

CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

HUNTING GUIDE

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FALL - WINTER 2017
CRITTENDEN COUNTY
KENTUCKY
FREE PUBLICATION
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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

2017 Kentucky Hunting Dates

Kentucky's 2017 hunting seasons through February 2018 are listed below with deer seasons applicable to Crittenden County and other Zone 1 counties.

Bullfrog	May 19 - Oct. 31
Squirrel	Aug. 19 - Nov. 10
Dove	Sept. 1 - Oct. 26
Crow	Sept. 1 - Nov. 7
Archery Deer/Turkey	Sept. 2 - Jan. 15
Canada Goose	Sept. 16 - Sept. 30
Wood Duck	Sept. 16 - Sept. 20
Teal	Sept. 16 - Sept. 24
Raccoon Hunt	Oct. 1 - Feb. 28
Crossbow	Oct. 1 - Oct. 22
Youth Deer	Oct. 14 - Oct. 15
Muzzleloader	Oct. 21 - Oct. 22
Crossbow	Nov. 11 - Dec. 31
Rifle Deer	Nov. 11 - Nov. 26
Fox	Nov. 13 - Feb. 28
Squirrel	Nov. 13 - Feb. 28
Rabbit	Nov. 13 - Feb. 10
Raccoon Trap	Nov. 13 - Feb. 28
Quail	Nov. 13 - Feb. 10
Duck	Nov. 23 - Nov. 26
Dove	Nov. 23 - Dec. 3
Canada Goose	Nov. 23 - Feb. 15
Bobcat	Nov. 25 - Feb. 28
Duck	Dec. 4 - Jan. 28
Muzzleloader	Dec. 9 - Dec. 17
Dove	Dec. 23 - Jan. 14
Free Youth Deer	Dec. 30 - Dec. 31
Crow	Jan. 4 - Feb. 28
Coyote Nighttime	Feb. 1 - May 31
Youth Waterfowl	Feb. 3 - Feb. 4
Coyote Daytime	Year Round
Groundhog	Year Round

The Crittenden Outdoors Hunting Season Guide was designed and published by The Crittenden Press, Inc., at 125 East Bellville Street, Marion, Ky. It is available in PDF form at The Press Online or MarionKentucky.org. Contact us at (270) 965-3191.



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Hayes claims county's big buck title

Thirteen-year-old Jada Hayes has been hunting deer with her dad since she was two. Last fall, she bagged a big eight-pointer that qualified as the youth champion in the annual Big Buck Contest sponsored by Hodge Outdoor Sports and Marion Tourism Commission. "I love being in the woods right before the sun rises and waiting for the chance to see a deer come out of the trees. There's nothing like it," said the young hunter who bagged her trophy on the last weekend of the rifle season.

Last fall, fewer hunters registered for the Big Buck Contest, according to Marion Tourism Director Michele Edwards. Only a handful of youth hunters signed up and about 100 adults were registered. All of the net proceeds from the contest go to Community Christmas, a local effort to help underprivileged families during the holidays. In 2006, \$447 went to Community Christmas. One year, the contest sent almost \$900 to the holiday program. Since the Big Buck Contest was started in 2005, more than \$7,500 has been contributed to the holiday project.

The contest has a unique scoring system. All animals must be checked at Hodge Outdoor Sports where they are weighed and measured. The formula is weight plus two times the number of points plus the inside spread.



Young Jada Hayes turned in the winning entry in last year's Big Buck Contest in Crittenden County.

Hunters for the Hungry feeds local families

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

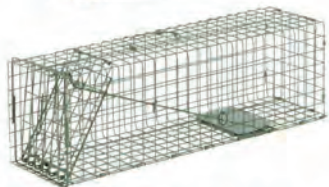
Hunters for the Hungry also has a companion program aimed at matching landowners needing deer depredation help with hunters willing to harvest those animals and donate them to the food bank. It is called The Kentucky Whitetail Access Program. More information can be found at http://kyhuntersforthehungry.info/whitetail_access.html

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

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

DEER HUNTING OUTLOOK GREAT FOR 2017-18

Mast crop okay; whitetails plentiful this fall

The morning air is crisp and comfortable. Dew blankets the grass and clings to spider webs that glisten as the sun's rays find them.

A taste of fall is enough to get any deer hunter excited with anticipation about what is around the corner.

The 2017-18 deer season opened last month for archers in Kentucky. With the start of the 136-day bow season, outdoors enthusiasts have lots of time to get out there and enjoy the opportunities afield. The crossbow, youth gun, muzzleloader and modern gun seasons are all part of the fall and winter hunting opportunities in the commonwealth. One is sure to find something that fits his or her taste.

There is plenty to feel good about as the fall seasons get underway. Last deer season, hunters reported taking more than 139,000 deer across Kentucky. It was the third highest harvest total on record and in line with the recent trend of record or near-record harvests. The overall harvest has averaged about 142,000 deer over the past five seasons in Kentucky.

"These are the good old days for Kentucky deer hunters," said Gabe Jenkins, deer program coordinator for the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources. "We have plenty of deer and many quality deer on the landscape. Hunters should expect hunting conditions similar to what they've experienced the past few years."

The herd estimate after the 2016-17 season showed a stable to slightly increasing trend across the state. This year, hunters will have more options available to them as they work to fill their tags.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife opened new wildlife management areas (WMAs) in Pulaski, Gallatin and Wayne counties in time for the fall hunting seasons. It also opened the December muzzleloader season on 17 WMAs and the youth gun seasons on eight WMAs.

In Crittenden County, the Big Rivers WMA is opening to quota archery and rifle hunting, plus some open archery hunting. It is open for youth rifle hunting, too. For more information about WMAs and hunting opportunities in Crittenden



and Livingston counties, see WMA Section on Page 14 of this publication.

