

A man wearing a camouflage jacket, a baseball cap, and glasses is kneeling in a wooded area. He is holding a large deer head with impressive antlers. The background shows trees and a grassy field.

CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

HUNTING GUIDE

FALL - WINTER 2016
CRITTENDEN COUNTY
KENTUCKY

INSIDE

Deer Outlook
Harvest Figures
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Trophy Bass Program
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Turkey Calls
WMA Gets Bigger
'15 Buck Winners

COVER STORY

Peace Among October Acorns

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

Kentucky Fall Hunting Dates

Kentucky hunting seasons through Feb. 28, 2017 are listed below with deer seasons applicable to Crittenden County and other Zone 1 counties.

- **Bullfrog:** May 20 - Oct. 31
- **Squirrel:** Aug. 20 - Nov. 11, Nov. 14 - Feb. 28
- **Dove:** Sept. 1 - Oct. 26, Nov. 24 - Dec. 4, Dec. 17 - Jan. 8
- **Crow:** Sept. 1 - Nov. 7, Jan. 4 - Feb. 28
- **Deer (archery):** Sept. 3 - Jan. 16
- **Deer (crossbow):** Oct. 1-16, Nov. 12 - Dec. 31
- **Deer (youth):** Oct. 8-9, Dec. 31 - Jan. 1
- **Deer (muzzleloader):** Oct. 15 - 16, Dec. 10 - Dec. 18
- **Deer (rifle):** Nov. 12 - Nov. 27
- **Turkey (archery):** Sept. 3 - Jan. 16
- **Turkey (crossbow):** Oct. 1 - Oct. 16, Nov. 12 - Dec. 31
- **Turkey (gun):** Oct. 22-28, Dec. 3-9
- **Canada Goose:** Sept. 16-30, Nov. 24 - Feb. 15
- **Raccoon (hunting):** Oct. 1 - Feb. 28
- **Raccoon (trapping):** Nov. 14 - Feb. 28
- **Woodcock:** Oct. 22 - Nov. 11, Nov. 14 - Dec. 7
- **Fox (hunt/trap):** Nov. 14 - Feb. 28
- **Rabbit:** Nov. 14 - Feb. 10
- **Quail:** Nov. 14 - Feb. 10
- **Bobcat:** Nov. 26 - Feb. 28
- **Duck:** Nov. 24-27, Dec. 5 - Jan. 29
- **Snow Goose:** Nov. 24 - Feb. 15
- **Waterfowl (youth):** Feb. 4-5
- **Goose Conservation:** Feb. 16 - March 31
- **Coyote:** Year-round
- **Coyote (trapping):** Nov 14 - Feb 28
- **Groundhog:** Year-round



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Foster claims county's big buck title

STAFF REPORT

This story of an up-and-coming outdoorsman sounds something like the legendary tale of Daniel Boone. It all started when he was three.

Jeremiah Foster's notoriety as an accomplished hunter was already swelling to epic proportions when the young man from eastern Crittenden County took down a championship buck in the fall of 2015.

Foster is always among the first young hunters in this area to fill his deer and turkey tags, and he's an accomplished competitive archer, having won a national championship as an eight year old.

This past deer season, Foster, who is now 10, earned a pot of cash for winning the Hodge Outdoor Sports-Marion Tourism Big Buck Contest.

Foster's winning buck was taken during the early muzzleloader season on Oct. 17. It field dressed 188 pounds and carried an eight-point rack with a 16 1/2-inch spread. The contest has a unique scoring formula that uses the deer's weight, antler width and number of points

to determine the winner. His deer scored 220.

This wasn't Foster's first big deer, however. He took another trophy buck as a six year old and he's downed whitetails with four different types of weapons — modern gun, blackpowder, bow and cross-bow. In total, he's bagged about 15 or more deer despite being in the dawn of his hunting career.

Foster recalls some of his earliest outdoors expeditions, hunting with his parents, Lee Ellen and Tony Foster.

"When I was three years old, my mom would take me with her, and I always took my toy gun," he said. "Dad took me when I was five years old and I shot my first deer. It was a doe."

On the first morning of blackpowder season last fall, Foster and his dad started out early.

"Dad and I went out to my grandparents' farm, which has been in the family for many generations. We had a two-man ladder stand. Dad and I made sure my gun was loaded correctly," recalls Foster.

It wasn't too long into their vigil that some deer were spotted off in

the distance. Foster identified one of the deer as a nice buck and he knew it was a shooter right away.

"Dad said, 'Let him get a little closer,'" remembers Foster. "But in my excitement I couldn't wait. As soon as I got him in my sights, I shot and he dropped," Foster explained.

When the smoke cleared from the blast of his Thompson Center Encore charged with 75 grains of black powder, the eight-pointer lay lifeless 110 yards away. It was a clean shot.

"I want to thank God for everything," Foster said. "He has given me the physical and mental ability to do so much."

After the hunt, Foster switched from blaze orange into his baseball uniform and raced to a ballgame in Greenville, Ky., where he pitched for his team, the Paducah Storm.

For winning the Big Buck Contest, Foster earned \$1,000 cash. That is almost enough to buy the high-end bow he has been wanting, which can be used for competitive shooting or hunting.

