

CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

HUNTING SEASON

GUIDE

Harvest Data
Big Rivers WMA
Choosing the
Right License
Coyote Hunting
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Where to Find
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Season Dates

FALL - WINTER 2014
CRITTENDEN COUNTY
KENTUCKY

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

It's all about management and habitat

BY MARK WILLIAMS

WHITETAIL TROPHY PROPERTIES

Kentucky is not a sleeper state anymore! With multiple bucks being taken each year over 200 inches, and the state recently having been ranked No. 1 in the country for Boone & Crockett entries in 2012, you can't label Kentucky a sleeper state any longer!

Several things have played a role in Kentucky climbing the ladder as one of the top-producing trophy states in the country. I could talk all day about all of those different factors, but the one I really want to discuss is habitat.

The success of the state is not just in western Kentucky. We are seeing huge deer being harvested all over the state. In fact, there have only been four of the 120 counties in the state that have not put at least one B&C buck in the record books from 2006-12. Quality Deer Management (QDM) has changed the state and changed it for the better.

The thing about QDM is that it has encouraged hunters to stop harvesting juvenile males – allowing bucks to grow older, thus creating a better age structure. If you look at annual harvest data put out by the state, the average age of bucks taken is getting older statewide. You cannot harvest trophy deer if you don't let them get old, that is just a cold hard fact.

However, what has really improved across the state, and is driven by QDM, is that landowners and those hunters leasing land have created better habitat on their properties. Habitat is one of the four corners of QDM and hunters have taken it to heart!

I deal with selling hunting land every day. It's all I do. The properties that I sell that crank out big deer every year all have two things in common. First, the hunters do *not* harvest juvenile bucks, period. Second, all of these properties have excellent habitat that deer thrive in. It is like the quote in the movie *Field of Dreams*, "Build it and they will come." Deer love a property with a diverse habitat that provides them with plenty of cover and a year-round food supply. The key to developing any property is to spend more time looking at what the



Author Mark Williams is an authorized agent for Whitetail Trophy Properties. See more about his company on page 19.

properties around yours offer, and then putting what those neighbors lack on your property. It has been my experience that most farms lack abundant cover. A great deer hunting property has a tremendous amount of cover where whitetails can bed. In a lot of cases, cover serves a dual role – it not only provides deer bedding and security, but it gives them a source of highly-nutritious food as well. Most early successional growth is an excellent source of deer food that is highly nutritional. I bet you didn't know that poke-weed is just as digestible and nutritious to a deer as soybeans. So is ragweed, beggar's lice, and the list could go on and on. All the

things you see in that overgrown field and in that cut-over timber has tremendous nutritional value, in addition to cover for the whitetail. Having dense cover aids the whitetail in fighting off predation from coyotes and bobcats. It makes it harder for those predators to find fawns, therefore helping the recruitment rate.

So, as you can see, cover plays a big role in the development and success of your deer herd.

Food is another key part to having an excellent habitat and developing a healthy deer herd.

Keeping a high plane of nutrition plays a huge role in a healthy deer herd. Healthy does tend to breed earlier in the season, meaning fawns are born earlier and have a higher chance of surviving the winter. A higher percentage of doe fawns get bred at one year of age instead of being two-year-olds. Not to mention, it helps grow larger racks on mature bucks. If a buck has a high plane of nutrition and comes through winter in better body condition, when spring green-up hits, then he can put more energy into growing antlers.

So, making sure that your property has adequate acreage dedicated to food and keeping a year-round supply plays an important part in not only growing deer but holding and attracting them to your property.

The landowner that has the food in the late winter owns the deer, especially, if we have a rough winter like last year. If you

have tillable land on your property, I would suggest 3-5 percent of your acreage needs to be in food. For those without tillable ground, it needs to be more like 8-10 percent of your acreage.

This is not as hard as it seems and not nearly as costly as you might think. Remember our discussion about cover? Well, if you convert parts of your property to early successional growth you not only get the cover but you get free food for a large portion of the year. So, do some TSI (Timber Stand Improvement) on your property to open the canopy to create early successional areas in the timber.

You can also take part of a crop or pasture field and convert it to early successional. It is much cheaper to develop early successional growth than it is buying seed, chemical, fertilizer and maintaining food plots. These early successional areas give your farm more cover and they provide a high plane of nutrition. By doing this you will increase the carrying capacity of your farm. When you combine that with not harvesting juvenile bucks, the magic will start to happen.

Most properties are a 3-5-year work-in-progress. I know our farm took about four years before we started to see the age structure in bucks that we were looking for. Now, we have multiple shooter bucks each year that are 4.5 years of age, or older. The improved habitat, low hunting pressure and high plane of nutrition

have given the deer no reason to move away from the property. Plus, we have recruited several deer from neighboring properties.

Think about habitat when you are looking to improve your property. Don't look at it through human eyes; think like a deer. Try to understand what is attractive to a deer. I will guarantee humans and deer see things differently! Deer don't like properties that look like state parks with fully developed canopies where you can see 100 or more yards through the timber.