The KDFWR's website is a good source of information about the newly opened Rockcastle River, Stephens Creek and Meadow Creek WMAs. Find these and all public hunting listed on the WMA and Public Lands Search page. Type "WMA/Public Lands Search" into the search box on the homepage. Each area's listing includes useful maps and information about hunting regulations for that area.

Hunters also may want to look into the ArcGIS Explorer app for mobile devices. With the app, hunters can view GPS location directly on boundary maps for public lands in Kentucky. The app is available for iOS and Android devices. Data usage rates may apply.

A mild winter and favorable conditions during the fawning season were encouraging signs for the season ahead.

"We had a good acorn crop last fall and a mild winter followed by a wet spring and summer," Jenkins said. "Everything went right this year for very high survival and reproduction."

Biologists look at various data sets and consider other factors when considering what to expect from a coming season.

The fall mast crop is a major consideration. Each year, Kentucky Fish and Wildlife analyzes red oak, white oak, hickory and beech trees at more than two dozen locations across Kentucky. The hard mast produced by these types of trees serves as an important food source for many animals over the fall and

winter.

Early returns for this year's mast survey suggest it could be a decent year for hickory and beech nut production, about average for red oaks and poor for white oaks. A spotty acorn crop could put deer on the move in search of food and help hunters' efforts.

"If we don't have many acorns, food plots should be great places to deer hunt," Jenkins said. "Folks who planted food plots should have excellent food plots this year. If you got it in, you got the rainfall, and it should be green."

Bowhunters established a new opening weekend record last year and helped set the tone for a great season. The modern gun season accounts for about 70 percent of the overall harvest each year. It opens statewide on the second Saturday in November and runs for 16 consecutive days in Zones 1 and 2 and for 10 consecutive days in Zones 3 and 4.

One wild card this year is the out-

break of epizootic hemorrhagic disease (EHD). EHD is transmitted to deer through the bite of a midge that carries the virus. The threat to deer ends when the first hard frost kills the biting gnats.

Through the end of August, Kentucky Fish and Wildlife had documented more than 1,400 cases of deer suspected of having contracted EHD.

While that is a drop in the bucket on a statewide scale, it is understandably concerning for hunters in those localized areas, considering some of the hardest hit counties have some of the lowest deer densities. Most of the reports have originated from counties east of Interstate 75. Five of the six counties with the greatest number of reported cases through Aug. 29 (Floyd, Magoffin, Breathitt, Pike and Bell) are assigned Zone 4 status, the most restrictive for deer hunting.

In Crittenden County, KDFWR biologist Philip Sharp said several re-

ports of possible EHD cases have been reported, but as of mid September none had been confirmed through laboratory testing.

The virus does not pose a threat to people or pets, and it cannot be contracted by eating meat from infected deer, according to biologists. The department recommends harvesting and eating only healthy deer and using disposable gloves to field dress game and process raw meat.

Hunters are reminded that they must check the animals they harvest and can do that by phone at 1-800-245-4263 or online at fw.ky.gov.

Also, always ask and obtain permission before hunting on private property and report game violations by calling 800-25-ALERT. Callers are asked for the county that they are calling about and forwarded to the nearest Kentucky State Police post, which dispatches a Kentucky Fish and Wildlife conservation officer.

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

Wildlife Commission proposes license fee increase which would start in 2018

The Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission unanimously recommended today that the department increase prices for some resident Kentucky hunting and fishing licenses.

The Commission is the guiding body for the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources. It took the action during its September quarterly meeting. It will be the first resident license price increase in more than a decade, and the first increase of the senior and disabled sportsman's licenses since their inceptions in 1999.

The Commission recommends all hunting, fishing and boating regulations for approval by the General Assembly and approves all expenditures by Kentucky Fish and Wildlife. All recommendations must be approved by legislators before they become law.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife relies primarily on license sales and federal excise taxes from the sale of hunting and fishing equipment for its revenue. It does not receive state General Fund money, such as those derived from income taxes or property taxes. The Department manages more than 600,000 acres for public use and stocks nearly 10 million fish each year. Hunting, fishing, boating and wildlife watching generate an estimated \$5.9 billion to Kentucky's economy each year.

The Commission's recommendation includes resident hunting licenses, fishing licenses, combination hunting/fishing licenses, senior and disabled sportsman's licenses and joint fishing licenses for spouses.

"Periodic license price increases are necessary to keep pace with inflation and general costs of living," said Commission Chairman Jimmy Bevins. "We usually project that an increase will last five years, but solid fiscal management historically has allowed us to make them last much longer."

The Department's last three resident rate changes happened in 1992, 1999 and 2007. License and permit fees for non-residents increased to help offset rising operational costs in 2014, but resident fees remained unchanged at the time.

Commission members said they took the action to help offset the rising costs of operating the Department's three summer camps

and the Salato Wildlife Education Center. In addition, increased revenue also will be utilized for increased conservation law enforcement efforts across the Commonwealth.

The three summer camps annually graduate more than 5,000 youth. The Salato Wildlife Education Center, located on the main Kentucky Fish and Wildlife campus, hosts more than 50,000 visitors each year.

"These programs are one main reason why Kentucky continues to see robust participation in hunting and fishing despite decreases seen in surrounding states," said Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commissioner Gregory K. Johnson. "Our children are our future sportsmen and sportswomen, and our future leaders."

"These license increases help the Department maintain a commitment and solid investment in outdoor education of our youth," said Johnson. "Revenue also will support a more complete law enforcement presence across the state, and improved law enforcement recruitment and retention."

"We operate almost entirely from user fees derived from hunting and fishing license sales, and federal excise taxes generated by the sale of hunting, fishing and shooting equipment and ammunition," said Bevins. "Other Kentucky state agencies are largely funded by General Fund tax dollars."

"The new rates for residents would not happen until the 2018 li-

cense year," said Bevins, "so that means we will have made our last increase last for 11 years – more than twice the original projection."

