

Arkansas Game & Fish Commission

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June 17, 2009 Edition

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Process underway for third alligator hunting season in Arkansas

LITTLE ROCK - The first step in the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission's process of the very popular alligator hunting season has just been finalized. For the past couple of weeks, AGFC field crews have been busy conducting alligator spotlight surveys all across south Arkansas.

This population data, a harvest report from last year's alligator hunt, a summary of last year's nuisance alligator activities and a report on Arkansas's farm-raised alligators will all be compiled into a single report that must be submitted to the U. S Fish and Wildlife Service by July 1. The USFWS will review the information and determine if there is cause to prohibit a conservative hunting season in 2009.

The AGFC will review the proposed hunting season dates in June with final approval coming in July. A total of 28 permits will be available with 20 of those coming through the computer draw process, Assistant Chief of Wildlife Ricky Chastain says. "In order for the hunt to take place, we must proceed with some of the administrative steps out in front of the Commission's final approval of these dates," Chastain said.

The proposed season dates for the 2009 alligator hunting season are: from 30 minutes after sunset on Friday, Sept. 18 until 30 minutes before sunrise on Monday, Sept. 22 and from 30 minutes after sunset on Friday, Sept. 25 until 30 minutes before sunrise on Monday, Sept. 28, 2009. The AGFC will begin taking on-line applications for the public land and private land at-large permits on June 22 and end the application period on July 10. Successfully drawn hunters will be notified by late July.

The mandatory hunter orientation classes will be held at the Hope Regional Office on Aug. 15, at the Monticello Regional Office on Aug. 22 and at the Little Rock Headquarters on Aug. 29. Chastain said that he strongly urges anyone interested in a chance to participate in the alligator hunt to be very aware of the important dates in this process. "We really want the public to understand how this process must be condensed into a short timeframe and to be very prepared to respond to the timelines of the application period, as well as plan ahead for the hunter orientation workshops and hunt dates if successfully drawn," he said.

The following permits will be available through the computer draw process:



Alligator Management Zone 1 (Southwest Arkansas)

Public Area Permits – Dr. Lester Sitzes III Bois d' Arc WMA – one permit
 Millwood Lake – one permit
 Private Land At-large Permits – five permits

Alligator Management Zone 3 (Southeast Arkansas)

Public Area Permits – Lower Arkansas River Complex – nine permits
 Private Land At-large Permits – four permits

White River Mount Olive Access renovated to enhance fishing opportunities

MOUNT OLIVE - Renovations on a White River access point in Mount Olive, a small community in Izard County, were completed Monday as part of a river-wide effort to repair access ramps and parking lots.

"Everybody around uses that ramp," said Charles Stevens, a trout fishing guide who has lived on the White River most of his life. "They've [AGFC] done a wonderful job. We appreciate it."

Mike Armstrong, AGFC chief of fisheries, said the portion of the White River flowing through Mount Olive is a popular recreation area stocked with trout, a major reason for making the Mount Olive access point a renovations priority. Furthermore, renovations were needed to accommodate modern boats.

"The project was to replace an existing structure that was worn out," said Mike Cantrell, AGFC regional maintenance coordinator who oversaw the access point's construction. "The boats are getting bigger, and people want a better ramp to launch from."

Built in the 1960s, the access ramp was neither properly sloped nor wide enough for easy boat use in recent years before the renovations, which cost \$29,103. The five-week-long renovation process entailed installing rocks for a sub-grade, or structure stabilization; setting a 20 x 83-foot concrete slab; and adding large rocks for bank stabilization. Additionally, a mobility-impaired parking space was added adjacent to the ramp.

The Mount Olive renovations were originally planned for 2008 but delayed due to excessive flooding. These renovations are one of many such projects planned along the White River to better serve fisherman and other river users.

**Braided or monofilament, fishing line needs changing often**

LITTLE ROCK - While looking around for a spool of monofilament line to load on to a reel or two, an Arkansas fisherman may think back to earlier times.

Before we had monofilament, one of the many wonders of the world of plastics development, fishing line was braided thread, cotton for the most part. Like Henry Ford's Model T, it came in any color you wanted as long as it was black.

That's an exaggeration. There were other colors, like green. But black seemed the predominant color of that old line. Remember, much Arkansas fishing was in muddy oxbow lakes and backwaters before the era of multiple man-made lakes came forth.

Visibility in that water was a matter of inches, not feet, and not many inches at that. Fish evidently fed by smell, not by sight.

But fishermen caught fish on the black braided line of the past. It worked fine because there was no other choice. Yes, old line became brittle and easy to break. More than one debate took place over whether braided line was stronger or weaker when it was wet, like after several casts into the water.

Some anglers today insist that braided line held up better in sun than today's monofilament does. Sunlight can make the plastic line deteriorate, experts say.

Bottom line on line: Change it. Change it even if you think it doesn't need changing. Fresh line performs better and also gives you the mental asset of knowing you are fishing with the best of equipment in regards to what connects the rod with the bait.

**Panel approves purchase to expand Cache River NWR**

LITTLE ROCK - The Cache River National Wildlife Refuge has received approval to buy almost 200 acres to expand in Monroe County.

U.S. Sen. Blanche Lincoln of Arkansas, 1 of 2 senators on the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission, announced the purchase.

The refuge is an important stop for migratory birds and provides a rare piece of undisturbed bottomland hardwood forest land in the Mississippi Valley region.



The tract is in the lower Cache River/White River floodplain, which is prime territory for migrating waterfowl. Refuge lands border the tract on three sides, and the Fish and Wildlife Service is to restore the land so it can be used by migrating birds.

The refuge covers more than 56,000 acres in Jackson, Monroe, Prairie and Woodruff counties in east-central Arkansas.

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:

Furbearers

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

Badger, spotted skunk and weasel hunting: Closed.

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 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 lee@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 lee@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.

Sept. 12 – University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton Skeet Shoot, 2 p.m. at the Point Remove Lodge in Hattiesville. This year Andy Miller is scheduled to do a shooting exhibition. Again this year, the Ducks Unlimited Green Wing shoot for kids ages 8-14 will be featured. For more information call Kristi Strain at (501) 977-2085 or by email at strain@uacccm.edu.

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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