

Arkansas Game & Fish Commission

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Arkansas Outdoors Weekly Newsletter

Arkansas Game and Fish Commission

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Lake Conway summit expands focus on varied problems

MAYFLOWER – Lake Conway's long-standing assortment of problems involve more than the lake itself. It's a watershed issue, participants in a meeting last week agreed.

It was a Lake Conway summit, and participants ranged from top state officials to local elected officeholders and to fishermen.

State Rep. Jane English of North Little Rock advocated the meeting, according to Mike Armstrong, chief of fisheries with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. English represents District 42 of the Arkansas House of Representatives. This includes northern Pulaski County and southern Faulkner County.

Armstrong said, "Rep. English told us there needed to be a holistic approach to the Lake Conway problems, and that it was time to quit pointing fingers (of blame)."

Lake Conway is owned by the AGFC and is the nation's largest lake built by a state agency. Completed in 1951, the lake has been a center of concern for flooding downstream roads, high water in homes around the lake, fluctuating water levels and excessive vegetation.

For nearly eight years, the Lake Conway Citizens Advisory Committee has met with AGFC staff members to work on the assortment of problems. Progress has been made on a number of them, but these are in the lake itself.



The summit participants said that the lake may be the center of issues, but many of them involve the entire watershed.

Armstrong said, "We agreed that the lake integrates everything that happens in its watershed."

When Lake Conway was built, the city of Conway had about 8,500 residents. Today, Conway's population is above 55,000, with extensive construction in the lake's watershed replacing trees and grass with asphalt and concrete. The nearby towns of Mayflower and Vilonia have also experienced major growth.

Two groups were formed at the summit. A long-range group will focus on watershed problems. A short range group will look at the known problems, especially the flooding of Grassy Lake Road and evaluating the current water level management plan. Armstrong said, "We know what the problems are, but we need to find the money to solve them."

Armstrong said, "Ultimately what we are talking about is quality of life for the residents in this area. Conway and Faulkner County will continue to grow. We want to help insure that this growth is consistent with a healthy watershed, and Lake Conway will be viewed as a positive asset for Faulkner County."

During the meeting, AGFC deputy director David Goad said he wanted the participants to know that the agency wants to be a good neighbor to all of the property owners in the area. "We have a lot of partners around the lake," Goad said. "We value what they have to say and take it into consideration when we make decisions about the management of Lake Conway," he added.

The summit participants will meet again in mid-September.

Participants in the summit meeting included Sen. Gilbert Baker; Theresa Marks, director of the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality; Dan Flowers, director of the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department; Jim McKenzie of Metroplan; Faulkner County Judge Preston Scroggin; Earl Smith of the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission; mayors of Conway, Mayflower and Vilonia, representatives of the Arkansas Department of Health; Faulkner County Public Facilities Board; Lake Conway Homeowners Association; Rodgers Estates; and Dr. Richard Collins, biology professor at the University of Central Arkansas who said he was representing "the common angler."

AGFC wins lawsuit over timber damage

LITTLE ROCK – The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission is entitled to about \$7.3 million from the United States government, according to a July 1 U.S. Court of Federal Claims ruling by Judge Charles F. Lettow.

The AGFC filed suit against the U.S. March 18, 2005, to recoup the value of dead and dying timber and to restore areas where timber died on Dave Donaldson Black River Wildlife Management Area, which covers about 24,000 acres in Clay, Randolph and Greene counties. The AGFC was able to prove that the Corps of Engineers' management of water from the Black River and Missouri's Clearwater Lake caused millions of dollars of damage to the WMA's bottomland hardwood timber.

The U.S. will have 60 days from the date Lettow's judgment is entered into the legal record to appeal the ruling, which came after an 11-day trial last December. The ruling also states the AGFC will be awarded attorneys' fees and expenses.