See details on registering for the contest on back page.

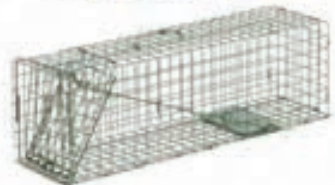


Young Jeremiah Foster is one of the area's most noted hunters and a celebrated competitive archer. He also excels at baseball.

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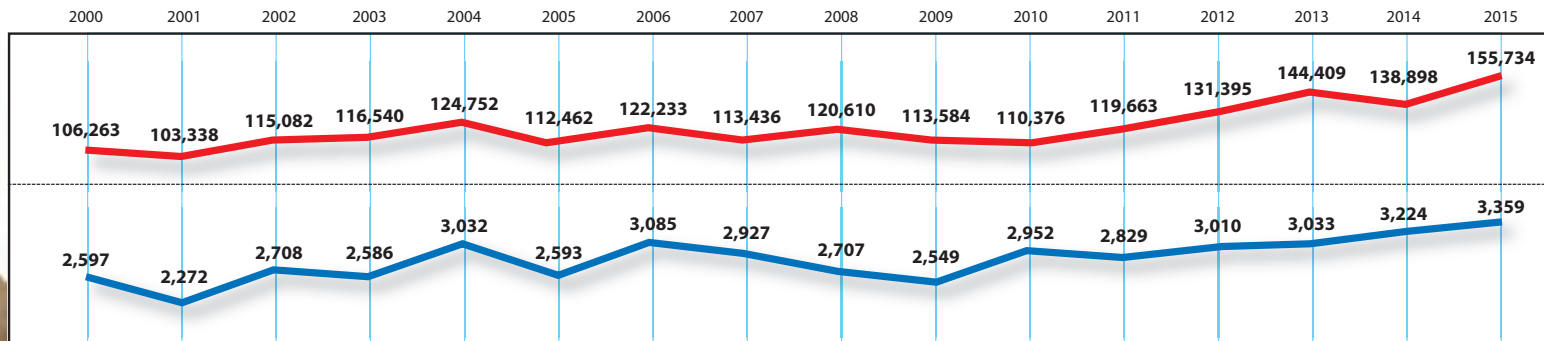
CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

DEER HUNTING OUTLOOK GREAT FOR 2016-17

Deer harvests by year since 2000

— Crittenden County
— Kentucky

Source: KDFWR
Telecheck Data



Crittenden remains among top counties

After months of anticipation, Kentucky deer hunters are geared up for what continues to look like another bountiful fall and winter season, and that bodes well for Crittenden County, one of the premiere places to hunt whitetail in the Commonwealth.

Kentucky's 2016-17 deer season kicked off the first Saturday in September with the start of the 136-day archery season. Hunters statewide came out of the chute with record-setting numbers in the first days of bow season.

"Everything right now points toward another good season," said Gabe Jenkins, deer program coordinator for the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources (KDFWR).

That is welcome news following what has been a string of record harvests both locally and statewide. In 2015, 3,359 deer were taken in Crittenden County, according to KDFWR Telecheck numbers. That total ranked the county third in harvest numbers and is the most on record dating back at least 20 years, eclipsing 2014's total by more than 100 animals.

Such improving opportunities spell good news for local hunters and businesses alike.

"I think most retail, grocery stores and restaurants benefit from the hunters that own and lease land in the area," said Marion Tourism Commission Director Michele Edwards. "Even some finance at local banks."

In the last 16 years, Crittenden County has ranked second in the state in the number of deer harvested 11 times, trailing only Owen County. Four other times it has ranked third behind Owen and Pendleton counties, both in northern Kentucky. Crittenden ranked fourth in 2009 behind only Owen, Pendleton and Graves counties.

Such an impressive crop has earned the county nationwide attention from hunters, including a few high-profile professional athletes who either own or lease land here. And while the economic impact of deer hunting on the county is significant, Edwards said it is difficult to put an exact dollar to measure its extent.

Statewide records

Last year, hunters in Kentucky established a new benchmark by taking more than 155,730 deer. It was the third record harvest in the past four seasons and included 55 bucks from 40 counties documented by Kentucky Fish and Wildlife that met the Boone and Crockett Club's minimum entry score for its awards book.

"Our deer hunting in Kentucky is better than it's ever been," said Steve Beam, wildlife division director for Kentucky Fish and Wildlife. "We're harvesting record numbers of deer and our production of large-antlered bucks is completely incredible."

A state believed to hold fewer than 1,000 whitetailed deer a century ago now is considered one of the nation's premiere hunting destinations. The latest herd estimate — derived from harvest and age structure data — pegged the statewide population at more than 820,000 after the 2015-16 hunting season and before fawning this spring.

"We've really hit the scene in the past 10 years because of our quality whitetail," Jenkins said. "That's a product of good management, good habitat and being diligent about what's being put on the landscape. With that, we still have to be good stewards."

The archery season is just one facet. Crossbow, muzzleloader and youth deer hunting opportunities are part of the overall season

framework. But it is the modern gun deer season in November that drives the harvest, accounting for 70 percent of the total harvest last season.

"We've been setting archery records nearly every year and every month, so we're seeing more interest in archery hunting," Jenkins said. "But we're still a modern gun-dominated state and weather is the biggest key in that."

