



Rare mussels released into Big South Fork of Cumberland River

A collaborative effort between the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Park Service placed three endangered species of freshwater mussels into the Big South Fork of Cumberland River on Aug. 12.

More than 100 juvenile mussels comprised of three species, the Cumberlandian combshell, the tan riffleshell and the littlewing pearly-mussel, now live in a shoal upstream of Blue Heron in the Kentucky section of the Big South Fork. All three species are protected under the Endangered Species Act.



Lee McClellan photos



“One of the last places on Earth they survive is right behind me,” said Monte

McGregor, mussel biologist for Kentucky Fish and Wildlife, while standing on the banks of the shoal. “These are the rarest of the rare.”

McGregor and his team raised these mussels at Kentucky Fish and Wildlife’s Center for Mollusk Conservation in Frankfort from broodstock collected from that site on the Big South Fork in 2013. These three species currently reproduce in low numbers in the river. This effort helps bolster those wild populations.

All of the released mussels have a small tag on them for identification and further monitoring. The Big South Fork

See “Mussels,” page 6

INSIDE:



2 Retiring employees



7 Davison Woods



8 Native walleye



Marvin Adams

After 30 years of service with the department, **Marvin Adams** retired from the agency on July 31st.

Marvin wore many hats during his tenure with the department, but most recently took care of shipping and receiving, uniforms and supplies for the agency. Marvin also served as the Records Retention Officer for the department.

Marvin knew everyone in the department and many staff members would



Denise Boebinger and David Bruce

Retirements

make a special trip to see him when in Frankfort, even if they did not need supplies or uniform items.

Marvin has been battling health issues for several years and our thoughts and prayers are with him and his family.

After many years with the department, **Denise Boebinger** has wrapped up her licensing duties July 31.

Denise will still call Frankfort home, but will be spending quite a bit of time in Florida as well. Denise has worked for the Department since 1990 and has spent the majority of that time involved in our Sport and Commercial licenses area, including managing the branch for many of those years.

Her vast experience in the licensing system and dealing with our many license agents throughout the state has helped make the licensing area successful for the last 20+ years. She has helped lay solid groundwork for our future license enhancements.

We wish Denise all the best in the next phase of her life and hopefully she will at least send us some pictures of the sun setting over the ocean. Best wishes Denise!

Fisheries Technician **Tim Abney** retired August 1st following a 27-year career with the Department.

Tim graduated from McLean Co. High School, did a tour of duty with the U.S. Army, and then started with Fish & Wildlife upon his return to the

states. Tim began his illustrious career in the Southwestern Fishery District in Bowling Green as a creel clerk on Green River Lake in March 1988. He returned



Tim Abney

the following year as a creel clerk on Baren River Lake, but was hired as a full-time Fisheries Technician halfway through the survey.

Tim worked in the Southwestern District until transferring to the Northwestern Fishery District in 2002. Tim routinely used his vast set of technical skills to assist other divisions within the Department.

In addition to his duties as a Fisheries Tech Tim was also a Hunter Education Instructor and regularly participated in youth hunting and fishing events. Tim was an asset to the entire Department during his tenure.

He is looking forward to afternoon naps, fishing, and traveling in his retirement...that is when he's not working at Menards in Owensboro.

See "Retirements," page 3



John Widener



Greg Ison

“Retirements,” continued

John Widener retired July 31 after more than 29 years of service to the agency. As a game management foreman, John supervised care of the wildlife and fish housed on the now Headquarters Complex.

Among numerous activities and the 365-day-a-year job the animal care staff perform, some of John’s favorite duties over the years were charming the Salato Center’s venomous snakes, rescuing other agency personnel from cage wrestling matches with white-tailed bucks, removing various decorations from the rack of hopped-up bull elk in rut, calming massive, very feisty bull bison playing tag with his co-workers, practicing safe large-aquarium diving maneuvers and designing elaborate, custom-made raccoon defense systems for our resident wildlife enclosures.

We wish Johnny well in retirement where he will continue to farm, be a licensed nuisance wildlife operator, play a little Bluegrass music, and try to keep up with his grandkids in there somewhere.

Willie
AmburgeyBrian K.
Taylor

Greg “Big’n” Ison and Conservation Officer **Willie Amburgey** celebrated their retirement at Carr Fork Lake on July 29, 2015.