The Commission voted to increase a resident hunting license from its current \$20 to \$27, a resident fishing license from \$20 to \$23, a combination resident hunting/fishing license from \$30 to \$42 and the resident joint fishing license for spouses from \$36 to \$42.

Currently, the senior and disabled sportsman's licenses provide \$165 worth of licenses and permits for \$5. A resident sportsman's license costs \$95.

Under the Commission action, the senior and disabled sportsman's licenses would increase to \$18. In 2007, Kentucky sold 90,184 of these licenses. Kentucky's aging society caused that number to reach 120,426 by 2016, with that number projected to continue increasing.

"We surveyed senior and disabled license holders across Kentucky and had a strong response," said Bevins. "Nearly three quarters said they would continue to purchase a license even if it was as much as \$20."

"I believe the support from our seniors is a direct reflection of their own memories and experiences," he said. "They remember when all deer hunting in Kentucky was prohibited prior to 1956 because there were very few deer, and when there were no wild turkey, elk or bears, or fish hatcheries to raise and stock fish."

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	2016	3,081



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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

WMAs offer local public hunting opportunities

Big Rivers WMA

Located in Crittenden and Union counties, the WMA is 7,574 acres. Directions: From Sturgis, Ky., at the intersection of U.S. HWY 60 and KY 109, travel north on KY 109 for 1.65 miles, turn left (west) onto KY 1508 and proceed 1.45 miles to main Union County entrance on left. Also from Sturgis, at the intersection of US 60 and KY 365, travel west on KY 365 and proceed 2.5 miles to main Crittenden County entrance and area office on right. Additional Crittenden County access is available on Bells Mine Road off KY 365. From Marion, travel 7.5 miles east on US 60, turn left on KY 365 and travel for 6.8 miles.

Description: Steep to very steep upland hardwood forests, flat to rolling bottomland hardwood forest, and agricultural lands bordered by the Ohio River to the west and the Tradewater River to the south. Good populations of deer, turkey, squirrel, and furbearers exist on the area. ATVs, horseback riding, and

camping are prohibited

Regulations: Hunting is open under statewide regulations for small game, furbearer and turkey seasons, except these seasons are closed during the two-day quota hunt that starts the first Saturday in November.

Other Exceptions: Deer hunting is open under statewide regulations for the archery, crossbow and youth firearm seasons; however, during quota hunts, all deer hunting seasons on this WMA are closed, except to drawn hunters. Archery/crossbow-only quota hunt from the Monday following the October youth-only weekend through Nov. 30, except when closed during the two-day quota hunt that starts the first Saturday in November.

Waterfowl: Shooting hours are from one-half hour before sunrise to 2 p.m. Hunters may not enter the area until 4 a.m.

For more information: Call Contact: (270) 374-3025.

Livingston County WMA and State Natural Areas

Consists of three tracts, the Bissell Bluff SNA (562 acres), Newman's Bluff SNA (461 acres), and Reynolds (873 acres).

Regulations: Open under statewide regulations for squirrel, rabbit, quail, fall turkey and furbearer seasons.

Exceptions: Deer: The archery, crossbow, youth firearm, muzzle-loader and modern gun deer seasons are open under statewide regulations, except modern firearms may not be used to take deer during the modern gun season.

Turkey (Spring): Open for the youth-only turkey season, and open only to youth hunters during the general spring turkey season.

Ohio River Islands WMA

On the Ohio River upstream from Smithland Lock and Dam, Stewart (Birdsville) Island and surrounding river area is a waterfowl refuge closed Oct. 15-March 15. Accessed

by numerous ramps along Ohio River, including Birdsville Ramp off KY137. Public hunting allowed prior to closure. Twin Sisters, Pryor, Rondeau islands and a large marsh area located between Pryor and Twin Sisters islands provide waterfowl hunting from temporary blinds.

Access to the islands on Kentucky side north islands at Givens Creek Ramp off of Golconda Ferry Road, and south at Birdsville Ramp off of Birdsville Road at KY 137. Roads are accessible off of KY 137, north of Smithland, and on the Illinois side at Davidson Memorial Boat Ramp and Golconda Marina Ramp.

Stewart Island/Birdsville Island Unit: Deer: Open under statewide archery and crossbow seasons through Oct. 14 only. Open during October muzzleloader season; closed during December muzzleloader season. Open during the youth gun season; closed for free youth weekend. Quail & Rabbit: Closed. Squirrel: Open from the third Saturday in May through the third Friday in June;



and from the third Saturday in August through Oct. 14. Turkey (Fall): Archery and crossbow seasons open under statewide regulations through Oct. 14 only. Closed for fall gun season. Turkey (Spring): Open under statewide regulations. The Stewart Island Unit is closed to public access Oct. 15 – March 15, except during early muzzleloader deer season. Waterfowl: The portion of the Ohio River from Smithland Lock and Dam upstream to the powerline crossing at river mile 911.5 is closed to hunting. Stewart (Birdsville) Island is closed to public access Oct. 15 - March 15, except for October muzzleloader season. Shooting hours are from one-half hour before sunrise to 2 p.m. Hunters may not enter the area until 4 a.m.



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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

Reluctant contestant, upstater wins local big buck

It is safe to assume that the number of 40-something-year-old bachelors coming to Marion for excitement is quite low.

But then, there are always exceptions to the norm. That's where Ryan Bulle fits in.

An upstate New Yorker, Bulle has found a second home in Crittenden County. It's a place where he'd like to one day retire. But for now, he satisfies his thirst for western Kentucky with a two-week hiatus from his landscaping business every fall.

"I take the first two weeks of November every year and come down there to deer hunt," he said.

Bulle, 41, is the 2016 winner of the Marion Tourism/Hodge Outdoor Sports Big Buck Contest.