The modern gun season opens statewide Nov. 12 and spans 16 consecutive days in Zones 1 and 2 and 10 consecutive days in

Zones 3 and 4. There are 43 counties assigned Zone 1 status, including Crittenden County, after the addition of Hardin and Webster counties this season.

Herd health assessments are under way and results are not yet available from the annual statewide mast survey. Hunters should take into account the availability of hard mast as the season progresses.

"Traditionally, when you have good mast years, we usually see a decline in the harvest from the previous year mainly because of a

change in feeding habits," Jenkins said. "They're not coming to corn feeders and they're not coming to green fields. They're in the woods."

"I don't know what the mast results are going to show, but in speaking with our staff and seeing for myself in the field, it looked pretty good. We'll see."

(Kevin Kelly with Kentucky Afield magazine, the official publication of the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, contributed to this story.)

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

Changes to Telecheck this season

Big game hunters will find a change in the Telecheck System when they report their deer harvest this season.

All successful hunters must check the animals they harvest and can do that by phone at (800) 245-4263 or online at fw.ky.gov.

The telecheck process includes some new questions. Hunters checking an antlered deer will be asked to enter the total number of antler points that are at least 1 inch and indicate if the outside antler spread is less than or greater than 11 inches. Those checking an antlerless male will need to distinguish if it is a male fawn (button buck) or if the animal has already dropped its antlers.

The additional data will help biologists, said Gabe Jenkins, deer program coordinator for the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources (KDFWR).

"What we're looking to do is obtain additional age data, something that indicates how old that harvested animal is," he said. "For all of the population models that we do, we need to know approximate age in the harvest. Additional age data allows us to better predict the standing crop and the age of our herd. That in turn helps us be more efficient managers of the herd."

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife owns, leases or manages more than 80 wildlife management areas across the state for public use. Some require a user permit, hold quota hunts or have special regulations for deer hunting.

"We've been able to add a significant amount of acreage in recent years," Beam said. "As a result, hunters now have more high-quality public hunting opportunities across the state."

The Kentucky Hunting and Trapping Guide, available on the department's website and whenever licenses are sold, is a valuable resource for hunters. It includes the full list of fall hunting and trapping season dates, summarizes hunting and trapping laws, and provides information about public lands hunting by region, youth hunting opportunities, hunter education requirements and quota hunts.

KENTUCKY HUNTING LICENSE FEES

License or Permit	Resident	Nonresident
Annual Fishing	\$20.00	\$50.00
Joint Husband/Wife Annual Fishing	\$36.00	Not available
1-Day Fishing	\$7.00	\$10.00
3-Year Fishing (available online only)	\$55.00	Not available
Nonresident 7-Day Fishing	Not available	\$30.00
Nonresident 15-Day Fishing	Not available	\$40.00
Annual Hunting	\$20.00	\$140.00
1-Day Hunting (not valid for deer or turkey)	\$7.00	\$15.00
7-Day Hunting (not valid for deer or turkey)	Not available	\$55.00
Annual Youth Hunting (ages 12-15 only)	\$6.00	\$10.00
Annual Combination Hunting/Fishing	\$30.00	Not available
Senior/Disabled Comb Hunting/Fishing	\$5.00	Not available
Sportsman's License	\$95.00	Not available
Youth (ages 12-15) Sportsman's License	\$30.00	Not available
Statewide Deer Permit (two deer)	\$35.00	\$120.00
Youth (ages 12-15) Deer Permit (one deer)	\$10.00	\$15.00
Additional Deer Permit (two deer)	\$15.00	\$15.00
Spring Turkey Permit (two turkeys)	\$30.00	\$75.00
Youth Turkey Permit (one turkey, spring or fall)	\$10.00	\$15.00
Fall Turkey Permit (four turkeys)	\$30.00	\$75.00
Migratory Bird/Waterfowl Permit	\$15.00	\$15.00

Crittenden County - Kentucky DEER HARVEST TOTALS

1993	2,357	2005	2,593
1994	1,826	2006	3,085
1995	1,857	2007	2,927
1996	2,065	2008	2,707
1997	1,874	2009	2,549
1998	2,728	2010	2,952
1999	2,201	2011	2,829
2000	2,597	2012	3,010
2001	2,272	2013	3,033
2002	2,695	2014	3,224
2003	2,586	2015	3,359
2004	3,032		



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2014-15 Deer Harvest Results

County	Bucks	Does	Bow	Rifle	M'loader	C'bow	Total
Crittenden	1,684	1,675	574	2,389	327	69	3,359
Webster	1,017	1,150	403	1,523	189	52	2,167
Livingston	1,008	989	284	1,404	278	31	1,997
Caldwell	901	849	204	1,289	199	22	1,750
Union	550	468	256	644	97	21	1,018
Lyon	464	432	251	560	57	28	896

KDFWR Statistics

2013-14 Deer Harvest Results

County	Bucks	Does	Bow	Rifle	M'loader	C'bow	Total
Crittenden	1,606	1,618	454	2,456	268	46	3,224
Webster	1,238	1,204	360	1,825	215	42	2,442
Livingston	943	890	221	1,379	221	12	1,833
Caldwell	973	737	209	1,331	145	25	1,710
Union	570	489	264	721	60	14	1,059
Lyon	445	365	200	536	50	24	810

