOKE – Teams from Harrisburg swept the top spots Friday and Saturday at the [Arkansas Youth Shooting Sports Program](#) championships at the Remington Gun Club. The AYSSP is sponsored by the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission.

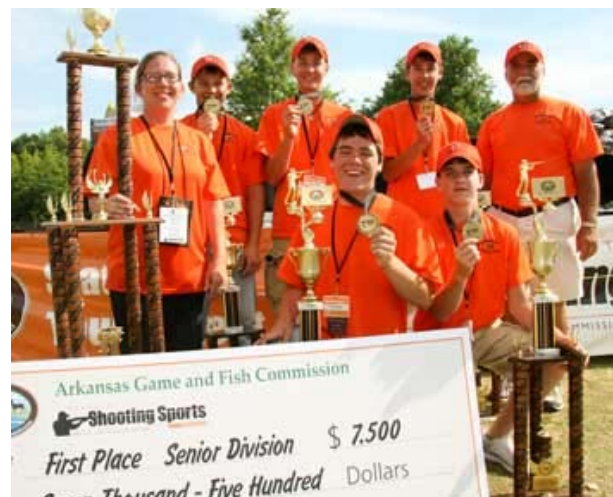
"It went better than ever," said Mike Bonds, assistant chief of the AGFC Education and Outreach Division. "It was a smooth event."

Regional competitions were held each weekend in May at the Remington Gun Club with 400-600 participants each day. The top 64 junior (grades 6-8) and senior (grades 9-12) teams qualified to compete for the state championship. About 4,200 youth participated; about 2,400 were involved last year.

In the senior division, Harrisburg Hornets AAA won first place and a \$7,500 team scholarship. Huntsville Squad One took second place and a \$5,000 scholarship. The Mountain Home Bombers Bomb Squad won third place and a \$2,500 scholarship. The Searcy Claybusters, seeded 14 in the 16-team field, finished fourth.

The top three junior division teams were the Harrisburg Hornets Squad A in first place, Ozark Youth Shooting Team Junior Gold in second and Southside Skeeters (Bee Branch) in third. The top three teams won prizes.

"We're just thrilled to death," said Steve Johnson, coach of Huntsville Squad One. "We've been fortunate the past two years to win. We were happy to win the runner-up position."



Several new elements were part of championship weekend. Shooters may qualify for the Junior Olympics if they do one of the following: shoot 24 of 25 targets in the junior division, hit 48 of 50 targets in the senior division or qualify as one of the top 32 squads in the division. Representatives from USA Shooting and colleges across the country were on hand to attract youth and further the sport of shooting. Graduates of the hunter safety course entered to win prizes.

AGFC Shooting Sports Coordinator Chuck Woodson applauded the championship's organization and said he was pleased with the results.

"Since we are the No. 1 tournament in the nation, a lot of shooting entities have come out of the woodwork," Woodson said. "There's no other state that has 4,000 shooters in one group. This is one of the greatest retention and recruitment tools there is.

"It's just a good, safe sport to get into. There's no other sport where a 9-year-old and a 90-year-old can compete at the same level."

The AYSSP is open to any youth. They learn to safely operate a firearm and acquire respect for one another.

"Just about everybody can participate in the program on some level," Bonds said. "The kids are great. I'm always impressed by their maturity and their attention to safety."



Buffalo River Elk Festival features elk management summit workshop

JASPER - Jasper and Newton County residents are busy preparing for their annual Buffalo River Elk Festival. The festival is scheduled to begin Friday, June 26, and continue through Saturday, June 27. This year, the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission will hold an elk summit workshop during the celebration. The award winning festival began in 1998 to celebrate the successful reintroduction of elk to Newton County and has been an annual event every year since.

The highlight of the festival is the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission drawing for elk hunting permits. The drawings and most of the activities will be at the courthouse square in Jasper with a kids' fishing derby on the banks of the Little Buffalo River. This year the elk summit workshop will be held at the festival. It will be the culmination of the months-long effort to design a management plan for Arkansas's elk herd. The elk summit workshop will be held at the Arkansas House in Jasper from 10 a.m. to 12 noon.

Thousands of hopeful elk hunters applied for the permits for this year's hunt. The public land elk hunt dates are Zones 1, 2, 3, 4: Sept. 21-25 and Dec. 7-11, Private land elk hunts are Zones A, Sept. 21-25 and Dec. 7-11, Zone B and Zone 4, Dec. 7-11.

The drawing for the public land permits will be on Saturday, June 27 at the Newton County Courthouse Square in Jasper, near the Buffalo River and center of Arkansas's elk country. Persons applying for permits don't have to be present, but many attend each year, joining in the festivities and activities.

One of the more popular events returns to the festival again this year - the on-site drawing for a permit. One permit will be issued to someone who applies at the Elk Festival in Jasper. Sign up, stick around and you may win a permit. For this permit, the lucky hunter must be present. Just like the other public land elk permits to be drawn, entrants must be an Arkansas resident.

The elk hunting permits will be issued for specific zones along and near the Buffalo River.

The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission and Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation will be present with several educational programs. For the hunting enthusiasts, drawings for elk permits will be held each hour starting at noon on Saturday.



Purple gallinule: gaudiest of the southern slough

By Samantha Holschbach
Arkansas Game and Fish Commission

LITTLE ROCK - Sporting disproportionately long toes, a bill resembling a piece of candy corn and gaudy green and royal-blue plumage, the Purple Gallinule looks like a displaced Mardi Gras partier in its Arkansas wetland habitat.