He will be the first to tell you that his idea of hunting is much purer than a contest. In fact, he wouldn't have registered had Barbara Hodge at the sporting goods store not encouraged him to do so because the money goes to a good cause. Proceeds from entries go to Community Christmas, an effort to make the holiday special for underprivileged families.

"I have never been a fan of buck pools. That's not why I hunt," he said. "But since this helps people I registered."

Bulle said the buck he took last fall with his bow was nothing special. The mainframe eight-pointer grossed around 130 inches.

"When they called me I thought Britt (Wright) or some of the girls at Hodge's had put them up to it."

Still, Bulle is tickled to win the \$1,000 cash because it will pay for his trip this coming fall. It takes several gallons of gas to drive 17 hours from the Catskill Mountains to Marion.

"I've tried it every which way and it still works out to about 17 hours," he said. "On the way down you're excited and it feels so great to get there. But that drive home is tough."

Since 2008, Bulle has been making the pilgrimage to bow hunt the early rut.

"That's just a great time to be in the woods. You see a lot of activity and the weather is usually good," he said.

Ironically, poor weather kept him at bay last fall. It was so



Register at Hodge's Sports & Apparel on Sturgis Road in Marion any time before harvesting a deer. Cash Jackpot is \$1,000. For more information and contest rules, call 1-800-755-0361 or visit online www.MarionKentucky.org

hot and dry when he and a hunting buddy arrived in Marion they decided to do other things instead of hunt. He's spent so much time in Crittenden County, Bulle has made lifelong friendships with everyone from the ownership at Hodge's to Todd Lucas at the taxidermy shop and many others. Janette Brantley, who was a server at Marion Cafe, and her husband, Brent, have befriended Bulle, who now stays in their cabin and hunts nearby.

"I have just fallen in love with the place," he said. "Everyone is so kind. I just have a ball."

With the weather less than cooperative last fall, Bulle loafed around until a cold front came through. The first day out, he missed a big buck with his bow. A couple of days later, he was able to take the eight-pointer that won the contest, but it wasn't as nice as the one he missed.

"It was just before 8 a.m., when I saw a doe being chased by a pretty good buck. She finally made her way across the field with the buck close behind her. She stepped through the hedgerow toward me, he followed and presented me with a broadside shot at 30 yards. The buck literally stood in the exact same spot as the previous deer I'd missed a couple days earlier," Bulle said.

This time, the arrow flew true and he bagged the buck. While the harvest was nice, it was

nothing akin to the first buck he took in Crittenden County which was just over 150 inches, and he's bagged another that topped 160. Still, the hunt was memorable and was made even

more eventful by learning that he'd won the contest.

Bulle says most people in Crittenden County consider him a yankee, but he's quick to point out that he isn't a city

slicker.

"The town where I live (Windham) is 1,300 people. It's smaller than Marion," he says with a chuckle. "I'm not from the city."

Bulle has been hooked on archery hunting since he bagged his first deer at age 12 while growing up in Minnesota. He has hunted all over the Midwest, but finds Crittenden County more appealing than the plains of Iowa or riverbottoms of southern Illinois.

A hunting guide in Pope County, Ill., first mentioned to him the opportunities in Crittenden County. Now, he's hooked.

"Eventually I'd like to purchase a small farm there one day and perhaps retire. It's a place I hold extremely dear to me and I'm truly blessed to have the opportunity to be a guest there each fall," Bulle said.

Register for the contest at Hodge's Outdoor Sports.

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2016 Deer Harvest Results

County	Bucks	Does	Bow	Rifle	M'loader	C'bow	Total
Crittenden	1,552	1,529	467	2,331	215	68	3,081
Webster	1,041	1,301	379	1,760	117	86	2,342
Livingston	921	838	224	1,350	158	27	1,759
Caldwell	921	771	224	1,305	128	35	1,692
Union	564	528	309	689	55	21	1,074
Lyon	449	332	146	577	43	15	781

KDFWR Statistics

2015 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

2014 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

Marion offers many attractions

The rolling hills of Crittenden County are home to Kentucky's largest Amish Community with a population of over 500. Cabinetry, furniture, baked goods and bulk foods as well as seasonal items such as plants, vegetables, pumpkins and gourds can be purchased from Amish families.

While visiting the Amish Community take your car on a boat ride across the Ohio River on the Cave in Rock Ferry. A free ferry runs continuous from the Kentucky side of the Ohio River to the southern Illinois town of Cave In Rock. Hours of operation are from 7 a.m., to 10 p.m. There is a beautiful riverside park overlooking the Ohio River at Cave In Rock.

Marion is a bustling town with quaint shops that sell many beautiful handmade items and antiques, delightful restaurants and coffee shops. The friendly people are always willing to visit and extend the Southern hospitality for which they are famous.

Marion is home to the Ben E. Clement Mineral Collection, a world-class collection of Kentucky

and Illinois flourite. The museum is two blocks from downtown.


Crystal specimens at the museum range in weight from a fraction of an ounce to hundreds of pounds. Each was a rare accidental find among regular ore bodies, and was brought from deep underground and preserved.

There is a 40-acre park about a mile from downtown. The park has

a 1.25-mile walking trail, basketball courts, skate park, ball diamonds, soccer complex and two playgrounds. There are public restrooms at the park which are open from March through November.

Marion has a number of other tourist opportunities. Visit the Marion Welcome Center on South Main Street for maps and other information.


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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

KDFWR officials answer leftover questions from Call-In TV Show

Viewers of "Kentucky Afield" television picked up their phones and took to social media in September to submit more than 200 questions for the annual fall hunting call-in show.

Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources wildlife biologists Gabe Jenkins and John Morgan, along with Sgt. Rufus Cravens of the department's Law Enforcement Division, joined "Kentucky Afield" host Chad Miles for the hour-long show that aired live on Sept. 16 on Kentucky Educational Television. The panel could not get to all of the questions before the credits started rolling.