"We won on every argument," said Julie Greathouse of the Perkins and Trotter law firm in Little Rock, co-counsel with the AGFC's Jim Goodhart and John Marks. "We didn't get every bit of our requested damages. The court agreed that we were entitled to our claim for restoration, and we were awarded costs to restore the most severely damaged areas but not for restoration of lesser-impacted areas of the WMA."

The court's 61-page document indicates a thorough examination of the disagreement between the agencies. "We hope (the USA) doesn't appeal," Goodhart said. "The case has taken considerable time and expense to litigate, and the court has expended a great amount of effort to spell out a just solution. It is now time to move on and focus on restoring the damage."

The Clearwater Lake water-control plan of 1950 was being followed until 1993 when the Corps began deviating from the plan and, at times, flooding Black River WMA, particularly during the summer growing season.

According to Lettow's ruling: "At various times, members of the Commission attempted to persuade the Corps of Engineers to return to the original water control plan, which the Commission argued would more promptly evacuate water from the management area."

By the late 1990s, according to the ruling, the AGFC had warned the Corps about flooding and hardwood damage on Black River WMA. Had the Corps "performed a reasonable investigation of the effects the deviations would have on downstream water levels, it would have been able to predict both that the deviations would increase the levels of the Black River in the management area and that the flooding caused by these increased levels would damage timber."

In 2000 and 2001, the Corps performed an environmental assessment of the modified water-control plan it had been using since 1993 and determined that it could not continue the practice because of the potential for significant impact on natural resources. The Corps then returned to the water management plan used before 1993.

More than five years passed between the time serious timber damage occurred in 1999 and 2000, and the AGFC's lawsuit. The AGFC was negotiating with the Corps during that period, hoping to receive compensation and avoid a lawsuit before the statute of limitations ran out. In



the end, the lawsuit was unavoidable.

"We are committed to working with the Corps toward a fair resolution of these issues," AGFC Director Scott Henderson said when the lawsuit was filed. "But the Commission's first priority is conserving the wildlife and fishery resources that belong to the people of Arkansas. We must do everything we can to protect the valuable habitat on our management areas, and it got to the point that it was necessary to take this formal action to preserve our claim."

The corridor of bottomland hardwood timber in Dave Donaldson Black River WMA is the largest contiguous block of timber along the Black River in Missouri and Arkansas, and is among the largest contiguous areas of bottomland hardwood timber remaining in the Upper Mississippi Alluvial Valley. Much of the WMA land was purchased by the AGFC in the 1950s and 1960s to preserve bottomland hardwoods and provide wintering habitat for migratory waterfowl. The AGFC operates the WMA as a wildlife and hunting preserve, placing special emphasis on the waterfowl that pass through the area in the late fall and early winter on the Mississippi River flyway.

Rachel's Law affects teens operating personal watercraft

LITTLE ROCK – Teens operating personal watercraft will face a new age restriction beginning this weekend. "Rachel's Law" will take effect July 10, raising the minimum age to 16 years for individuals to legally operate a personal watercraft alone.

The law is named after Rachel Rutherford, who died of her injuries as the result of a personal watercraft accident on Lake Hamilton at the age of 15.

Previously, the minimum age had been 14 years to operate a personal watercraft, which includes Jet Skis, Sea-Doos and WaveRunners. While the law primarily affects teen boaters, other age groups are under its influence, too.

Boat operators under age 12 may operate a personal watercraft only if accompanied by an individual at least 21 years old who was born before 1986 or has a valid boating education certificate. Again, this accompanying individual must lawfully be in position to take immediate control of the personal watercraft.



By law, all Arkansas boat operators born after Jan. 1, 1986 must complete an approved AGFC boating education course. A course may be completed in any of the following ways: in an instructor-led course free of charge, online for \$15, or, for a limited time, via a home study course which includes a DVD or video available for purchase online. For more information about boating courses, visit www.agfc.com/boating and click on "Boating Education," or call (877) 493-6424.