KDFWR Statistics

TOP 15 HARVEST COUNTIES LAST SEASON

County	Male	Female	Total	Wildlife Region
Owen	1,776	1,925	3,701	BLUEGRASS REGION
Pendleton	1,772	1,799	3,571	BLUEGRASS REGION
Crittenden	1,684	1,675	3,359	PURCHASE REGION
Christian	1,678	1,605	3,283	PURCHASE REGION
Breckinridge	1,597	1,316	2,913	GREEN RIVER REGION
Graves	1,285	1,572	2,857	PURCHASE REGION
Hopkins	1,437	1,403	2,840	GREEN RIVER REGION
Shelby	1,344	1,306	2,650	BLUEGRASS REGION
Hardin	1,410	1,177	2,587	GREEN RIVER REGION
Ohio	1,364	1,159	2,523	GREEN RIVER REGION
Grant	1,286	1,135	2,421	BLUEGRASS REGION
Grayson	1,366	1,041	2,407	GREEN RIVER REGION
Hart	1,308	1,098	2,406	GREEN RIVER REGION
Nelson	1,187	1,140	2,327	BLUEGRASS REGION
Bracken	1,167	1,159	2,326	NORTHEAST REGION

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

COVER STORY - BOWHUNTING

Family legacy provides therapy for hunts amid October acorns

For Tony Travis, deer hunting provides an ample amount of “alone therapy” to get him through the work week but it’s also a family connection that has created a life-long bond with his now grown daughter.

A crewman for the Crittenden-Livingston Water District, Travis, 59, is accustomed to late-night calls to repair distribution lines and long, sometimes wet hours in a trench.

Perhaps that’s why he covets those lonesome vigils perched in a deer stand overlooking the family farm in rural Crittenden County.

“I can’t relax fishing so I hunt,” he said with a chuckle. “It gets me away from work and I don’t think of anything else while I’m out there.”

Over the years, Travis has scored some nice deer with his bow. This fall, on Oct. 13, he tagged the nicest of all – a mature 10-pointer.

“It was definitely the best one I’ve ever gotten,” said Travis, who has three or four more Pope and Young Class bucks.

This one scored 152, “and I gave him the benefit of the doubt in spots,” Travis said while scoring the buck.

A bowhunter since the early 1970s, Travis has learned a thing or two about deer. He uses age-old tactics when it comes to hunting the wind, but he also likes the new technology. Things like trail cameras and scent-shields are among his favorite.

“I use the no-scent soaps and Hodge’s has a cedar cover scent that I really like,” he said. “I’ve had deer right under me eating acorns and they never know I’m there.”

The buck he took in October was eating acorns. The woods were full of them at the time. The buck was feeding alongside a doe and two small twins.

“I shot him high and didn’t have a blood trail,” he said. “I looked around a little, but waited till the next morning when I knew I could find him.”

The buck lay about 150 yards from where he made the shot.



Brodi (Travis) Sutton with the tom she bagged last spring.

Travis estimates him a 5½ years old.

One of the first things Travis did after shooting the buck was to phone his daughter and son-in-law, Brodi and Justin Sutton. They came over to help track the deer.

Travis reared his daughter to enjoy hunting. Now, she’s quite successful in her own rite. She bagged a nice gobbler last spring and loves to deer hunt.

“She called me the other afternoon and said, ‘Dad, I’m walking to my stand and some does are watching me. What should I do?’” Travis said with a grin, recalling his fatherly advice to pay no attention and keep moving.

“Everything I know about hunting I got from him,” said Brodi. “My earliest memories hunting were for turkeys. That’s what we always did.

“I never got one back then, but I shot at one. The way I recall it, the turkey was too close,” she added.

Father and daughter live only a few miles apart and they spend a great deal of time perfecting their sporting skills.

“He teaches me how to shoot, how to hold the bow and how to

stand,” said Brodi, now 32. She hunts in order to be more in tune with her surroundings. She and Justin own a farm and Brodi spends a whole lot of time grooming it for wildlife. She also has dad’s secret feed recipe – call it a family heirloom because no one else is getting his hands on it.

It’s a secret blend of grains and what Travis calls other “odds and ends.” It’s something he’s concocted over the years and says he may one day retire from his day job and commercially manufacture it.

The feed was part of the big buck’s diet.

“I didn’t weigh him, but he was big and had a double white patch on his neck. That’s the third one I’ve gotten like that,” he said.

Travis had hunted the same stand the evening before he got the big buck and let two pretty nice deer pass by.

“You have to let those walk. I like to find a deer I want and hunt him,” he said. “I’m pretty particular about what I will shoot. Sometimes I’ll go a few years without taking one if I don’t see what I want.”

He said several folks in his neighborhood hunt by the same philosophy and it’s paying dividends.

“They all feel the same way and we all just bow hunt. If you will pass these smaller bucks up and let them grow, it really works to your advantage,” he said. “I don’t want to knock the way anyone hunts, but if you want bigger deer you have to be selective.”

Learning to be patient and enjoy the hunt more than the harvest is something Travis’ daughter continues to seek and dad is quick to provide a path for finding it.