Below, Kentucky Fish and Wildlife personnel answer a handful of the questions that did not make it on-air. Viewers who missed the live show can watch a full replay on YouTube. Enter "KYAfield" in the search box on the YouTube homepage.

Will Kentucky Fish and Wildlife consider adjusting deer seasons due to the EHD (Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease) outbreak? – Eddie from Morgan County

GABE JENKINS, Deer and Elk Program Coordinator, Kentucky Fish and Wildlife: We will not be implementing an emergency regulation to shorten or close deer season in 2017 in any county due to the EHD outbreak. We encourage folks to report all dead deer

they find using our online reporting system.

After the outbreak has ceased, we will evaluate the number reported along with the harvest data from the 2017 season and make our recommendations for the 2018 season at the December meeting of the Fish and Wildlife Commission. Deer are prolific breeders, and the population will rebound within a couple years.

Lastly, if your area has experienced a severe die-off, I would encourage hunters to participate in some self-restraint and pass once you have taken enough deer to fill your freezer for the year.

How far west have elk traveled in Kentucky? – Wayne from Marion County

JENKINS: We receive reports of elk outside the elk zone almost every year. In the early years of elk restoration, we saw elk leave the elk zone more frequently. We've had reports of elk as far west as Lake Cumberland and one elk went to North Carolina. We have had elk harvested outside the elk zone in Bath, Carter, Laurel, Madison, Wayne and Wolfe counties.

What resources are available through Kentucky Fish and Wildlife to assist with wildlife habitat improvement? – Gary from Grayson

BEN ROBINSON, Wildlife Division Assistant Director, Kentucky Fish and Wildlife: Kentucky Fish and Wildlife is committed to assisting landowners with wildlife habitat improvement on their property. We employ more than 30 wildlife biologists who specialize in assisting private landowners with habitat management projects. From tips about improving food sources for deer and turkey to navigating cost share programs through the federal Farm Bill, we have someone available to assist you.

For more information, visit our web site at fw.ky.gov or call 1-800-858-1549 and ask for the phone number of your local private lands or Farm Bill biologist.

Does prescribed burning on private and public lands benefit wild turkeys? Where can I find more information? – Tony from Montgomery County

ROBINSON: Kentucky Fish and Wildlife considers prescribed fire an essential management tool for private landowners and publicly managed Wildlife Management Areas.

Prescribed fires are carefully planned and managed by highly trained burn crews for containment to select areas.

We regularly use prescribed burning on grasslands and timbered areas to benefit a host of game and non-game species, including wild turkey.

Prescribed fire has many benefits. Fire removes old vegetation and stimulates new growth, providing a lush food source for wildlife. Fire promotes oak regeneration in our forests resulting in more acorns, a staple food source for many species. By removing dead vegetation, fire also creates bare ground, a necessity for bobwhite quail and other ground dwelling birds.

For more information on prescribed fire in Kentucky, visit the Kentucky Prescribed Fire Council's website www.kyfire.org.

Why was bear season closed in McCreary County on public land? – David from McCreary County

JOHN HAST, Bear Program Coordinator, Kentucky Fish and Wildlife: Bear numbers are still low in McCreary County. Kentucky Fish and Wildlife's philosophy on bear management is to allow as much hunter opportunity as the bear population will allow. What we may sacrifice in hunter opportunity in McCreary County for a few years will pay off when bears have a chance to grow within the county and expand more fully into surrounding counties, such as Pulaski and Rockcastle. Great bear habitat lies just to the north of McCreary County within the Daniel Boone National Forest, and it has the potential to provide a great place for bears and bear hunters in the future.

A population of bears is very slow in its growth and patience is necessary to see any big leaps in the season quota. You can rest assured that Kentucky Fish and Wildlife is actively monitoring bears in McCreary County in order to improve our population models. When the bear population is ready, hunters will once again be able to hunt public land.

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Fishing is a major attraction in this part of the state. Several nearby lakes and rivers provide a variety of fishing opportunities.

The Ohio River, which borders Crittenden County on the northern edge, provides a wide variety of species on its Smithland Pool and the Cumberland River has good fishing, too.

You will find crappie, black and white bass, sunfish, sauger and catfish on the Ohio. The largemouth bass fishing is outstanding enough to attract several local and

national bass tournaments. The angling possibilities are wide enough in numbers and variety to satisfy the most demanding fisherman. For access to the Ohio and Cumberland rivers, boat ramps with ample parking are located at Riverview Park (formerly known as Dam 50 Area) for the Ohio and at Dycusburg, Ky., for the Cumberland.

The Smithland Pool is formed by the high lift dam near Smithland, Ky. The pool runs from near Uniontown, Ky., 72 miles to the dam. Smithland Pool is over 27,000 acres in size and contains many small embayments.

Also, don't forget nearby Kentucky and Barkley lakes, which are within 20 miles of Marion. The lakes are famous, and offer some of the best crappie, bass, catfish and bluegill fishing in the nation.



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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

Youth Hunting Tips

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 mile-stones 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.

We asked folks to reply on social media about their experiences or tips for hunting with youngsters. Following are their comments:

Jacob Perryman: I have not taken my own child yet (too young), but I have taken a lot of kids hunting over the years. A good comfortable stand or blind is number 1. The second (depending on the age) don't make them wait on the monster buck. If the youth wants to shoot a doe let them. If they want to shoot that young buck let them. They will be grown one day and will understand managing for big bucks but right now they just want to be outdoors with you and be successful. Lastly, no matter how small the harvest, you should be just as excited as they are. If you're not, you are doing something wrong. I would much rather watch a youngster harvest a small buck than to harvest a big buck myself. The happiness and excitement can't be explained. It has to be witnessed.

Robin Duncan-Curnel: We took our children hunting when they were little. Sunday afternoons set up against a hay bale in the field. Most of the time they took a nap, but that wouldn't be their version of the trip. They didn't care what they saw or didn't see, they were hunting as far as they were concerned. As old as they are now, opening morning we still go and they still take a nap.

