

Arkansas Game & Fish Commission

[Site Search](#)Keywords **FIND**

News

[HOME](#) » [News](#) » [Weekly E-Newsletter](#) » [Arkansas Outdoors Newsletter](#)

Arkansas Outdoors Weekly Newsletter

Arkansas Game and Fish Commission

Keith Stephens (501) 223-6342, e-mail: kastephens@agfc.state.ar.us

July 15, 2009 Edition

[Sign up to receive this newsletter via e-mail each week](#)

Today's Topics

- [Black leaves commission with emphasis on outdoor recreation and youth programs](#)
- [New law affecting teen boaters goes into effect July 31](#)
- [Youths compete in Junior Olympic qualifier](#)
- [Hot weather doesn't have to mean a lack of fishing](#)
- [Effective use of jigs improves angling successes](#)
- [Boating education class schedule](#)
- [Hunter education class schedule](#)
- [What's open for hunting](#)
- [Coming up in the outdoors](#)

Black leaves commission with emphasis on outdoor recreation and youth programs

LAKE VILLAGE - Freddie Black's tenure on the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission ended July 1, but his work fulfilling the agency's mission—to wisely manage Arkansas' fish and wildlife resources while providing maximum enjoyment for the people—will be felt for years to come.

Black, Chairman and CEO of Simmons First Bank of South Arkansas, was appointed to the Commission in 2002, replacing former commissioner Marion McCollum of Stuttgart. In his last year, Black's leadership capabilities were demonstrated when he supervised AGFC's leases with Chesapeake Energy for drilling rights on Gulf Mountain and Petit Jean wildlife management areas, producing \$32 million to fund numerous conservation programs, facility renovations and new projects. Through the gas lease funds, AGFC purchased the \$2.12 million Wallace Land Trust near Arkansas City in Desha County. The land covers over 1,800 acres of wildlife habitat near Choctaw Island WMA. The original purchase of Choctaw Island WMA is now know as the East Unit and the Wallace Trust land is as the West Unit of the WMA.

A lifelong hunter and angler, Black strived to represent outdoor-enthusiasts on a number of fronts. He especially supported youth involvement in outdoor programs like Archery in Schools and the Arkansas Youth Shooting Sports Program, which has experienced exploding growth from 900 students in its first year to a current 4,000 students. The Arkansas Youth Shooting Sports Program has expanded



into a partnership with USA Shooting, resulting in a development camp for exemplary youth shooting athletes from Arkansas. Black also advanced efforts for youth to enjoy more hunting and fishing excursions. Regarding waterfowl hunting, Black pushed to end the ban on using spinning-wing decoys, and supported increasing the daily bag limit on mallard hens from one to two.

During Black's tenure, the Witt Stephens Jr. Central Arkansas Nature Center in Little Rock opened to the public, delivering nature to an urban audience. The facility is situated along the Arkansas River near the Riverfest Amphitheatre in downtown Little Rock.

From the very beginning, Black served AGFC using his passion for the outdoors as a guidepost for decision-making, increasing outdoor opportunities for Arkansans within the context of conservation.

New law affecting teen boaters goes into effect July 31

LITTLE ROCK – "Rachel's Law," will take effect July 31 instead of July 10 as had been previously thought. The final adjournment of the 2009 session was on May 1. An act without an emergency clause or a specific effective date becomes effective on the 91st day after adjournment of the legislative session in which the act was passed.

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.

The law raises the minimum age to 16 years for individuals to legally operate a personal watercraft alone. Previously, the minimum age had been 14 years to operate a personal watercraft, which includes Jet Skis, Sea-Doos and WaveRunners.

Wildlife officers with the AGFC have not issued any tickets to violators, only warnings have been given at this time.

Boat operators between 12 and 15 years of age may operate a personal watercraft only when accompanied by an individual at least 18 years old who was born after 1985 or has a valid boating education certificate. Additionally, the accompanying person must be in position to take immediate control of the vessel.

Boat operators under age 12 may operate a personal watercraft only if accompanied by an individual at least 21 years old who was born after 1985 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 1985 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 starting 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.



Youths compete in Junior Olympic qualifier

LONOKE - Hundreds of youth shooters competed June 26, 27, and 28 in the first annual Arkansas Junior Olympic Qualifier Tournament, a foretaste of summer competitions and camps aimed to develop a new competitive standard in Arkansas.

"These international competitions place Arkansas on the map," said Chuck Woodson, AGFC Arkansas Youth Shooting Sports Coordinator. "If Arkansas youth shooters compete well at the international level, they could potentially compete in the 2012 Olympics."

The Arkansas Junior Olympic Qualifier Tournament hosted 202 youth who shot in International Trap form, a challenging twist on standard American Trap. In comparison with American Trap, shooters competing under International Trap encounter several differences, which include: clay targets are shot at speeds roughly twice as fast from unknown angles and heights, and they can travel over 85 yards whereas American Trap targets soar roughly 50 yards, among other differences.