“He always tells me how much he enjoys hunting. It is just a mind-clearing time for him. He can sit in a deer stand and not worry about anything – it’s just him and nature,” said Brodi. “I am a little more impatient, but I would like to find the same peace. I’m trying to get there.”

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

Brantley's buck is top for youths

Nathan Brantley's hunting heritage is strong and deep. The young hunter's family has lived in Crittenden County for decades, but he now resides in Arkansas where his father, Chris, is minister of a General Baptist church.

Last fall, he came back to Kentucky and the Happy Hunting Grounds to take a buck that won the junior division of the Big Buck Contest, sponsored by Marion Tourism and Hodge's Sports and Apparel.

Brantley, 11, was born in Marion and harvested his first deer at the age of six. Two years later, he took a whitetail with a bow.

His grandfather, Karl Brantley, is a longtime hunter with a number of Pope and Young bucks and his namesake, great-grandfather Nathan Brantley Jr., took a 21-point buck in 1969.

During the 2015 deer season, Brantley was sitting in a tower stand with his grandpa when an eight-point buck came across a cut bean field. It stopped at 50 yards and the young gunner made a clean shot with his .308.



Harvest Log

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Date, County, & Sex must be filled in before carcass is moved.

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☐ ELK ☐ BEAR ☐ SANDHILL CRANE

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☐ ELK ☐ BEAR ☐ SANDHILL CRANE

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Expanded WMA dedicated to game wardens

More than 840 acres added to the Big Rivers Wildlife Management Area were dedicated in October to two conservation officers who devoted their lives to protecting Kentucky's natural resources.

The addition of the Jenkins-Rich Tract grew the WMA straddling Crittenden and Union counties to 11.6 square miles. It is named for the late Capt. David "Donan" Jenkins and the late Conservation Officer Ronnie Rich.

Family members, officials from the two counties and a couple dozen biologists, conservation officers, law enforcement and administrators with the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources (KDFWR) crowded a small, freshly mowed clearing inside the tract for the dedication ceremony in October.

"There are more stories about these guys than you can imagine," said Wildlife Division Director Steve Beam during the brief ceremony. Before you leave, "take time to look around, but reflect on these men."

Jenkins earned Officer of the Year accolades in 1964 and 1965.

Altogether, he served with the department for 39 years before retiring as a law enforcement captain in 1997.

While Jenkins gained a reputation for his toughness — he won novice boxing championships while serving in the U.S. Army — he had a soft spot for kids. He and his wife, Georgia "Jo" Jenkins, developed a technique for cultivating the highly-prized ginseng plant. The couple took proceeds from their ginseng sales to help fund partial college scholarships for kids of department employees and students at Crittenden and Union county high schools.

"There are givers and takers," Jenkins explained at the time, "and I'm a giver."

"Both made kids feel important," said KDFWR Game Management Foreman Curt Divine, speaking from his own personal experience.

Rich began his 25-year career at Kentucky Fish and Wildlife in 1979 as a wildlife technician at the Sauerheber Unit of Sloughs Wildlife Management Area near Henderson. After three years, he switched to the department's law

enforcement division to become a conservation officer.

Jenkins took Rich under his wing. Jenkins saw Rich's passion for the outdoors, and served as the new officer's mentor for many years. Rich grew into a strong leader, yet remained humble and never stopped trying to qualify for the position. A compassionate husband and exemplary father, he led by example and believed in seeking the truth.

Rich, jokingly nicknamed "The Godfather" by others for his field knowledge, constantly taught others about his craft. He strongly believed that respect was earned, not given. Over his career, Rich earned his respect by winning several awards, including the 1987 Kentucky Officer of the Year; 1998-99 Waterfowl Enforcement Officer of the Year; and 1999 United Bowhunters of Kentucky Officer of the Year.

Rich's service to the public did not end with his retirement in 2004. He used his knowledge and

See WMA/page 11



Wildlife officials gather on Oct. 13 to dedicate the WMA.

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

Crittenden call-maker says shy toms led him to work on perfecting lurring sounds

From The Crittenden Press

Everyone knows that necessity is the mother on invention, especially the wild turkey hunter.

Those who pursue the cautious strutters of spring are quick to try anything to get an edge on their unpredictable prey. For Tolu resident Jake Perryman, the drive to harvest turkeys has led to a sideline job making calls.

The 41-year-old lifelong Crittenden Countian unveiled recently his handmade custom turkey calls. They are now available at Hodge's Sports & Apparel in Marion.

Perryman says he started making calls last year when "call shy" turkeys hung up on him time and again. In order to lure them within shotgun range, Perryman tried something that most hadn't — a copper surface on a handheld pot turkey call.

"I couldn't buy a copper call anywhere," he said.

When he built his own, the turkeys came running. His personal

success went up, so he figured others might be interested. Over the previous 12 months, he handmade almost 100 calls and sold more than half of them.

They're constructed of exotic wood bases from trees that no one would find along the Ohio River bottoms where Perryman grew up. Some of the wood comes from Africa. There's Bocote, walnut, cherry, Ziricote, Osage orange, wenge and leopard wood in his artist's bag.