Sonny Duncan: I have always been an avid hunter myself, very seldom ever missing any season (especially deer and duck seasons). Now that I have kids, things have changed a bit. With my children being very involved in sports (and myself included) I can't seem to find the time to hunt that I once did. That being said, every chance we get, we all go deer hunting together. That includes myself, my



Young Daryl Sherer enjoys hunting with his father, Barrett. Here, he examines a large buck rub.



Scottie Brown and his son, five-year-old Brier, enjoy a day afield.

daughter, my son and even my wife. Opening morning of deer season is like a holiday. The moment my daughter got her first deer was probably the best hunting trip to date until my son gets one. My kids absolutely love duck hunting. It's way different than deer hunting. We laugh and cut up tell stories and really just have a blast. Wouldn't trade our hunting time for anything in the world.

Scottie Brown: My advice on taking a little one hunting is that it is their hunt not ours. You have to make sure and keep them warm and comfortable first and foremost. Don't pressure them into harvesting a certain animal, let them decide which animal they would like to take. Whether it be 10 minutes or 10 hours when they say they're ready to go, you leave. Keep it fun for them and teach them all you can while you wait. Some of my fondest memories of my dad involve hunting and I have enjoyed passing those memories and lessons on to my boys.

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

COVER STORY

Bonds of Berry matrimony forged afield

BY CHRIS EVANS

THE CRITTENDEN PRESS

This big buck story starts with a chance encounter at church camp and a risky move on a cool September evening.

Linking it together were some permanent vows, digital pictures and a grandfather's wisdom.

Sketch in a few more details and this formula results in a Pope and Young quality whitetail that has steeled the bonds of matrimony between Crittenden County newlyweds.

It all started about seven years ago when Brian Berry and Kaitlyn Clapp — two teenage high schoolers — met at Brandon Springs Group Camp in Land Between the Lakes. Kaitlyn, from Graves County, and Brian, from Crittenden, were smitten with one another from the beginning. They struck up a relationship at the Cumberland Presbyterian camp and maintained it the best they could over the next few years with 75 miles separating them. Even though they drifted apart for a time, one thing that always drew them back together — besides their affection for one another — was a love for the outdoors.

Kaitlyn grew up in Wingo, Ky., trekking along behind her father on hunting excursions from the time she was able. Her family has long kept a hunting lease in Livingston County, ironically, not too far from where she eventually made her home near Salem.

Kaitlyn and Brian tied the knot in May. Their courtship, soldered with countless adventures afield, was not unlike any other with its share of movies and dinners out on the town. However, they seemed to find a higher spiritual link within their vigils afield.

At first, Kaitlyn deferred to Brian when it came time to pull the trigger. Although she was perfectly accepting of the arrangement, her grandpa warned Brian of the perils for not dividing in equitable form the glories in taking game.

"It started when he took the gun from me on a turkey hunt," says Kaitlyn.

"But there was a sapling in front of her and she couldn't swing to shoot," retorts Brian.



"Her grandfather said something to me about getting all the shots," Brian explains with a chuckle. "So I knew I had to do something to get my reputation back."

To shed any appearance of being a game-hog, Brian accepted the role of second and started giving his bride more chance for glory. On an early September bow hunt, just a few days into the 2017 season, she scored mightily on a 10-pointer that grossed nearly 145.

Brian was without a doubt more excited — especially before the arrow was released.

The couple likes to hunt together, sharing the experience on separate trees with lock-on stands placed close enough to communicate with whispers or hand gestures.

With help from trail cameras, they had identified and traced the routine of a certain buck that was coming to a soybean field nearly every afternoon about 6:15. They named him Taz, short for Tasmanian Devil because he when arrived each day for dinner at the crop field, the buck "tore up stuff and ran all over the place" marking his territory.

"We used a double set for a

southwest wind," Brian said.

It was Labor Day weekend and they hunted the buck Sunday and Monday. On the first hunt, he was within 10 yards at one point, but never presented a shot.

"Brian hadn't cleared out the shooting lanes good enough," says Kaitlyn.

He rectified the situation early on Labor Day and they tried it again that evening.

"Taz was acting crazy," said Brian. "It was a perfect wind, but he had me puzzled. He fed into the field at about 50 yards then went right back into the woods."

With the holiday behind them, it was back to work. Kaitlyn is a student-teacher in the Livingston County School District, completing work for a degree from Murray State. Brian is an insulator, working out of an area union hall. They decided to race home from their jobs on Wednesday evening, Sept. 6 and challenge Taz once again. They showered and applied formulas to eliminate human odor before the hunt and took a Honda side-by-side ATV to the bean field.

When they arrived, Brian had concerns. The wind wasn't right. The air was cooler as a weather

front pushed through, taking the afternoon temperatures into the mid 70s. A light breeze was feathering in from the northwest.

"It was swirling off the bluffs and I knew it was risky," Brian said.

There were a dozen or so does in the field early, then Taz showed up right on schedule. He and a small bachelor group postured around one another for a time at about 80 yards then the devil wind got them. The females under their stands caught a whiff and bolted into the field toward the bucks.

"I thought it was over," Kaitlyn said.

Eventually, the herd calmed. Taz bristled when an inferior male crossed his face, then lowered his guard and began feeding calmly toward the couple's setup.

Holding her Hoyt Charger Vicxon bow with her left hand for about 45 minutes had deadened the arm.

"It was going numb," Kaitlyn said.

She flexed her hand a time or two to promote some blood flow and Brian whispered for her to be still.

"I didn't get nervous," she said. "But Brian was huffing and puffing and the leaves on the tree he was in were rattling."

"I didn't get nervous until it was over," she added, looking out of the corner of her eyes toward her new husband.