The 10 top-scoring individuals of this tournament will receive all-expenses-paid attendance at a Junior Olympic Development Shotgun Training Camp, set for August 20-23 at the U.S. Olympic Training

Center in Colorado Springs, Colo. Starting with the top scorer, these individuals are Wesley Wilcox, Greenbrier High School; Nick Adams, Genoa FFA; Ethan Pruitt, Searcy Clay Dusters; Hunter Gallant, Batesville Pioneers; Tyler Hartsfield, Pangburn Shooting Team; William Gathright, Scrapper Traps; Kyle Johnson, Green Forest; Alec Bolin, Russellville; Bryce Holwick, Greenwood Bulldogs; and Josh Hall, Mt. Ida FFA. The next fourteen scorers in line are eligible to attend but must pay for attendance expenses.

"Since the Arkansas Youth Sports Shooting Program is the largest program in the nation, USA Shooting offered to host our own development camp," Woodson said. "We're breaking ground, especially when you consider that the other existing development camps only host individuals from across the country, much less a group of participants from one state."

Additionally, if athletes competing in the Arkansas Junior Olympic Qualifier Tournament hit 105 targets out of 125 attempts, they became eligible to compete in the National Junior Olympic Tournament, to be held July 24-26 in Colorado Springs, Colo. Woodson said about 20 Arkansas youth will compete in this tournament.

"This [Junior Olympic qualifier tournament] is the first step towards making an Olympic team," said Mike Bonds, assistant chief of the AGFC Education and Outreach Division.

Arkansas' highly successful shooting program stems from the committed individuals involved.

"We have so many volunteer coaches—454 coaches and assistant coaches from 65 counties," Woodson said. "Our program wouldn't be anything without all the coaches and athletes."

Hot weather doesn't have to mean a lack of fishing

LITTLE ROCK - Hot weather fishing, after anglers get past the inaccurate viewpoint of "fish don't bite when it's this hot," can be much more productive if they keep a few basics in mind.

Fishermen at the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission said, yes, it's hot a little ahead of schedule this year, and it's uncomfortable out there in the middle of the day or really, from mid-morning until dark. That still leaves two-thirds of the day and night for fishing, although few fishermen want to be on a lake or river in the really late hours.

So one basic to keep in mind is fish are cold-blooded creatures, meaning they adjust their activities in part according to body temperatures, which are closely tied to the water temperatures. In cold water, fish slow down their movements. They speed up in normal or warm water, but in hot water, fish tend to be lethargic.

They are less likely to dash for a bait. But they still eat, and they still will hit a bait or lure. They just do it somewhat in slow motion.

For the fisherman, this means try a technique of slowly working the lure. Slow down a spinner bait until the blades barely turn. Don't zip that topwater across the surface, but work it slowly with pauses between movements. Retrieve a crank bait just enough so it maintains the depth you want.

One tactic that has been around for years is to try scent concoctions on your baits in hot weather. Give 'em a good dose of Fish Formula or whatever you choose, and this little added touch may be enough to get a sluggish fish into action instead of just looking at the nearby offering you dangle before it.

Work in the shade, too. This is where the fish will probably be. They don't like bright, hot sun any more than you do.



Effective use of jigs improves angling successes

LITTLE ROCK - Jigs are tried and true utensils for catching fish of many species in Arkansas, from trout requiring tiny jigs to lead-heavy ones used for striped bass.

In crappie fishing, many of Arkansas's better crappie anglers use only jigs. They wouldn't touch a live minnow with the proverbial 10-foot pole. These folks catch a heck of a lot of crappie, often when others strike out. Still, don't interpret this as meaning jigs are superior to minnows for crappie fishing. Good strings of crappie continue to be caught on live minnows, according to Arkansas Game and Fish Commission observers.

One form of jigs, whether using plastic skirts or trailers or using hair or feathers, is the micro jig. These are the little ones. Very little.

Micro jigs in most fishermen's understanding means those weighing 1/16th of an ounce or less. That includes 1/32nd-ounce, 1/64th-ounce,



and – believe it or not -- 1/128th-ounce jigs.

The very small jigs, the micro type, tend to be associated with trout fishing, but they will work at times on crappie, bream and other species, even largemouth bass.

Professional bass fishermen, at least most of them, usually have a handful of small jigs in one of their tackle boxes. These tend to be 1/8th-ounce in weight, but sometimes the pros will work with 1/16th-ounce. Trouble with them is they are difficult to cast with standard bass fishing reels.

For those fishermen not in the professional bass ranks, micro jigs can be fished with ultralight spinning rigs, including 2-pound or 4-pound line. They also do well with fly rods.

There isn't a discernible time when these tiny jigs should be brought into action unless it falls into the "match the hatch" technique fly fishermen use with trout.

The same game plan can work with bream. Find them dimpling the surface, feeding on small insects, and a micro jig might be just the ticket to get bream hitting for you.

It won't work all the time, but it's a technique worth keeping in mind and gearing up for.

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 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.

© 2009, Arkansas Game & Fish Commission. All Rights Reserved.

2 Natural Resources Drive - Little Rock, AR 72205 - (800) 364-4263 - (501) 223-6300 - www.agfc.com
[Aristotle Web Design Services](#)