Despite its carnival-appropriate appearance, the Purple Gallinule's features – at least some of them – serve a legitimate purpose. Its extensive toes evenly distribute the bird's weight across the flimsy lily pads it walks upon, otherwise



the gallinule would sink. In fact, the gallinule's flexible feet coupled with its light weight let it become a trapeze artist of sorts, balancing on rickety limbs and climbing trees up to 65 feet tall. Its chicken-like bill enables it to eat a diet of fruits, seeds, flowers, grains and invertebrates. The bird's shimmering coloration serves no purpose in the game of love, as both sexes showcase the same vivid hues.



You don't have to actively seek this peculiar bird to find it. You may spy one ambling across lily pads or crawling in shrubby areas as you're admiring alligators in a southern Arkansas slough or fishing in thick vegetation. The Purple Gallinule can be found in marshes in the southern and east-central portions of the state from April through September.

According to Dr. Dan Scheiman, bird conservation director of Audubon Arkansas, reliable places to view Purple Gallinules between May and August include Bois d'Arc Wildlife Management Area, Okay Landing at Millwood Lake and Arkansas Post National Memorial.

Bothersome web worms can be useful as bream bait

LITTLE ROCK – They may be in your trees, your neighbor's trees or somewhere else close at hand – and they are ugly.

These are webs, the whitish structures in forks of trees and shrubs that house large numbers of crawly things. Some people call them web worms, tent worms, tent caterpillars or something like "yucky caterpillars."

There are different species, most the larval stage of moths. Some of these worms develop into large and beautiful moths. Most, though, become small drab brown moths. The worms are basically harmless except for eating leaves on trees. Rarely do they eat foliage to the extent the tree dies.

But most people find the webs and the worms themselves bothersome and unsightly.

You can do something about them. You can gather up a bunch of the worms and go catch some bream. You should feel better in doing it. No, you won't reduce the numbers of the worms or the webs, but you'll have a route to some enjoyable fishing and some nice food on the dinner table.

Start off this project by getting a small container. A plastic jar with a lid you can poke small holes in works well. Even a discarded drink container, 12-ounce or half-liter or 20-ounce size, is usable. Pick up a stick to assist in opening up the web.

Go to gathering worms. You may have an available youngster who can help make a game of it. Gather a bunch of the worms, and if several webs are nearby, this will be easy. Pick two or three green leaves, drop into the container then get ready for fishing.

You will want small hooks for your rod or pole and line. Open the container, shake out a worm and hook it. Toss it into the water. Just imagine if you are a bream and a wiggly green and black worm comes close instead of a dull red worm.

Experienced bream fishermen sometimes chum the area they want to worm for bream. They'll toss a few worms into the water then follow with the same on a hook.

When your web worms have produced a nice string of bluegill, red-ears or green sunfish for you, then you've got some good eating coming up to finish off this do-it-yourself project. And the bait didn't cost you anything.



G. Keith Douce, University of Georgia



G. Keith Douce, University of Georgia

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.

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 (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

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

June 13 - Dr. Merlin Tuttle, Internationally recognized bat authority will present "The Amazing World of Bats" during Bat-O-Rama XX at Devil's Den State Park. Dr. Tuttle has traveled the world for more than 45 years studying and photographing hundreds of bat species. His scientific discoveries have been published in leading scientific journals. His popular articles and photos have appeared in hundreds of books and magazines, including five articles in National Geographic. The founder of Bat Conservation International, Dr. Tuttle and his staff have been working to conserve bats and bat habitats for 27 years. The presentation begins at 8:45 p.m. at the park amphitheater. Admission is free. For more information on the weekend's programs telephone the park at (479) 761-2239 any day between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. or e-mail harry.harnish@arkansas.gov.

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

June 20 - Arkansas Catfishing Association tournament at Blue Mountain Lake (children under 16 are welcomed to attend). For more information contact our Paul Schweyer of Barling at paulschweyer@sbcglobal.net or (479) 452-1652 or (479) 719-0474, or Lee Fields of Pope County at leefields@centurytel.net, (479) 331-0399 or cell (870) 577-7289 or go to http://arkcats.org/Home_Page.php.

June 20 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Father's Day Special."

June 25 - Want to know more about Arkansas bats? Check out "Bats: Fact and Fiction" at the Witt Stephens Central Arkansas Nature Center in Little Rock, 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Learn about rabies, species of bats in Arkansas, which are on the endangered species list and many other topics. Blake Sasse, non-game mammal coordinator for the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, will be on hand to give information on bats, their importance to the ecosystem and how to install bat houses. Call the nature center office at (501) 907-0636 weekdays between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. to register.

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

June 27 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Ridin' and Reelin'."

July 4 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Chairman Freddie Black Looks Back on 7 Years."

July 11 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Float Tube Fishin'."

July 18 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Trout Fishin' on

the White River.”

July 18 - Arkansas Catfishing Association tournament at Lake Norfolk (Gamaliel). Open tournament to the general public. For more information contact Paul Schweyer of Barling at paulschweyer@sbcglobal.net or (479) 452-1652 or (479) 719-0474, or Lee Fields of Pope County at leefields@centurytel.net or (479) 331-0399 or cell at (870) 577-7289 or go to http://arkcats.org/Home_Page.php.

July 25 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve “Wildman” Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be “Smallmouth Fishin’ with Duane Hada.”

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.

Aug 15-16 - Arkansas Catfishing Association tournament at lakes Millwood and Earling in southwest Arkansas. Open tournament to the general public. Double catch donated to Hope in Action charity. For more information contact Paul Schweyer of Barling at paulschweyer@sbcglobal.net or (479) 452-1652 or (479) 719-0474, or Lee Fields of Pope County at leefields@centurytel.net or (479) 331-0399 or cell (870) 577-7289.

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