They both started as seasonal technicians for the Southeast District 28 years prior and were hired full time in 1990 as Wildlife Technicians. They were key in the early grouse trapping efforts in the region and also played an important role in the stocking of white-tailed deer throughout

Eastern Kentucky.

They participated in the first capture of a black bear in Kentucky in 1993 and the reintroduction of elk in 1997-2002. Greg moved out of the Southeast Division and into the Deer and Elk Program in 2005 where he served until his retirement.

In 2002, Willie changed careers and moved to the Law Enforcement Division. He started his law enforcement career in Harlan County and later transferred to Knott County where he stayed till his retirement.

Although he felt it was time to move on, he said he was going to miss the many people that influenced his career.

Congratulations to them

both for the many accomplishments over their distinguished careers, and we wish them a happy retirement.

Conservation Officer **Brian K. Taylor** retired August 1, 2015 after serving the Commonwealth of Kentucky for 28 years.

Brian began his employment with the Department in 2001 as a Kentucky Conservation Of-

ficer serving the Hopkins County area. He spent several years patrolling the vast Peabody Wildlife Management Area in Western Kentucky. Brian had prior state service with the Transportation Cabinet.

Brian is looking forward to getting back into hunting, fishing, playing golf, and catching a few UK football games. He will start all these activities only after he finishes the enormous “honey-do” list that has accumulated over the past 28 years.

NBTC recognizes John Morgan for his bobwhite quail work



Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources' quail biologist **John Morgan** was recently awarded one of the nation's most prestigious conservation awards.

The National Bobwhite Technical Committee (NBTC) made Morgan the latest recipient of its Individual Achievement Award, the "Hall of Fame" for quail biologists across the country.

The award was presented in front of representatives from more than 20 states at the annual NBTC meeting held in Gallopway, NJ.

John's energy, commitment, work ethic, innovative thinking, and ability to embrace rather than run from a challenge have been instrumental in Kentucky's quail restoration successes. He has played a key role in national as well as state level

quail recovery. He has served diligently on the NBTC Research Sub-committee and the NBTC Steering Committee for many years, and most recently rose to the challenges of becoming Chair-elect of the NBTC Steering Committee.

John has been pivotal to the continued momentum of the national Coordinated Implementation Program, a groundbreaking approach to monitor quail restoration success across the nation's quail focal areas.

Because of these efforts, John Morgan has not only earned the National Bobwhite Technical Committee Annual Award, but also the respect and gratitude of those with whom he serves in a large-scale effort to bringing back bobwhites across the entire range of the bobwhite quail.

Mullins is MFC Officer of the Year

Kentucky Conservation Officer **Dustin Mullins** was recognized last month in July at the Mississippi Flyway Council (MFC) meeting in New Orleans. Mullins was selected as the MFC Law Enforcement Officer of the Year by his peers. He was selected from a large group of nominees from within the 14 states and three Canadian provinces that make up the MFC.

The criteria for this prestigious award include wetlands protection efforts, youth hunter involvement, waterfowl education, law enforcement work and more.

Congratulations to Officer Mullins and thank you for your dedication to preserving Kentucky's waterfowl resources. Pictured above are Captain **Brett Zalla** (MFC Law Enforcement chairman), Betsy Mullins, Officer Dustin Mullins and Deputy Commissioner **Dr. Karen Waldrop** (MFC chair)



Promotions

Mike Strunk has been promoted to Regional Coordinator for the Southeast region. Mike has a bachelors in wildlife management and masters in biology from Eastern Kentucky University.

He has worked for a private consulting firm, as Buck Creek Watershed Coordinator in a joint position with the Pulaski County Conservation District, and The Nature Conservancy.

For the past 10 years he has worked as a private lands biologist in the region. Mike's diverse work experience, knowledge, and enthusiasm will be a great asset in his new role and we know he will do an excellent job.

His other interests include hunting, fishing and kayaking. Mike is married to Amy Strunk and they have three children: Dylan, Ally and Addy.

Mike says, "The thing I enjoy the most is spending time with my family outdoors, from time spent afield turkey



COMMISSION MEMBERS TAKE OATH

Gov. Steve Beshear reappointed Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Members Vancel Thacker and Chris Godby to second terms earlier this month. Franklin District Judge Chris Olds administered the oath of office prior to the start of last weeks Commission meeting. Thacker represents the Seventh District and Godby the Ninth. They will serve four-year terms.