Kentucky is not just about bourbon and horses anymore. The secret is out about the high-quality whitetail hunting this state has to offer. By allowing bucks to move into older age classes and continuing to improve our habitat, the commonwealth will continue to stay that way. For deer, it always has been and always will be about habitat. If given a choice, deer will always choose the higher-quality habitat with an abundance of cover and high-preference food.

Happy hunting!

The Crittenden Outdoors Hunting Season Guide was designed and published by The Crittenden Press, Inc., at 125 East Bellville Street, Marion, Ky. Contact our office at 270-965-3191.

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

Crittenden County
DEER HARVESTS

1993	2,357
1994	1,826
1995	1,857
1996	2,065
1997	1,874
1998	2,728
1999	2,201
2000	2,597
2001	2,272
2002	2,695
2003	2,586
2004	3,032
2005	2,593
2006	3,085
2007	2,927
2008	2,707
2009	2,549
2010	2,952
2011	2,829
2012	3,010
2013	3,033



Bucky, the stuffed whitetail at Marion Welcome Center, draws plenty of visitors who want to see a real life buck up close. The center is open weekdays inside Marion Commons in the same building as city hall and the police department. Pictured here is Marion Tourism Director Michele Edwards (left) and Crittenden County Chamber of Commerce Director Susan Alexander setting the mounted buck up in the front room of the tourist center. The center has maps and other information that will help tourists find their way around the county. Maps of the Amish community are very popular and can direct visitors to various shops and attractions.

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2013-14 Deer Harvest Results

County	Bucks	Does	Bows	Rifle	M'loader	C'bow	Total
Crittenden	1,543	1,490	469	2,295	232	37	3,033
Webster	1,146	1,082	296	1,763	140	29	2,228
Livingston	963	774	203	1,355	154	25	1,737
Caldwell	903	741	209	1,287	121	27	1,644
Union	547	459	243	684	71	8	1,006
Lyon	400	324	191	469	43	21	724

KDFWR Statistics

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

Three years on trail of monster buck pays off for Fredonia gunner

For years, Fredonia's Kevin Chambliss has taken good bucks, but never before had he sighted in on something like his monster 12-pointer that won 2013-14's Crittenden County Big Buck Contest sponsored by Hodge Outdoor Sports and the Marion Tourism Commission.

"This is by far my biggest buck ever," said 39-year-old Chambliss. "I've tried for years to harvest a buck that would break the gross 160 Boone and Crockett mark with no luck."

He'd been close, taking a 151, 154 and 156 in years past. He knew that 160 milestone could be eclipsed by a buck he'd encountered for the first time in 2011. He was pretty sure the buck – at that time – was a three-and-a-half-year-old basic eight pointer with a couple of stickers on the G2.

"He would've been a great buck to harvest, but I could tell he still had some growing to do," Chambliss said. "My next encounter with the buck was during the 2012 deer season. He had grown quite a bit and would've likely flirted with the 160 mark."

Problem was, he'd already tagged out with a 138-class nine-pointer in bow season.

"I tried during the entire 2012 rifle season to get my wife or daughter a shot at the big buck. My wife came close to dropping the hammer on him. We had the buck broadside at 80 yards for only a few seconds before he turned and walked directly away from us," Chambliss recalls.

Not having a good shot at the deer moving away from her, his wife didn't pull the trigger. Their hearts sank minutes later when



Kevin Chambliss harvested this big 12-pointer and captured first place in the 2013-14 Big Buck Contest sponsored by Hodge Outdoor Sports and Marion Tourism. Register at Hodge's on Sturgis Road.

they heard a close shot just over the ridge.

Despite missing their chance, Chambliss said he and his wife never second-guessed the deci-

sion not to take an unethical shot. After neither seeing the deer again from the stand nor getting him on a trail camera that season, Chambliss figured the deer was

gone, probably hanging on someone else's wall.

Fortunately, though, he got an-

See **TROPHY**/page 9

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When planning your hunt, don't forget camp safety

Ah, nature. Besides the mosquitoes and dew-laden mornings, nothing says fall like a getaway to the great outdoors.

As you wind down from the stress of packing up and driving to the cottage, campsite or hunting getaway, the CSA Group, a leader in testing and certification, wants to remind you to stay safe with these tips.

Cottages

- Make sure that certified carbon monoxide (CO) and smoke alarms are properly installed outside all sleeping areas.

- When opening your cottage for the season, carefully inspect all appliances and electrical cords for damage from rodents or insects. Check gas lines for any loose valves or leaks.

- Ensure cottages are equipped with proper emergency safety equipment, including first aid kits and fire extinguishers.

CO and Smoke Alarms

- Carbon monoxide is a silent killer. To prevent CO poisoning, fuel-burning equipment should only be used in well-ventilated areas.

- Test each unit at least once a month because the threat doesn't take a vacation.

- Change the batteries at least twice a year. A good routine is to change them every year the day before opening of deer season.

- Be sure to use the correct type of batteries.

- Follow the manufacturer's detailed operating instructions.