By trial and error, Perryman has perfected his craft, learning the finer points of mimicking the lonely hen looking for spring companionship in the Kentucky forests.

"The wood controls the tone," Perryman said, who works for a Henderson manufacturing company by day and tinkers with calls in the evenings.

His new bride doesn't mind. She's a school teacher in Madisonville and never really got into the hunting gig until they married. Now,

Sarah is as tuned in to a turkey cluck as anyone who claims to be a seasoned hunter.

"Some of my first calls didn't see the light of day," says Perryman with a chuckle. They were tossed out.

It took him a while to learn how to change pitches and tones in order to create a natural sound with a striker and piece of copper.

"The pedestal and sound board it sets on and the shelf for the playing surface is what makes the call. And the distance between the two is critical," he said.

There have been others from these parts who have made a name creating custom game calls and Perryman knows why. He said Crittenden County is a perfect place to perfect hunting skills and to learn what works. He has grown up fishing, trapping and hunting the hills and hollows of this community and right now he is concerned about the number of animals he's seeing.



Jake Perryman, 41, of Tolu recently unveiled to retail customers his handmade custom turkey calls. They are now available at Hodge's Sports & Apparel in Marion.

"Turkey numbers are down," Perryman said.

He, like other outdoorsmen in the area, believe recent harsh winters are partly to blame. He found five dead toms last year after a large snowfall.

"And that was on a 100-acre

farm," he said.

With gobbling a bit less frequent from the ridges of Crittenden County, Perryman says every hunter needs something special to give him an advantage. He suggests one of his custom calls.

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

WMA

Continued from page 9
spare time to help underprivileged kids and injured veterans.

He partnered with local youth conservation groups and the Wounded Warrior Project to create memorable hunting and fishing experiences at Wild Wing Lodge and Riverbend Whitetail Outfitters for those in need of his assistance.

Jenkins died May 23, 2014, at the age of 80. Rich died Dec. 8, 2011, at the age of 58.

"These men had a passion for the land, for wildlife and for conservation in this part of Kentucky," Divine told onlookers at the event.

All of the Jenkins-Rich Tract lies in Crittenden County, bordering Bells Mine Road to the south. The new property also includes a bit of frontage on Ky. 365 across from former coal mining property. The commonwealth already owned the land north of Bells Mine Road.

To acquire the property, the state paid \$2.27 million to Heartwood Forestland Fund VI Limited Partnership, which equates to \$2,700 acres per acre. It expands the total area of the WMA to 7,570



Jenkins



Rich

acres, making it one of the largest management areas in Kentucky.

The expansion is already marked with paint and signs and immediately becomes part of the hunting and management program. It is mostly wooded. A power line right-of-way is about the only open land on the tract.

Though not in the Jenkins-Rich Tract, just down the road is a new viewing platform for one of the best vistas in the county. Off Bells Mine Road and marked on maps of the WMA, the wooden deck overlooks the Ohio River and into Illinois. Riverview Park/Dam 50 lies to the left of a big hook in the river and is visible in the winter-time when trees have shed their leaves, said Divine.

(Kentucky Afield Outdoors contributed to this story.)



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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

Improve youth hunting

Kentucky offers youth hunters an assortment of special seasons in the fall and winter months.

In the mind of a young hunter making the transition from observer to participant, these opportunities to hunt deer, elk, furbearers, small game and waterfowl are milestones never to be forgotten. As such, adult mentors know it falls on their shoulders to deliver a safe and enjoyable experience that leaves their young companion wanting to return to the field another day. It can be a lot of pressure.

Three experienced hunters and mentors – Capt. Richard Adkins, Derek Beard and Mark Marraccini – have developed strategies through the experience of teaching their own children to hunt. The following is an assortment of their tips.

•Children should be confident in their ability to make a good shot when the opportunity presents. Taking them to a shooting range ahead of time establishes a comfort level, allows for repetition and instruction in a controlled environment.

•“If you just want them to develop good, strong shooting fundamentals, you can do that with a pellet rifle or a .22 rifle rather than hurrying them into a loud centerfire rifle,” said Marraccini, executive staff advisor for the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources. “The fundamentals will transfer. The young shooter will not feel the recoil in a hunting situation and he’ll barely remember the noise.”

•Stress safe handling of any firearm. Adkins, the training section supervisor for the Law Enforcement division of Kentucky Fish and Wildlife, wants his children to be as adept as possible with the firearm that they will use in the field. To that end, consider utilizing dummy rounds for practice.

•“I want them familiar with that gun,” he said. “That way there’s no confusion.”

•Consider starting young hunters off small and work up. Squirrel hunting is the perfect introduction because it teaches woodsmanship and hunting skills that will translate to larger game animals. Utilizing a rimfire or small caliber rifle for squirrels will help marksmanship.

•Review the rules and regulations before going afield.

•As any parent knows, kids can have the attention span of a fruit fly and expecting them to sit still for extended stretches is unreasonable.



able. A ground blind allows for some freedom of movement and protection from the elements.

•“I’m a firm believer in ground blinds for kids and use ground blinds all the time for kids,” Adkins said.

•Setting up a stable hunting rest in the blind will help a young hunter steady their aim by guarding against the muscle fatigue that can set in quickly when the gun is shouldered.