"When I looked at her, she was already drawn," said Brian. "I told her to hold on."

About that time, the buck stepped into range she released.

Smack, the arrow hit the buck on a downward trajectory from her 23-foot loft.

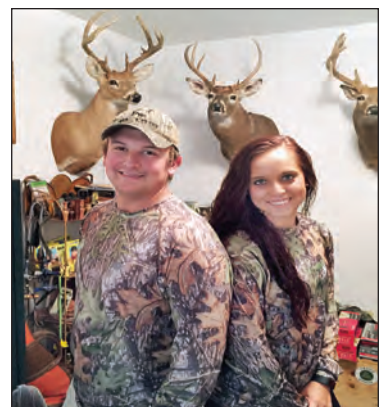
"It looked like a lung shot," Brian said.

They watched Taz dash out of sight after about 200 yards. As the buck raced away, Brian saw the fletching barely sticking out of the buck's side.

"I knew she'd gotten good penetration," he said.

But then doubt began setting in. Was it a too high? Did it get an organ?

Only time would tell.



Their trophy room contains previous conquests.

They exited the scene for a few hours, returning at 10 p.m., to begin looking for her deer just as a heavy dew was setting in. They got some help from friends, Cole Bebout, Lance Brantley and Judd Woodward. Yet, after finding a good blood trail for about 100 yards from the last spot they'd seen Taz, signs grew dim. They gave up the search at 2:30 a.m., knowing they'd both get only a few hours sleep before reporting to their jobs.

Brian's father, Wes, a coal miner, had some time to look for the deer before his shift started the next day. Just before noon he'd given up and phoned Brian to tell him he'd exhausted his opportunity and was headed to the mines.

"He was actually on the phone with me when he said, 'Oh, here's her buck, Brian.'"

Dad stumbled upon the deer in high weeds. He snapped a few photos and texted them to his son and daughter-in-law. They promptly clocked out and headed home.

"We couldn't stand it," Kaitlyn said. "We had to get there."

In full velvet, the 10-pointer sported ideal symmetry. The main beams were both about 23 inches long and the scoring was within a couple of inches from being identical on both sides. It was taken to local taxidermist Robert Kirby for immortalization and the couple plan to hang it in their trophy room alongside mementos from other conquests.

"We really enjoy being together and hunting together," said Brian.

Chances are that will make for a long and bountiful partnership.

CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

Great outdoors gift ideas

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services' 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation unveiled that more than 90 million United States residents aged 16 or older participated in some sort of wildlife-related activity that year — the most recent year on record. Wildlife recreationists spend nearly \$150 billion per year on their activities. With this in mind, those who have hunters, anglers or outdoorsmen on their holiday shopping lists may find that gifts facilitating these specific pursuits can be the ideal fit this holiday season.

Rather than scouring the mall for hours, a visit to the nearest sports outfitter can yield a bevy of appropriate gift ideas. For some inspiration, consider these gifts for the outdoor enthusiast.

- Binoculars: Scoping out territory and looking for game is often part of the hunt. A set of durable new binoculars can give hunters an edge.

- GPS/digital watch: Although many smartphones tell time and offer GPS services, lightweight watches may be more convenient

than phones. For example, the Garmin Fenex Watch is waterproof and offers such functions as GPS, an altimeter, barometer and a digital compass.

- Waders: Anglers sometimes need to get up close and personal with their prey. A sturdy pair of breathable waders is ideal for those who venture out of the boat or off of the coast.

- Wool socks: They may be a basic item, but hikers, hunters and other sports people can't stock up enough on warm, sweat-wicking wool socks that will keep their feet comfortable and dry on all excursions.

- Folding knife: Knives are ideal for cutting fishing line, twigs for a campfire and much more. A sturdy, quality knife that fits easily in a pocket or backpack is a must-have for hunters, campers and anglers.

- Water-resistant pouch: A day on the boat or near the water requires gear that can get wet without soiling items stored inside. Choose a pouch that can fit a camera, keys, phone, and other necessities.



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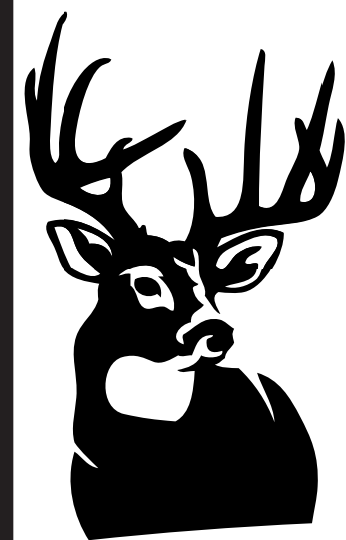
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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

HIP Survey required before hunting birds

The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources reminds dove, waterfowl and other migratory birds hunters to complete their Harvest Information Program survey before hunting this fall.

"The information gathered by the Harvest Information Program (HIP) allows us to determine how many birds hunters took; then we can determine the harvest," said John Brunjes, migratory bird program coordinator for the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources. "This information helps to set our migratory bird regulations."

The process takes less than 5 minutes. To begin, visit the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife website at www.fw.ky.gov and click on the "My Profile" tab on the top left corner of the page.

You then answer a few questions about your migratory bird harvest last year. Once finished, you are assigned a confirmation number.

"Even if you didn't hunt migratory birds such as doves or waterfowl last year, you still need to fill out the questions on the survey," Brunjes said. "It gives us data on the number of migratory bird hunters."

The implementation of the HIP survey in Kentucky improved the veracity of the data that biologists use. "We changed systems," Brunjes said. "We went from completely unreliable data to extremely accu-



rate data. In the absence of good data, we have to be more conservative in our migratory bird regulations, which means less opportunity for hunters."

Brunjes said Kentucky's HIP system is under consideration for implementation on a national scale. "They are considering it because of the improvement in our harvest data," he said.