Camping stoves and lanterns

- Fuel-burning equipment such as stoves, lanterns and cookers should only be lit outdoors and at least nine feet from tents, combustible materials and vehicles.

- Before use, carefully inspect parts for leaks, blockages or damage.



Whether it's a hunting cabin or around an open campfire, safety should be first priority. Remember, camps are generally idle for most of the year. Make sure everything is in working order before your relaxing stay begins.



- Keep flammable clothing (and eyebrows) away from open flames, and carefully monitor children and pets around fuel burning devices.

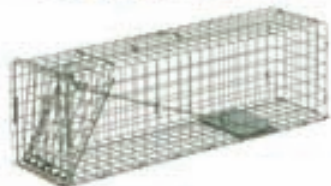
- Before packing up equipment, make sure it is completely turned off and cool to the touch.

Have a great season – and don't forget the bug spray.

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

Last year's deer harvest reaches new state record

KDFWR REPORT

A year after establishing an overall deer harvest record, Kentucky hunters did it again.

The 2013-14 deer season in Kentucky ended Jan. 20 with a total harvest of 144,404 animals. That represents a gain of more than 9 percent over the previous record set during the 2012-13 season.

"This year we were ahead of the curve," said David Yancy, deer biologist with the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources. "Hunters harvested more deer in September than they ever had, the October youth weekend was the best it had been since 2008, there was a slightly better than average muzzleloader season and then modern gun season was way better than it normally is. It sort of held throughout."

A spotty crop of acorns and other hard mast across Kentucky had deer on the move, and made them more vulnerable to hunters.

An increase of about 9,000 deer permits sold — about one-third of those coming through youth sportsman's licenses — also meant there were more hunters in the field.

"The poor acorn crop was a major factor in getting those deer out into the open and into the harvested corn fields and the food plots," said Tina Brunjes, deer program coordinator with Kentucky Fish and Wildlife. "The weather during the modern gun season and during the muzzleloader season was not as wonderful as it was last season, but we didn't have any epic ice storms or some sort of huge flood. Hunters were able to get out."

Harvest totals for firearms, archery, muzzleloading and crossbow were up across the board. A record 104,619 deer were taken by firearms hunters. Archery hunters harvested 20,833 white-tails while muzzleloader hunters bagged 15,641 deer and crossbow hunters reported taking 3,311 deer.

MOST COMMON GAME VIOLATIONS

KDFWR officials say these are the most common violations made during hunting season.

1. Not filling out back of hunting license.
2. Failure to call KDFWR Telecheck system.
3. Trespassing.
4. Failure to wear appropriate hunter orange.

Male deer accounted for nearly 54 percent of the deer harvested. Out of the 77,719 male deer taken, 9,962 were antlerless, according to telecheck data.

Three of the top five counties in terms of estimated deer densities produced the top harvest totals. Hunters in Owen County took 4,069 whitetails to lead the state followed by Pendleton County with 3,464 and Crittenden County with 3,033.

Kentucky's deer herd was estimated at approximately 900,000 prior to the season. Herd estimates are derived through computer modeling that takes into account harvest and age structure data.

Brunjes tempered her expectations for this past season, thinking it might be average compared to the record harvest of 131,395 deer posted in 2012-13.

"We ended up with a huge, record-breaking year," she said.

After a second record harvest in as many seasons, deer are looking at a landscape that has more to offer, Brunjes said.

"The potential is there for the does that make it through this cold winter to have really high fawning success, and those bucks that make it through this cold winter, they're going to be the best of the best," she said. "If we can get a good spring, we might not see the numbers next year, but we'll see a lot of quality deer out there."

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

Buck on script for great hunt

Youth's .25-06 true for contest winner

It's an amazing storyline for the Chambliss family of Fredonia. Father Kevin Chambliss won the grand prize in 2013-14's Hodge Outdoor Sports Crittenden County Big Buck Contest and his son Jacob harvested the biggest buck and captured top prize in the contest's youth division.

"This has been a great deer hunting year for my young'uns," said Kevin Chambliss. "We were getting pictures over a mineral lick all summer long of a good looking 10-pointer that was running with a nice eight-pointer."

His boys – Jacob, 12, and Logan, 9 – had gone hunting often with their father during archery season with no luck at bagging either buck.

"As the big bucks always do, they turned nocturnal shortly after bow season started," dad said. "We continued to get pictures of the 10-pointer, but almost never during daylight hours."

Fast forward nearly two months to an evening hunt during rifle season. Jennifer, the mom, and youngest son, Logan, sat together in a ground blind at one end of a large, unharvested soybean field not too far from Shady Grove. Jacob and dad sat together in a ground blind at the opposite end of the same field approximately 400 yards away from the other two. They knew the field was being frequented by several does and small bucks.

"At 3:45 p.m., my wife and Logan noticed a big buck making his way out of a section of woods directly behind the blind Jacob and I were in. It was the 10 pointer. He made his way past their blind and into the woods behind them, offering them a perfect broadside shot at less than 50 yards," said the father.