•“I think it’s imperative that they have some kind of mount to put the gun in so they can shoot accurately,” Adkins said. “It allows me to secure the gun so it’s like shooting off of a bench. I’m a big proponent of them because they increase accuracy and increase safety. It was the best money I ever spent for them.”

•Comfort is key. Consider letting them sleep in and hunt in the afternoon. Either way, do not forget the snacks and drinks. Beard and his children have made it a tradition to stop at a gas station on the way to their hunt location.

•“They can buy anything they want, within reason,” said Beard, who is the Bluegrass Wildlife Region coordinator for Kentucky Fish and Wildlife. “My oldest likes getting a Big Red soda and some Sour Patch kids, sunflower seeds and chips.”

•Dress them appropriately for the weather. Wet clothes and cold toes and fingers can make for a miserable experience and end a hunt quickly.

•Snoopy mittens are usually not adequate.

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

KDFWR adds 4,600 public acres

Public land hunting opportunities in Kentucky have grown this fall by more than 4,600 acres.

The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources announced in October the opening of six new properties ranging from Ballard County in the west to Bath County in the east. Newly opened properties include one new wildlife management area in Nelson and LaRue counties, plus additions to five existing wildlife management areas.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commissioner Gregory K. Johnson said the acquisitions are an outgrowth of the department's sportsmen-centric philosophy.

"Our surveys show that sportsmen and sportswomen want more places where they can hunt and fish," he said. "These new public lands help us work toward that goal. We're proud to offer these new opportunities where people can go and create lasting memories."

The newest wildlife management area (WMA) is Rolling Fork River

WMA, Frasier and Theresa Reesor Family Tract, in Nelson and LaRue counties. This nearly 2,900-acre area, which is bisected by the Rolling Fork River, features a mix of heavy forested hillsides and fallow fields. This property will be open to hunting under statewide regulations, including modern gun season for deer.

Additions to existing properties include:

- Big Rivers WMA and State Forest, 842 acres in Crittenden County.

- Clay WMA, addition to the Justice Tract, 148 acres in Bath County.

- Kleber WMA, 505 acres in Owen County.

- Kentucky River WMA, 70 acres in Owen County and 5 acres in Henry County.

- Boatwright WMA, 217 acres in Ballard County.

Hunting regulations for each addition are the same as the main wildlife management area. Maps and more information about each area may be found online.



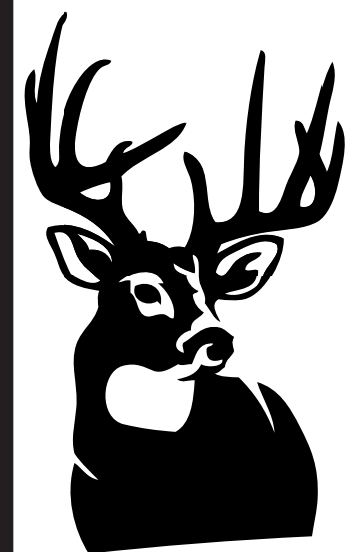
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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

First gun? Consider the 20 guage instead of .410

BY LEE McCLELLAN
KENTUCKY AFIELD

My first shotgun was an old .410-gauge Mossberg with a bolt action and pistol grip that once belonged to my grandmother. A decent squirrel gun, yet working the bolt to get off three shots at incoming doves was nearly impossible for me when excited. Doves flying nearby had little to fear when I shouldered that old .410.

Many think a .410-gauge is a good beginner's shotgun because of its lighter weight and reduced recoil, but in reality, it is the worst choice.

"I don't recommend them for a first shotgun," said Bill Balda, hunter education supervisor for the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources. "They are an expert's gun. You are much better off with a 20-gauge semi-automatic. The semi-automatic action soaks up much of the recoil. You get much more shot in a 20-gauge shotshell."

Balda explained the extra shot in

a 20-gauge shotshell than in a .410-gauge makes it much more forgiving. A typical .410 gauge shotshell holds ½-ounce of shot which correlates to 175 pellets of No. 7½ shot. A regular game load in a 20-gauge shotshell holds ¾-ounce of shot and 306 pellets of No. 7½ shot. You do the math.

Plus, with a semi-automatic shotgun, three trigger pulls gets you three shots quickly if you need them. Price, however, may be a deterrent to a semi-automatic shotgun. They are a large cost commitment, especially for someone just dipping their toes into the shotgun sports.

A single shot shotgun runs about \$150 brand new, with used ones available at half that price. An average semi-automatic shotgun costs several times more than a single shot. Both though, with proper care, should last a lifetime. My grandmother's .410 still shoots great today.

"Single shots are effective and they are good beginner guns,"

Balda said. "Single shots are hinge actions and easy to use. They are safe to handle for beginners as they are easy to see if they are loaded. Even with a shotshell in it, the gun can't go off with the action open."

These attributes make single shots a good option for a youth hunter. A single shot also teaches young hunters shot discipline. You are much less likely to take impractical, out-of-range shots when you have just one try at the target.

"Single shots are lighter and easy to carry in the woods," Balda said. However, the light weight brings with it more pronounced recoil or "kick." Balda recommends a low recoil shotshell for single shots.