In addition to a HIP confirmation number, migratory bird hunters need a valid Kentucky hunting license and a Kentucky Migratory Game Bird-Waterfowl Permit to be legal hunters.

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

To protect your trophy, get it directly to a local taxidermist



Hunters need to know the proper way to care for and dispose of their deer carcass before and after processing, says the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources.

If you plan on having your trophy preserved by a taxidermist, the best policy is to keep the hide clean and undamaged. If you remove the head from the carcass yourself, remember to leave more than enough skin beyond the neck area. You can never have too much hide, says local taxidermist Robert Kirby.

"If you're unsure how to properly cape your trophy deer, I would recommend just bringing the entire animal to me," added Kirby, who operates Outdoor Obsessions.

"Bring it to me before it goes to a processor or before you start processing it yourself," he adds.

If you will be cutting up the venison yourself, be sure to get the animal into a cool, shady area as quickly as possible. Never leave it in direct sunlight, even during fall days when temperatures might seem appropriate for hanging a deer with safety. November sunshine can cause problems quickly for the carcass.

Crittenden County's Hunters for the Hungry program will accept deer donated by hunters. The Family Butcher Shop will accept donated deer at 346 Rooster Lane off Ky. 654 North Monday through Saturday. Hunters for the Hungry operates on donations, so please give to the organization when you donate a deer. Your contribution helps pay processing fees. The venison is distributed by the Crittenden County Food Bank at the former health department building in Marion.

One thing hunters should never do is discard a carcass improperly or illegally. Leaving the remains on the property where you harvested the deer is the best disposal method. If you are hunting on an-

other 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.

"Disposing of it on the side of the road is not a good idea, it is littering," said Tina Brunjes of the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources. "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."

Hunters who plan to carry a carcass out of Kentucky need to know the laws in the destination state and the states through which the deer will be transported.

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

Squirrel hunting perfect for beginners

Generations of hunters have honed basic hunting skills and techniques and provided tasty table fare by stalking the forest for squirrels.

For local wildlife biologist Philip Sharp, the memories of squirrel hunts as a youngster outpace current activities. Yet, he still says chasing bushy tails is the best way to become a better hunter and outdoorsman.

"When I was young we didn't have the deer population that we do today so everyone squirrel hunted, rabbit hunted and quail hunted. Small game is just what we did," said Sharp, who is a private lands biologist for the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources.

As a youngster he and his older brother spent hours gunning for squirrels on the Higginson Henry Wildlife Management Area in southern Union County. He recalls getting to the best hunting spots well

before daylight because otherwise, you'd be overrun with other hunters.

"There would be 10 or 12 trucks parked there by the time we came out of the woods," he said. "We would get on those old horse trails and when we started hitting spider webs we knew we were in good shape because we were past where other hunters had gone."

Kentucky's fall squirrel season opened in August and runs until the end of February other than a short pause for the opening day of rifle deer season.

Squirrel hunting is good this season. Biologists say squirrel numbers have been trending up for a little while. The squirrel population is in really good shape right now, according to wildlife officials.

Hunters help Kentucky Fish and Wildlife monitor the squirrel population by volunteering for the annual Squirrel Hunter Cooperator Survey.

The fall mast crop plays a con-

siderable role in squirrel populations. Following a good mast year, squirrels typically enter spring and summer in better physical condition and female squirrels tend to produce healthier litters.

Last year was a good season for nuts, but Sharp says the white oaks are really low in number this year and squirrels have already cleaned up most of the hickory nuts.

"A squirrel will eat just about anything. They eat a lot of insects. And they will eat corn, soybeans, buds on trees, persimmons and they really like dogwood berries," Sharp explains. "Hickory nuts are probably their preferred food source, but those don't last very long."

As children, many of us were taught to stop, look and listen before crossing a roadway or railroad tracks. The concept also applies to squirrel hunting during the early fall season when trees are still full of leaves and the dense foliage can conceal squirrels from a hunter's sight. That's why a lot of people prefer to use a shotgun in the early season.

"Small game hunting, especially squirrel hunting is the No. 1 way to

introduce a new hunter to the outdoors," said the biologist. "You don't have to be 100 percent quiet, but it teaches them to read sign, pay attention, to look and listen. You use a lot of your senses in becoming a good squirrel hunter."

Deer hunters tend to sneak into a stand or blind, sit there a few hours then slip out of the woods, Sharp explained. That type of experience might be less rewarding for a young outdoors enthusiast looking for a more stimulating experience.

While you're afield, look for stands of hickory, oak and beech trees. Freshly cut nuts falling from above or shavings piled around the base of a tree are tell-tale signs of a good place to set up for squirrels.

Setting up in the early morning or at dusk are good bets. Squirrels are most active during those periods.

Be patient. Wait for noise. Watch for the treetops moving. That's a good indication that a squirrel is working above you.

Novices may find squirrel hunting to their liking because it doesn't require an abundance of equipment or gear to get started.

A 20-gauge or smaller shotgun is preferred by many for early squirrel season while a .22-caliber rifle is a late season staple once the leaves have fallen. Some comfortable camouflage clothing, a grippy pair of boots along with bug spray, and you're all but set for an early season outing.

Sharp recommends carrying a can of tick spray such as Permethrin. You must take precautions against the ticks, he said. Watch for ticks on the squirrels and in your game bag, too, if you use one.

Hunters are allowed six squirrels per day, with a possession limit of 12 squirrels. Consult the Kentucky Hunting and Trapping Guide for additional information about squirrel hunting.

Fall Squirrel Hunter Cooperator Survey logs are available by calling Kentucky Fish and Wildlife at 1-800-858-1549 or online at fw.ky.gov. Click on the "Hunt" tab, select "Game Species" from the dropdown menu and click "Squirrel." Each year, hunting log cooperators receive an annual report and a small gift for their participation.

Drive carefully at deer time

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 them.

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.

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