"My wife decided not to shoot the buck hoping it would somehow make its way back out into the field and present Jacob a shot. Logan couldn't shoot the buck because he was lucky enough to have taken a nice eight-pointer during the youth rifle season."

As if he had read the script, the buck reappeared to the right of the blind and walked out into the bean field.

"Jacob and I were unaware of the encounter my wife and Logan had just experienced and we were totally unaware the buck was heading our way," Kevin recalled.

Staying in touch with modern communications devices has made hunting as a family even more meaningful as each blind's observances can be shared with the other. Finally, the phone rang.

"Jacob and I were watching a small buck chase a couple of does around our end of the field when I felt my phone buzz. It was a text from my wife saying: Big buck coming your way!"

Jacob began glassing the field to find the buck, which was following a drainage ditch up the middle of the field directly toward him. At 200 yards, the buck started making his way toward the other deer that had earlier arrived in the soybean field.

"When he got to them, he laid

See **SCRIPT**/page 10



Twelve-year-old Jacob Chambliss took this nice 10-pointer last year and won the Youth Big Buck Contest sponsored by Hodge Outdoor Sports and Marion Tourism. Register at Hodge's on Sturgis Road.

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

TROPHY

Continued from page 4

other shot.

"My next encounter with the big 12-pointer was on a morning hunt during the 2013 rifle season. Deer were definitely moving that morning. I saw several small bucks chasing does and two decent 3½-year-old bucks cruising the field edges," he recounted.

He left his deer stand and headed to the pickup after a nice morning's hunt, but still holding his buck tag.

"A doe suddenly crossed in front of me with a huge buck on her tail. I knew when I saw him that he was the big buck from the years before," said Chambliss.

The deer ran into a large thicket and Chambliss continued quietly to his truck, hoping not to run them out of the thicket and into the path of another hunter.

"I had no pics of the buck this year and knew he wasn't spending much time on the property. My only hope was that he'd stay with his newfound love long enough for me to close the distance on him," he said.

Unable to hunt that afternoon or the next morning due to other obligations, Chambliss didn't know if

he'd ever see the big bruiser again. Almost 36 hours passed before he got back into the woods.

"I finally made it to the farm only 45 minutes before dark. I made it to my stand with high hopes of seeing the buck, but as the sun began to set with no sign of him, I worried that he might have already moved off the farm. Just when I had given up and decided to still hunt my way back to the truck, a doe stood up out of a small woolly depression in the

field and behind her was my buck," he said.

The hunter had apparently walked past the bedded deer on his way in to the stand.

With one shot to the front, right shoulder, the big buck hit the ground.

"His body was much bigger than I had thought. Though I was excited about my harvest, I felt like an era had ended and couldn't help but take a few moments to thank God for allowing me to have

the opportunity to hunt such a magnificent creature," Chambliss said.

The tall, 12-point rack had long beams and plenty of character. It's rough, gross score was around 165 B&C.

As it turned out, the hooves on the buck were in the process of coming off and is a sign of having contracted EHD sometime during the late summer-early fall. Chambliss thinks the disease may have eventually claimed the deer later



in the winter.

"I truly believe God blessed me with this buck instead of allowing nature to take its course," he said.

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

SCRIPT

Continued from page 7

his ears back and began posturing to the smaller buck, running him off," Kevin explained. "The 10-pointer then walked over to the does and stopped for a second."

Jacob steadied his .25-06 on his shooting sticks and whispered, "I'm on him, dad."

"I said, 'Whenever you're ready, buddy,'" said the father.

The next few seconds seemed like an eternity as Jacob carefully squeezed off one round from his deer rifle. The shot was perfectly placed in the deer's front shoulder and soon Jacob was admiring the 10-pointer he'd been watching on trail cameras since summer.

"We hugged, high-fived and had an awesome father and son moment that every dad needs to experience at least once in his life," said the proud dad. "The look on his face when he walked up to the biggest buck he has ever taken a shot at will forever be etched in my mind."

Mom and younger brother had watched the entire hunt unfold and were able to share in the excitement of Jacob harvesting the nearly 130 Boone and Crockett buck.



This fall's youth deer hunt is Oct. 11-12. Hunters 15 and under may participate with an appropriate license. There is a free youth deer hunt Dec. 27-28. Both hunts are for either sex animals.

"I'm so blessed to have a family that enjoys spending time in the outdoors with me," Kevin said.

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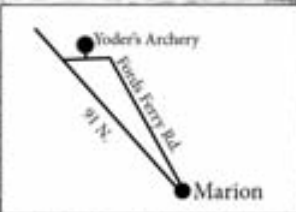


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CARCASS DISPOSAL

Hunters need to know the proper way to dispose of their deer carcass after processing. Leaving the remains on the property where you harvested the deer is the best disposal method. If you are hunting on another person's property, ask the landowner where you can dispose of the deer's carcass and offer to bury it. Respect the landowner's wishes. Deer hunters should never throw deer remains alongside the road or onto someone else's property without permission.