A pump-action shotgun, where the shooter manually pulls the action to cycle a shotshell, falls in price between single shots and semi-automatics. New ones from established manufacturers run roughly \$300 - \$400, but some from less well known manufacturers go for as little as \$200.

"A pump is really reliable and almost any load will shoot in them," Balda said. "I think as a first shotgun, they are a little much to keep up with from worrying about pumping the action for the next shot."

Pump-action shotguns perform for decade after decade with routine maintenance. "They wear like iron," Balda said. "If money is an issue, a pump is a good choice for a repeating shotgun."

Proper fit is an important consideration for buying a first shotgun as well. "For the average person, length of pull is most important," Balda said.

The length of pull is the distance between the trigger and the butt end of the stock. A simple way to gauge length of pull is to place the butt of the stock of the unloaded shotgun in the crux of your arm, fold your arm into the gun and place your first finger on the trigger.

"You should be able to get the first notch of your finger on the trigger," Balda said. "If you can't, the stock is too long. If you get to the

second notch of your finger, then it is too short."

Installing a recoil pad lengthens the stock and often remedies one that is too short. He recommends taking the shotgun to a gunsmith for a proper fitting if the stock is too long.

Most manufacturers offer youth model shotguns with shorter stocks. These make excellent choices for many female shooters as well. Don't force a shooter to fit a certain shotgun, have the shotgun fit the shooter.

Also, mount the shotgun you are considering to your shoulder and place your cheek firmly on the gun stock as if ready to fire. "All you should see is the bead on the front of the barrel," Balda said. "If you are having trouble with that, mount the gun higher on your shoulder."

Consider these options for a first shotgun. The most important thing is the end result. "Look straight down the barrel at the target and paint it out of the sky," Balda said.

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

Trophy bass program back with cool water

Now that water temperatures are settling downward for the fall, the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources is resuming its trophy bass propagation program.

The program only accepts trophy-sized largemouth bass from anglers. In return, anglers receive a free replica mount of the fish. Bass accepted for the program are used as broodstock to grow a new generation of large fish.

"By pairing male and female largemouth bass that have already shown the ability to grow to larger-than-average size, we hope to produce offspring with the same genetic growth potential," said Jeff Ross, assistant director of fisheries at Kentucky Fish and Wildlife. "Stocking these offspring across the state could provide anglers a better chance at catching a memorable fish or even a new state record."

The program launched in spring 2016. Department officials shut down the program for the summer because higher temperatures are stressful for fish being transported to hatcheries.

This fall, the department will accept largemouth bass exceeding 7 pounds. In spring, when fish are preparing to spawn, the department will accept male largemouth bass weighing more than 6 pounds and female largemouth



Winter fishing in the Bluegrass State is pretty tricky at times, but the rewards are huge when it comes to big bass and sauger. The tailwaters on the Ohio River and downstream of Kentucky and Barkley dams are the best for sauger.

bass weighing more than 8 pounds. The swollen bellies of egg-laden fish make it easier to separate the males from female bass in the spring.

Anglers donated four trophy bass in the spring. Unfortunately, only one was caught early enough for the hatchery to spawn it. Offspring from that fish will be stocked in Fishpond and Greenbo lakes, where the adult trophy fish were caught. Trophy bass offspring will eventually be stocked at lakes across the state.

For more information about how to donate fish to the program, visit the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife website at fw.ky.gov and search under the keywords, "trophy bass."

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FROM KDFWR REPORTS

Turkey hunting is relatively new in modern day Kentucky, although they were prominent table fare for early pioneers. The restocking of turkeys in Crittenden County took place in the 1980s and early 1990s. Many of the turkeys were brought here from Missouri and Iowa.

Hunting for spring and fall turkeys in the commonwealth has become quite popular over the past 25 years.

Did you know that field dressing a turkey is much like cleaning a chicken? The easiest way to dress your freshly-harvested turkey is to split the skin on the belly between the tip of the breast and the tail. Reach under the breast and bring out the internal organs. If the turkey has been shot in the head and neck, as preferred, the organs should have little damage. If the intestines have been punctured, wipe any residue out of the body cavity. If you intend to save the pelt or any part



for a trophy mount, you will want to have paper towels to absorb blood from the feathers. Washing the blood off is not recommended, as the feathers absorb the water.

Whether you skin or pluck your turkey depends on what you intend for a trophy and a meal. If you plan to use the skin and feathers for a trophy, talk to a taxidermist for advice before you hunt. He or she can advise you on the best methods of removing skin and feather parts you want to preserve as your mount. If you want to use the turkey as a traditional roast turkey, you may want to pluck the feathers and save the skin on the bird. This will keep the meat moist during cooking. Any bird that will be frozen whole should be completely wrapped, preferably in an air-tight bag.

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

Big Rivers Wildlife Management Area in northern Crittenden and southern Union counties offers a variety of hunting, hiking, fishing and nature watching opportunities on 7,570 acres of wooded hillsides and open grasslands. The Ohio River overlook is one of the most magnificent views on the WMA. The WMA offers quota and non-quota deer hunting for archers. The modern rifle season is a quota hunt. Youth hunting is a non-quota firearms opportunity for whitetail deer.

Big Rivers WMA Crittenden & Union counties



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