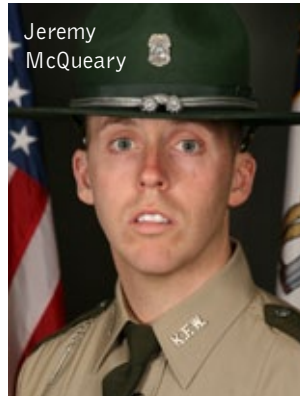
or deer hunting to fishing for bluegill or smallmouth. I am extremely fortunate to

have a family that values time together in the great outdoors as much I do."



SHIKAR SAFARI HONORS OFFICERS FOR 2013 AND 2014

Officers Chris King (District 9) and Steve Nelson (District 4) were recently recognized at the Audubon Country Club in Louisville for their selection as the Shikar Safari Officer of the Year for 2013 and 2014 respectively. From left are Captain Stuart Bryant, Officer Chris King, Shikar Safari International representatives Christian and Janis Bohner, Officer Steve Nelson, Colonel Joe West and Captain Brett Zalla.

James
NasonEd
MahurinJeremy
McQuearyPatrick
BrannenDamon
FosterGreg
WattsAndrew
SuitRaymond
LawsonDavid
Marques

Law Enforcement Division names nine new lieutenants

Law Enforcement Division recently named new lieutenants in eight districts and its Operations Support Branch at Headquarters.

The promotions became effective August 16.

James Nason is the new lieutenant in the Second District, **Ed Mahurin** in the

Third, **Jeremy McQueary** in the Fourth, **Patrick Brannen** in the Fifth, **Damon Foster** in the Sixth, **Greg Watts** in the Seventh, **Andrew Suit** in the Eighth and **Raymond Lawson** in the Ninth. **David Marques** is the lieutenant for the Operations Support Branch.

“Mussels,” continued

National River and Recreation Area is a refuge for 11 species of freshwater mussels on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife’s Endangered Species List.

“The Big South Fork is the last place you can actually find the littlewing pearly-mussel,” said Leroy Koch, senior biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and an authority on freshwater mussels. “If we lose them here, we’ve likely lost them for good.”

The Center for Mollusk Conservation reintroduced four other endangered mussel species in the Big South Fork including the dromedary pearlymussel, the spectacle-case, the fluted kidneyshell and the oyster mussel over the past several years.





100 acres of Salato woodlands became Davison Woods, named after longtime Salato Manager Laurie Davison who died in June. Her parents, Dexter and Josette Davison, spouse Mary Daniels, children Yacob and Cathey, friends, and fellow employees took part as the Department dedicated the woodlands in her name. *Dave Baker photos*



DAVISON WOODS and HIKING TRAILS



In memory of Salato Center Manager Laurie Davison (1963 – 2015)

Laurie encouraged thousands to explore the wonder of Kentucky's wildlife along many paths, including these hiking trails she designed and helped clear for public enjoyment.

Did You Know...

Laurie's favorite trail was the longest - the only through-hike in North America. Hikers can easily remove to allow, and to the same ground by volunteers, maintenance and other staff.



DAVISON WOODS



Native strain walleye re-introduced to the Upper Kentucky River

Native southern strain walleye returned to the Kentucky River for the first time in several generations when the KDFWR stocked fingerlings in over 100 miles of the upper Kentucky River recently.

Southern strain walleye are native to much of Kentucky and the native strain walleye produced at the Minor Clark Fish Hatchery are

part of KDFWR's larger effort to re-establish native walleye populations to much of their former range.

This genetic strain of walleye is known to grow and mature faster and reach a larger maximum size than their northern strain cousins and so the re-introduction should be welcome news to anglers.

In early June, KDFWR staff stocked 25,255 advanced fingerling native walleye at multiple locations in all three forks above Lock and Dam No. 14.

KDFWR also expanded the native walleye stocking in the Barren River watershed, as for the first time, the lower Barren River and parts of Drakes Creek were also stocked with 41,288 advanced fingerling native walleye.

All native walleye populations in Kentucky are expected to be given an extra bit of protection in the future as new regulations have been passed by the KDFWR commission and are pending legislative approval. These special regulations are an 18 to 26 inch protective slot limit and a two fish daily creel limit and will apply to all native walleye waters.

This stocking program has not been without its challenges. Collecting enough native walleye broodfish from the wild has



John Williams photo



Dave Dreves photo

been a perennial problem. The department has aggressively tried to expand the native walleye restoration program, so as waters where broodstock can be obtained increases, more areas to be stocked are added.