Disposing of it on the side of the road is not a good idea, it is littering. This practice makes hunters look bad. Nobody wants to see or smell a deer carcass. Be considerate of others. Just because you've taken a deer, that doesn't mean it's over. Disposing of the carcass is part of the process of deer hunting.



Teach young hunters early the proper way to care for and dispose of a deer carcass and they will carry that knowledge into adulthood and pass it along to others.

Hunters for the Hungry chapter here

Crittenden County has an active Hunters for the Hungry chapter. Venison donated to the organization helps feed people right here in this county. The meat is distributed through the Crittenden County Food Bank, the fourth Friday of each month.

Hunters for the Hungry will pay for processing of the animal. The participating Hunters for the Hungry processor in Crittenden County is Family Butcher Shop on Rooster Lane of Ky. 654 North in the Amish community near Mattoon.

This year, Hunters for the Hungry has launched a new program aimed at matching landowners needing deer depredation help with hunters willing to harvest those animals and donate them to the food bank. It is called The Kentucky Whitetail Access Program. More information can be found at http://kyhuntersforthehungry.info/whitetail_access.html.

For more information on the Hunters for the Hungry program, go online to <http://kyhuntersforthehungry.info/processors.html>.

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

Make sure you have correct license and permits for game you're after

Requirements to secure a hunting license vary depending on where a hunter lives. Different states, counties and even countries have their own rules, and hunters must adhere to these specific rules in order to secure their licenses in time for hunting season.

As different as rules can be from state to state, there are certain ways hunters can make the licensing process go more smoothly regardless of where they live.

- Determine which type of hunting you will be doing. Before applying for a license, determine where you will be hunting and which species of animals you hope to hunt. Different animals typically require different permits, so hunters can do themselves a favor and expedite the process by pinpointing the animals they hope to hunt before applying.

- Determine how licenses are issued. Depending on where you live, your state or municipality might have a website detailing each step of the licensing

process. If not, visit a nearby sporting goods or outdoor shop like Hodge's in Marion and ask a member of the shop's staff if they can help with the process. An outdoor shop is often a great source of information and is likely to make the process much easier to understand.

- Determine if you're eligible for any discounts. Some hunters are eligible for discounts, while others might be charged more. Many states offer discounted rates to their own residents and might even extend those discounts to seniors, youths and military personnel. However, many states charge out-of-state hunters more. Do some research ahead of time to determine your eligibility for discounts or if your status will garner more fees.

- Buy only what you need. Hunters who can only get out to hunt for one day should only seek a one-day license. Such licenses are less expensive and available for many different types of hunting.

LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

KENTUCKY RESIDENTS

Deer

Ages 12-15

Youth Hunting License + Youth Deer Permit

Ages 16-64

Annual Hunting License + Statewide Deer Permit

Ages 65+/Disability

Senior/Disabled License

Fall Turkey

Ages 12-15

Youth Hunting License + Youth Turkey Permit

Ages 16-64

Annual Hunting License + Fall Turkey Permit

Ages 65+/Disability

Senior/Disabled License

Small Game & Furbearer

Ages 12-15

Youth Hunting License

Ages 16-64

Annual or 1-Day Hunting License

Ages 65+/Disability

Senior/Disabled License

Trapping

Ages 12-15

Annual Youth Trapping License

Ages 16-64

Annual or Landowner/Tenant Trapping License

Ages 65+/Disability

Annual or Landowner/Tenant Trapping License

Migratory Birds

(dove, snipe, woodcock, moorhens, rails and gallinules)

Ages 12-15

Youth Hunting License

Ages 16-64

Annual or 1-Day Hunting License + Migratory Game Bird-Waterfowl Permit

Ages 65+/Disability

Senior/Disabled License

Waterfowl

(ducks, geese, coots and mergansers)

Ages 12-15

Youth Hunting License

Ages 16-64

Annual or 1-Day Hunting License + Migratory Game Bird-Waterfowl Permit + Federal Duck Stamp

Ages 65+/Disability

Senior/Disabled License + Federal Duck Stamp

NON-RESIDENTS

(Must buy non-resident licenses/permits)

Deer

Ages 12-15

Youth Hunting License + Youth Deer Permit

Ages 16 and over

Annual Hunting License + Statewide Deer Permit

Fall Turkey

Ages 12-15

Youth Hunting License + Youth Turkey Permit

Ages 16 and over

Annual Hunting License + Fall Turkey Permit

Small Game & Furbearer

Ages 12-15

Youth Hunting License

Ages 16 and over

Annual, 1-Day or 7-Day Hunting License

Trapping

Ages 12-15

Annual Trapping License

Ages 16 and over

Annual Trapping License



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Local hunter makes magazine covergirl

At the age of 17, Katie Davies is already making a name for herself as an outdoors enthusiast.

Davies was featured on Kentucky Outdoors Magazine's August cover. A senior at Crittenden County High School, Davies competes in archery tournaments and has been hunting since she was 9 years old.

Davies said it was an honor to be featured in the magazine. The big buck shown with her on the cover was the second one she had ever taken. While on the hunt, it was a surprise when the buck came into view, she said. Moments earlier, several other deer had been spooked away. Then suddenly, the buck showed up within 18 yards of her position.