Though a boating education course is mandatory for many young boaters, the information is valuable for everyone. Additionally, the boating education course will undergo changes beginning Jan. 1, 2010: boat operators will no longer be able to take non-proctored (unsupervised) final tests when taking the online course, among other changes that are being developed.

Early breeding grounds surveys show duck numbers are up

LITTLE ROCK – There is some fresh news for Arkansas duck hunters, and it is good.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has released its preliminary report on mid-continent breeding ducks and habitats, based on surveys conducted in May and early June. Total duck populations were estimated at 42 million breeding ducks. This estimate is a 13 percent increase over last year's estimate of 37.3 million birds and is 25 percent above the 1955-2008 long-term average.

A key component for waterfowl managers is that pond count.

The number of ponds in the Canadian prairie provinces and in the upper Midwest of the United States is 45 percent more this year than last year and 31 percent more than the 1955-2008 long-term average, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission waterfowl biologist Luke Naylor says. "Of particular interest for Arkansas duck hunters is the dramatic increase in pond counts in the Dakotas, an area that makes a substantial contribution to this state's mallard harvest," he said. "Unfortunately, this good news must be considered in light of continued loss of the grassland habitat that has made this region so valuable for nesting ducks and in turn Arkansas duck hunters," Naylor stated.



According to the FWS, wet and dry cycles, where water levels fluctuate over time, are vital components of maintaining wetland productivity. This is especially important for the prairie potholes of the northern plains. While hunters and ducks rejoice with the return of water, droughts are important in rejuvenating wetlands. As evident by this year, dedication to conservation, even through dry cycles, can pay off when water

returns to the prairies and wetlands again teem with breeding waterfowl and other wildlife.

Habitat is the vital element for ducks as it is for all wildlife. The number of ponds is up, the number of ducks is up, but some parts of the Midwest and the South, Arkansas especially, were hard hit by heavy rains and flooding in the spring. In Arkansas, rice and soybean crops are far behind schedule, and these are used extensively by migrating ducks.

The FWS issued a caution note. "Improvement in water conditions is only part of the story. Water without nesting cover does little to improve the duck outlook. As good as the news is this week, waterfowl and prairie habitats continue to face greater long-term threats. Grassland habitat is under siege on many fronts and is being lost at alarming rates. The U.S. prairie pothole region has lost more than 1.2 million Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres since 2007 (another 3.1 million acres will expire by 2012), and more than 3.3 million acres of native prairie are projected to be lost during the next five years."

The FWS surveys 10 species of ducks in its population counts. Eight of the 10 showed increases this year, and the two that didn't showed very slight drops.

Mallards, THE duck to most Arkansas waterfowl hunters, increased 10 percent over last year and 13 percent over the long-term average.

Gadwalls increased 12 percent over last year and 73 percent over the long-term average.

Wigeons decreased 1 percent over last year and 5 percent over the long-term average.

Green-winged teal increased 16 percent over last year and 79 percent over the long-term average.

Blue-winged teal increased 11 percent over last year and 60 percent over the long-term average.

Shovelers increased 25 percent over last year and 92 percent over the long-term average.

Pintails increased 23 percent over last year but decreased 20 percent over the long-term average.

Redheads decreased 1 percent over last year but are up 62 percent over the long-term average.

Canvasbacks increased 35 percent over last year and 16 percent over the long-term average.

Scaup increased 12 percent over last year but are down 18 percent over the long-term average.

Population estimates for black ducks, ring-necked ducks, bufflehead, goldeneyes, and mergansers are similar to last year as well as their 1990-2008 averages.

Hunting season dates and bag limits for Arkansas will be proposed by the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission's Wildlife Management staff at the AGFC's July 16 meeting in Little Rock. The commissioners will set the seasons and bag limits at their Aug. 20 meeting in Little Rock.

Bass fishing successes show Coal Pile is coming back

PENDLETON – One of Arkansas's most renowned fishing areas appears headed back to its former lofty status after the 2009 Big Bass Bonanza.