The Minor Clark Fish Hatchery staff

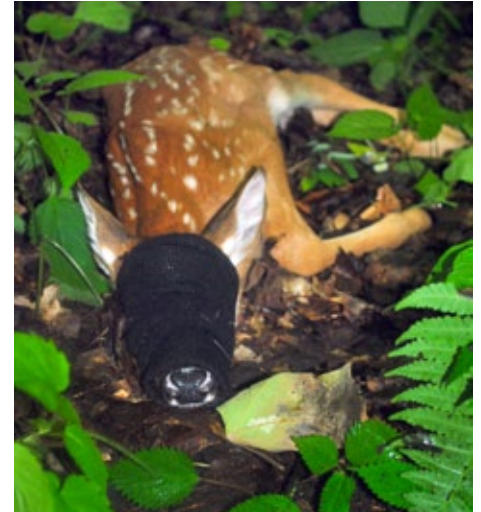
has worked tirelessly to develop techniques to keep native walleye broodfish healthy at a very sensitive time in their life cycle and continually look for ways to maximize the survival rate from hatching until the fish are stocked.



NEW LAW ENFORCEMENT RECRUITS

Commissioner Greg Johnson welcomed a new class of recruits that is beginning its journey toward certification as conservation officers. Twelve recruits began their 12 weeks in the Fish and Wildlife portion of their academy training this month. Twenty-two additional weeks at the Department of Criminal Justice Training's academy also await those not already certified as Kentucky law enforcement officers.

White-tailed deer research in southeast Kentucky



From left to right: KDFWR Kyle Sams and Gabe Jenkins, University of Kentucky graduate student Joe McDermott and KDFWR John Hast. *Photos courtesy Kyle Sams*

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife deer biologists, in collaboration with the University of Kentucky, are researching white-tailed deer herd growth in Southeastern Kentucky.

In some Zone 4 counties, deer populations are stagnant to slightly decreasing and have not been responding positively to the restrictions that correspond with a zone 4 designation.

This research is needed to answer the basic management questions of survivability, reproduction and mortality factors. Data from these studies will help the Deer and Elk Program make more informed decisions about the harvest regime in these counties with a struggling deer herd.

KDFWR staff are assisting two master's level graduate students at the University of Kentucky with field data and research. One student is conducting research on the adult female deer and the other is focusing on fawns.

Together the graduate students are investigating select basic population parameters of white-tailed deer in the southeastern part of the state to attempt

to explain what factors may be responsible for low deer numbers.

The graduate students are conducting the research project by trapping adult female deer and outfitting them with very high frequency (VHF) radio-transmitter collars. They also are capturing fawns dur-

ing May/June and fitting them with VHF collars. They then monitor the collared adult deer and fawns for survival throughout the year.

This data should provide us with the ability to make better informed decisions regarding our deer herd in the southeast.

BOBCAT KITTEN AT SALATO

The Salato Wildlife Education Center's newest resident is a 5-month-old female bobcat kitten. Still too small to be released into Salato's bobcat complex, staff is slowly acclimating her to her new surroundings and scheduling times to bring her out for public viewing. The kitten was orphaned at two months of age and taken in by the Broadbent Wildlife Sanctuary in Irvington. She has resided at Salato for the past few months. *Mindy Rose photo*



Maintenance day at Long Bar Bank Fishing Area on the Cumberland River below Wolf Creek Dam



Above: Bill Ridener and Kyle Burnett prepare the site for mowing. Left: Technicians Danny Parks and Dirk Bradley put their weed eaters to good use as George mows.

Fisheries Division staff **Marcy Anderson, Danny Parks** and **Dirk Bradley** joined forces with **Bill Ridener, George Corder** and **Kyle Burnett** of Beaver Creek Wildlife Management Area for a day of maintenance at Long Bar Bank Fishing Area (LBBFA) on the Cumberland River.

The LBBFA was purchased in 2009 to provide bank anglers with additional access to the Cumberland tailwaters, the state's premier trout fishery.

Although anglers had kept a path worn from the parking area to the island at Long Bar, the area surrounding the parking lot was overgrown and in need of maintenance.

Beaver Creek personnel brought a bush hog and the Fisheries Division provided the weed eaters. After a few short hours, the area was looking much better and more inviting for anglers.