"The experience was awesome because it was the first day of the season," she said. "We had that buck patterned all summer long."

Hunting allows Davies to appreciate the sights and sounds of nature. She credits her love of hunting to her parents who also enjoy the sport. "I got really hooked after my first doe hunt. I got so excited. My heart raced and all that good stuff that you get when you're in a tree stand. I just couldn't stop hunting after that," she said.

Davies said competitive archery is equally exhilarating. She has competed across the Southeast in states such as Georgia, Florida, Louisiana and Texas.



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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

Big Rivers WMA is available for public hunting

Big Rivers Wildlife Management Area and State Forest between Sturgis and Marion is open for public hunting. It officially opened last fall just in time for the quota deer hunt.

This wildlife management area totals 6,812 acres of fields and woodlands at the confluence of the Ohio and Tradewater rivers in Union and Crittenden counties.

No special permit is required for entry. However, there is a quota on deer during the rifle season.

"This area offers excellent deer, turkey and squirrel hunting, plus excellent hiking and wildlife viewing opportunities," said Scott Harp, regional wildlife coordinator for the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources. "We also have several habitat projects currently planned to enhance quail and rabbit hunting."

The wildlife management area (WMA) is open under statewide regulations for squirrel, rabbit, quail, furbearer and fall turkey seasons. However, there is a special quota drawing for rifle deer hunts. That is the only opportunity for rifle hunting for deer on the WMA, except for free youth seasons in October and December.

Big Rivers WMA and State Forest is otherwise open for archery/crossbow deer season (except during the quota hunt) and is open for the free youth weekend hunt in December.

While the area offers adequate parking, some of the road infrastructure is still under evaluation and development. Maps of the area are available online at fw.ky.gov. Click the maps and on-line services tab, then the wildlife management areas tab. Boat-in access to interior areas is allowed.

The area is jointly operated by the Kentucky Division of Forestry and Kentucky Fish and Wildlife.

The Nature Conservancy, The Conservation Fund, The Forest-land Group, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Kentucky Heritage Land



Access Big Rivers WMA from State Route 365 North.

Conservation Fund, U.S. Forest Service's Forest Legacy Program, Indiana Bat Conservation Fund and the Stream Mitigation Fund were instrumental in acquiring the property for permanent protection.

Big Rivers WMA and State Forest also will be managed for the protection of watershed and water quality, the security and recovery of endangered, threatened and rare species, and the preservation of existing cultural and geological treasures.



View Map Online

http://fw.ky.gov/More/Documents/BigRiversWMA_and_StateForest_all.pdf

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

Questions & Answers about KY deer hunting

BY ART LANDER JR.
KENTUCKY AFIELD

Modern gun season for deer, the highlight of the fall hunting calendar, opens Saturday, Nov. 8 and runs through Nov. 23.

Hunters often wonder about rules and regulations concerning deer hunting. Here are some FAQs (frequently asked questions) about Kentucky's most popular big game hunting season:

Q: Does modern gun season for deer open on Nov. 8 every year?

A: No. It opens statewide on the second Saturday in November.

The actual date changes annually due to calendar shift.

Q: How long is modern gun season open?

A: Kentucky's 120 counties are divided into four deer management zones. Counties in Zones 1-2 have a 16-day season and there's a 10-day season in the counties of Zones 3-4.

Q: How many bucks can a hunter take during modern gun season?

A: All hunters have a bag limit of one antlered deer per season, no matter what they hunt with (modern gun, bow, crossbow, or muzzleloader), or the seasons they choose to hunt.

Q: How many antlerless deer (does) can a hunter take during modern gun season?

A: In the Zone 1 counties, hunters may take an unlimited number of antlerless deer. There's no "daily" bag limit on deer. In Zones 2-4, the combined bag limit for all deer seasons is four deer. Hunters are reminded that in the Zone 4 counties, antlerless deer may not be taken during modern gun season.

Q: How do hunters check in the deer they take during modern gun season?

A: Hunters now have three Telecheck options: The first is to call (800) CHK-GAME (245-4263). The second and third options are online. Visit the department's website at fw.ky.gov from a home computer or laptop, or a phone with a web browser, and follow the prompts. All deer taken in Kentucky must be Telechecked.

Q: Can hunters use archery gear or muzzleloaders during modern gun season for deer?

A: Yes; any legal rifle, handgun, bow, crossbow or muzzleloader

may be used. All deer hunters must wear hunter orange clothing and must follow all firearm season restrictions, zone guidelines and other hunting requirements.

Q: A 30-year old resident who is new to hunting wants to know what license and permits are required for modern gun deer season. A co-worker invited him to hunt on their family's farm.

A: Kentucky residents must purchase an annual hunting license and deer permit. Additionally, anyone born on or after Jan. 1, 1975 must carry a valid hunter education course completion card while hunting. Anyone hunting for the first time is also eligible to buy a hunter education exemption permit. This permit allows apprentice hunters to hunt for one year without a hunter education card. The permit requires its holder to hunt with a licensed, adult hunter who meets the hunter education requirement.