Coal Pile is the place. Ask nearly any Arkansas bass fisherman, amateur, professional or somewhere in between, and that person will know about Coal Pile, the backwater on the lower Arkansas River that ranks close to legendary for its production of large largemouths. Earlier this year, a 31 pound, five bass limit was caught on the lake and in that limit was an 11-pounder.

Coal Pile is a 538-acre body of water in Desha County a dozen or so miles from Dumas and near an unincorporated place called Pendleton. A highway bridge carries U.S. Highway 165 and Arkansas Highway 1 across the river near the entrance to Coal Pile. The name isn't Coal Pile Lake, Coal Pile Pond, Coal Pile Slough, Coal Pile Creek. It's just Coal Pile. And you won't find it on maps. The name originated n steamboat days when a fueling station was in operation a short distance off the main river. There is nothing left to trace to that era.

But the bass are there.

For several decades in the last century, Coal Pile yielded numerous trophy bass to eager anglers from the area, from all around the state and from many other states. In 1984 and 1985 when the Bassmasters Classics were held at Pine Bluff, some contestants made the lengthy run downriver to Coal Pile just for a couple of hours fishing the fabled spot.

But bass fishing declined all along the Arkansas River, Coal Pile



included, then extensive work was done by the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and private organizations and individuals. Structures on the river were altered. Extensive stockings of bass fingerlings were made.

In the recent Big Bass Bonanza, anglers who caught Coal Pile bass finished high in the standings although the winning fish came from far upstream on the final day of the three-day event. A Coal Pile bass weighing 7.16 pounds led the first two days. It was caught by Danny Sheeks of Stuttgart on a chartreuse Rat-L-Trap lure.

On the first morning of the Bonanza, contestant Mitch Miller of Dumas made nine quick casts, and seven minutes after the fishing started, he brought in 6.86-pound fish on Coal Pile. He used a Zara Spook, a topwater lure.

Near the end of the tournament, Brandon Rhoden of Grapevine landed a 6.98-pound bass, not on Coal Pile but on the Annex, an adjacent area. Rhoden caught his fish on a chrome Rat-L-Trap.

A number of smaller bass, many in the 4-pound and 5-pound range, came out of Coal Pile in the Big Bass Bonanza.

Coal Pile now is owned by the Game and Fish Commission after a 2008 transaction with a hunting club that owns surrounding land. The Commission specified that Coal Pile would be used for public fishing and for a waterfowl rest area. It is not to be open to hunting of any kind.

There is a problem with easy access to Coal Pile from the main river, as a sand bar at the entrance forces boaters who proceed with extreme caution or risk hanging up. Future plans include dredging at this entrance. There is a newly paved public boat access at the Pendleton bridge, and a motel and restaurant are nearby. A short distance to the east is a Corps of Engineers campground.

Meeting scheduled to address habitat improvement on Bull Shoals tailwater

BULL SHOALS - The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have entered into a cooperative agreement to place habitat improvement structures in a one mile section of the Bull Shoals tailwater immediately below Bull Shoals Dam.

The primary purpose of this project is to provide cover for young trout during periods of high flow. The work will be performed by Kesser International, Inc. of Little Rock and the project is expected to begin in early August. Work will be completed by Oct. 1 so that no disruption to the brown trout spawn occurs.

An informational meeting will be held on July 14 at 7 p.m. on the Arkansas State University campus in Mountain Home at the McMullan Lecture Hall. Representatives from the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will be available to answer any questions regarding the project and will present the plan for the project.



UALR to defend college bass national championship title on Arkansas River

NORTH LITTLE ROCK – Approximately 138 collegiate anglers from 69 colleges and universities across the country will be making their way to North Little Rock for the fifth annual Under Armour College Bass National Championship.