Taylorsville Lake WMA Field Day

KD FWR staff, working with Spencer County UK Extension Agent for Agriculture and Natural Resources Bryce Roberts, hosted a wildlife field day at the Taylorsville Lake Wildlife Management Area on July 30.

Roberts said that the Spencer County Cooperative Extension Service has been able to increase its visibility over the past six months by partnering with the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife. That partnership presented two sessions on Wildlife Food Plots and Wildlife Management.



After the success of those two indoor sessions, they conducted a Wildlife Food Plot Field Day at the local KDFW office

with 35 interested participants.

“We plan to continue to work together in the future on many different types of programs,” said Roberts.

Field Day participants learned of services and equipment that are available to private landowners, common invasive species and techniques to control them, and proper ways to cultivate and manage food plots for dove, deer and turkey.

There was also much discussion on the benefits of native warm season grasses and wildflowers, prescribed fire as a management tool and cost-share programs that are available for implementing wildlife habitat projects.

Participants also attended a field demonstration to see some of the many practices that are being implemented on the Taylorsville Lake WMA. Chuck Juengling from the Commonwealth Chapter of Quail Forever said the event was full of information (including excellent hand-outs) for folks wishing to create or improve wildlife habitat.

Of special interest was the discussion about prescribed burning and the options available for eradicating invasive species. “The array of chemicals available to the general public is a bit overwhelming,” he said. “The Private Lands Biologists are an invaluable resource to help landowners be certain they are using the proper applications at the correct time of year.”



NEW RETAINING WALL

The Department’s Woodshop and Grounds crew constructed a new retaining wall and installed new landscaping at the Arnold Mitchell Building entrance at Headquarters this month. Crew members Patrick Roberts and Todd Murphy (above) set large stones during the early construction stages. Brandon Sawyers, Dorothy Harris and Joann Mattox also helped with the construction.

Camp Currie and Girls Inc.

Sixty-six Girls Inc. youth and adults from Daviess County turned out earlier this month for their annual trip to Camp Currie. They spent a fun weekend fishing, boating, swimming, and on the archery range.

Girls Inc. is a national organization for girls 6-18 from challenged circumstances or backgrounds that teaches them to be strong, smart, and bold.

For many this was their first experience in the outdoors, first fish caught, and first boat ride.



Becoming an Outdoors Woman assists Nongame Kentucky Afield call-in show

Volunteer instructors and participants of the BOW program were on hand with host **Tim Farmer** to assist with the recent Nongame/Biodiversity Kentucky Afield live call-in show at KET.

Special thanks to this group, along with panelists **Brooke Hines, Danna Baxley** and **Kate Heyden** who fielded numerous questions and **Sunni Carr** who coordinated the flow of questions, for their time and willingness to share their knowledge with our viewers.

This show was a first for a Kentucky Afield call-in that fielded an all-female panel of experts with Farmer. The next call-in, on fall fishing in the Commonwealth, is a new annual addition to the live show line up, scheduled for 8 p.m. August 29th on KET.



Veterans spend day fishing at HQ lakes

We are so fortunate to work for the greatest Fish and Wildlife Department in the nation. Days like this make it all worthwhile. I really wanted to share this pic with all of you. Pictured are some of our nation's finest! Veterans from the Thomson-Hood Veteran's Center from Wilmore, KY. They came by for a day of fishing fun and storytelling at our lake here at headquarters. They were having a big time and made sure I stayed around to hear some of their stories of service to our country, and also some fishing tales.

Visiting with these veterans having a great day fishing at our lake helps me appreciate everything that every single person in our department contributes to memories folks like this have and share. Hunting and fishing is also about getting together to share experiences. These veterans were sure having fun doing that.





Kicking the dust up

Paintsville Wildlife Management Area Foreman **Zach Slinker** caught a few pictures of grouse chicks dusting on the edge of a forest tract that had been managed this past winter. His camera managed to capture three of the five chicks and one hen (six grouse) in the photos.

In February of this year, staff used the skid steer and attachment along with chainsaws purchased by the League of Kentucky Sportsmen to implement a heavy cut. Most everything was cut except soft mast species and some beneficial hard mast. The trees were dropped and left on the ground, this provided good horizontal cover.

The horizontal cover paired with the exceptional year for soft mast production made for good brood rearing habitat for this hen.

We hope this a good sign for the grouse hatch and coming grouse hunting season!