Q: Where can a hunter get more information about Kentucky's deer seasons?

A: A summary of Kentucky's deer season dates, a list of counties in the various management



The rut – the peak of the whitetail breeding season – usually begins around the last of October in western Kentucky.

zones and other important laws can be found in the annual Kentucky Hunting and Trapping Guide, a 66-page booklet that's

available wherever licenses are sold. Also, deer season regulations are posted online at: fw.ky.gov.



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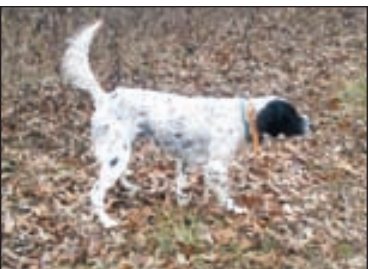
CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

KENTUCKY'S "MOST COMMON" HUNTING SEASONS

Bullfrog	May 16 - Oct. 31
Squirrel	Aug. 16 - Nov. 7
Dove	Sept. 1 - Oct. 26
Early Goose	Sept. 1-15
Crow	Sept. 1 - Nov. 7
Deer Archery	Sept. 6 - Jan. 19
Turkey Archery	Sept. 6 - Jan. 19
Wood Duck, Teal	Sept. 17-21
Teal	Sept. 22-25
Deer Crossbow	Oct. 1-19
Turkey Crossbow	Oct. 1-19
Raccoon, Opossum	Oct. 1 - Feb. 28
Deer Youth Rifle	Oct. 11-12
Deer Muzzleloader	Oct. 18-19
Turkey Shotgun	Oct. 25-31
Deer Rifle	Nov. 8-23
Deer Crossbow	Nov. 8 - Dec. 31
Turkey Crossbow	Nov. 8 - Dec. 31
Squirrel	Nov. 10 - Feb. 28
Rabbit	Nov. 10 - Feb. 10
Quail	Nov. 10 - Feb. 10
Bobcat	Nov. 22 - Feb. 28
Dove	Nov. 27 - Dec. 7
Turkey Shotgun	Dec. 6-12
Deer Muzzleloader	Dec. 13-21
Dove	Dec. 20 - Jan. 11
Deer Free Youth	Dec. 27-28
Crow	Jan. 4 - Feb. 28
Groundhog	Year Round
Coyote Daytime	Year Round
Turtles	Year Round

Proposed Waterfowl Seasons (Require legislative approval)

Duck	Nov. 27 - Jan. 25
West Goose Zone	Nov. 27 - Jan. 31
Pennyrile Goose	Nov. 27 - Jan. 31
White-Front Goose	Nov. 27 - Jan. 31
Snow Goose	Nov. 27 - Jan. 31
Snow Goose	Feb. 1-6
Snow Goose	Feb. 9 - March 31
East Youth Waterfowl	Nov. 1-2
West Youth Waterfowl	Feb. 7-8



Quail season opens Nov. 10 in the western zone. The English setter (above) is a common hunting dog for such seasons.



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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

Local teen scores buck on first day

BY CHRIS EVANS
THE CRITTENDEN PRESS

Hunting comes naturally to many humans; it's simply a passion for others.

Cory Prado grew up hunting alongside his father, Ricky, in the hills and hollows of Crittenden County. They spend much of their time together talking about the finer details of whitetail hunting, sharing insights nature has provided them.

"I really listen to what dad tells me," said Prado, an 18-year-old bowhunter who bagged a trophy buck on opening day of the 2014 archery season.

Of all the knowledge he's gleaned from dad, this teen archer says understanding the wind is perhaps the most important.

"Wind plays such a big factor. It has to be just right," Prado said. "And you have to be patient, too."

A north breeze was blowing in a cool front on the evening of Sept.

6. Prado knew conditions were perfect to slip into a woodlot where his trail camera had provided imagery of a very nice buck.

"I'd watched him all summer," he said. "I got several pictures on the trail camera. We knew he was coming to the woods just about every evening right before dark."

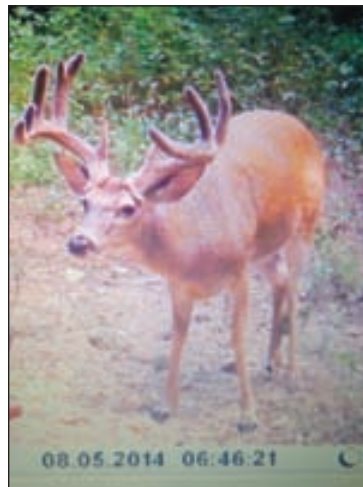
Sure enough, on the opening afternoon of Kentucky's 2014 bow season, Prado was aloft in his stand when the buck showed up.

"He just came cruising through there, then bedded down right under my stand," he said.

Prado raised his Mathews Z7 bow and launched an arrow tipped with a mechanical three-blade Rage broadhead. His aim was true and the buck lunged before running off into the distance.

"I called dad right away," he said.