The University of Arkansas at Little Rock will be on hand to defend their national championship won last year on Lake Maumelle and a private lake near England. UALR's team of Jeremy Reese and Trent Gebhardt last year brought in a five-bass limit that weighed 21.24 pounds to easily outdistance their nearest competitor by almost 4 pounds.

This year, the collegiate anglers will be casting their lines for a chance at more than \$15,000 in scholarship monies and prizes. It will take place on the Arkansas River Friday, July 10-Sunday, July 12.

"In 2005 with only six sanctioned clubs and teams competing for the national title, we created College Bass to support bass fishing at the college club level," said Steve Levi, general manager of fishing properties at Career Sports & Entertainment, the agency that owns College Bass. "Now with nearly 70 competing teams and 170 sanctioned clubs, we're returning to Arkansas with the top anglers battling it out for bass-fishing supremacy in the challenging, but rewarding North Little Rock waters."



The best collegiate anglers in the country will compete for a chance to call themselves the 2009 national champions as well as nationally televised bragging rights since ESPNU will be airing this event Wednesday, Aug. 5 and Sunday, Aug. 9. Only one team per school can compete in this premier event. Participating schools must host College Bass-sanctioned qualifiers to select their representative team.

Anglers from each participating school will fish for large-mouth bass 15 inches or longer and spotted bass 12 inches or longer, with a five-fish limit. Teams will fish a standard three-day format, with the field narrowed down to the top five teams on the final day. Weights will then be zeroed, and the largest one-day total on Sunday's final day of competition will take the title.

All competitors have July 4-9 for official practice before the tournament competition gets under way on July 10. From there on out it's the best college bass anglers from campuses across the country battling it out for bass fishing superiority.

Tournament waters will be restricted to Arkansas River Pools 5-7.



Under Armour College Bass National Championship

When: Friday-Sunday, July 10-12
7:00 a.m. (morning launch)
3 p.m. (weigh-ins)

Where: North Little Rock River Landing (morning launch)
100 Riverfront Dr.
North Little Rock
Academy Sports + Outdoors (weigh-ins)
6100 Warden Rd
Sherwood

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

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. 8 – Reekie Gardner Jr. White River Bass Classic Tournament, team bass fishing (two people per team). Entry fee is \$65 per boat. Registration will be held at B & R Marine, 840 Batesville Blvd. in Batesville, Aug. 6-7, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. For more information, call (870) 793-8275.

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.

Aug. 22 – East Arkansas Chapter of Ducks Unlimited membership banquet, Southland Gaming and Racing Park in West Memphis. For more information contact Jason Rodgers at (870) 225-6642 or agoinc4450@aol.com.

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@uaccm.edu.

Sept. 12 – Jacksonville Chapter of Ducks Unlimited membership banquet, old Wal-Mart building in Jacksonville. For more information contact Matt Robinson at (501) 412-8055 or jacksonvilledu@aol.com.

Sept. 17 – North Little Rock Chapter of Ducks Unlimited membership banquet, Sherwood Forest in Sherwood. For more information contact Pat Mahan at (501) 743-6154 or northlittlerock@yahoo.com.

Sept. 26 – South Logan County Chapter of Ducks Unlimited membership banquet, 1st Baptist Church in Booneville. For more information contact Josh Boersma at (479) 518-4250 or boersma66@yahoo.com.

Oct. 5 – Benton County Chapter of Ducks Unlimited membership banquet, The Quail Barn in Bentonville. For more information contact Todd Etzel at (501) 613-1874 or toddetzel@sbcglobal.net or Blayne Estes at (479) 721-3394 or baestes@cox.net.

Nov. 3 – Marion Chapter of Ducks Unlimited membership banquet, The Greens at Marion Clubhouse in Marion. For more information contact Irwin Burton at (870) 739-3442 or redneck_squirrel@yahoo.com.

Nov. 19 – Phillips County Chapter of Ducks Unlimited membership banquet, Phillips County Community College in Helena-West Helena. For more information contact Jason Smith at (870) 995-6103 or jason6868@att.net.

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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