On the other end of the county, his father quickly exited his own



Cory Prado's trail camera captured a nice Crittenden County buck in early August. On opening day of Kentucky's archery season, he bagged it.

deer stand, flushing several deer in the process and drove about 10 miles to where his son was still perched in a tree.

"I waited until he got there, then we tracked the deer. It had gone about 60 yards," Prado said.

The 10-pointer rough scored around 140 with plenty of room to spare for the Pope and Young book.



"When he was in velvet, he looked like a 160," Prado said, pointing out that once bucks shed their summer coat, the massive racks shrink to reality.

Still, it was a very nice deer, the biggest for this hunter who took his first deer at age 5 with a rifle, then bagged one the following fall with a bow.

"Ever since I got that first deer,

I've been addicted," he said.

Prado says his trail cameras are very important to his hunting strategy. He maintains about six cameras at a time.

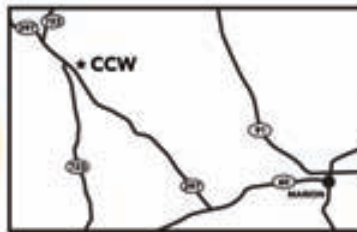
"Back before trail cameras we just did a lot of guessing," he said.

Now, the job is made much easier, but it still takes a special breed to harvest a large game animal with a bow and arrow.



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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

Beward on highway during fall's peak whitetail activity

KENTUCKY AFIELD

Deer movement increases in November as the shorter days and longer nights of fall trigger the breeding season. Motorists need to watch out for deer crossing the road at night or during the day, especially on rural roads.

Historical data indicate that deer and vehicle collisions in Kentucky are highest in November," say Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources officials. Drivers should slow down and be alert, particularly in areas where woods come close to the road. Deer can quickly dart out from the wooded area and into the road.

Drivers should not ignore those yellow signs with a deer on them.

Those signs designate high frequency deer crossing areas," said David Yancy, deer biologist with the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife. "People forget about them, but they are important."

The change of the seasons influences not only deer behavior, but human behavior as well. "Drivers need to be vigilant now," Yancy explained. "The two peaks of deer activity, morning and evening, coincide with the people going to and coming home from work."

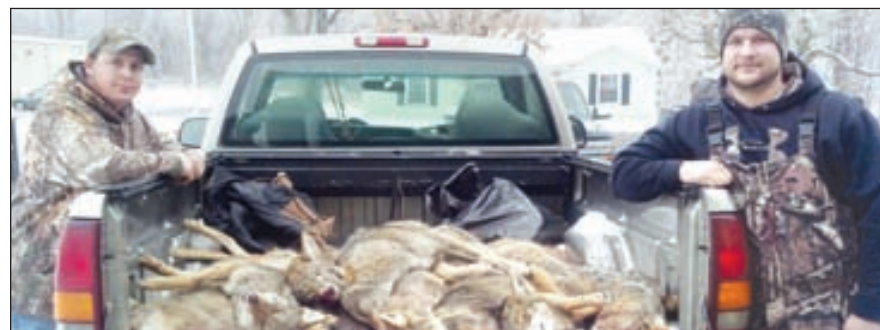
Deer caught in the road by an approaching vehicle often will not move out of the way, even when the driver honks the horn. Headlights tend to transfix these animals.

Motorists who encounter deer in the road should slow to a stop and allow the deer to cross to the other side. Keep the headlights on so other motorists can see your vehicle. Deer usually travel in groups, so if you see one, you'll likely see more.

If you are traveling at night over the next month or so, be vigilant. Deer can dart out from anywhere and cause serious damage to your vehicle. Be especially careful on foggy nights.

Some people mistakenly blame hunting for November deer movement, but deer move regardless of hunting pressure. "Hunting is not causing the deer to move around, breeding is," Tina Brunjes said. "Hunting reduces deer densities and areas with lower deer densities have fewer collisions."

For more information on deer and vehicle collisions, log on the Kentucky State Police's web page at www.kentuckystatepolice.org/deer-auto.htm.



James Reece (left) and Beau Beckner bagged eight coyotes to claim the grand prize in last winter's coyote hunting contest.

Moonglow dooms song dogs

STAFF REPORT

Weather was perfect for the Hodge Outdoor Sports coyote contest last February. And with the newly legal nighttime hunting of coyotes, this annual contest drew a record turnout and record harvest.

Sixty individuals, competing as two-man teams hunted for 24 hours starting one cold, snowy Friday in February and ended at dusk the following day. Fredonia duo James Reece and Beau Beckner won the event with eight coyotes. They took home the \$450 grand prize.

Beckner said conditions were ripe for

taking a big number of song dogs. He and his partner bagged two before 10 p.m., on the Friday night hunt using only the moonlight's glow on a snow-covered playing field, shotguns and mouth calls.

"You could see fine without a light," he said.

Armed with rifles the next morning, they knocked down two more just after daylight then filled their bag with four more in the afternoon.

"The coyotes were hungry and it's breeding season, too," Beckner said.

The pair used rabbit squealers and howlers to lure in their prey.



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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS



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