



Inaugural lake sturgeon sampling a huge success

Lake Sturgeon were once native to the Mississippi River, Ohio River, and Cumberland River drainages, but since the 1950s, they have been extirpated from the Cumberland River.

To restore this unique species to its former range, the Department has stocked more than 20,000 juvenile lake sturgeon in the Cumberland River and Big South Fork since 2007.

This winter, the Big Rivers Research Branch and Ichthyology crews set out on the Cumberland River in hopes of capturing some of the stocked sturgeon. Trotlines baited with nightcrawlers were set and left to fish overnight in the Cumberland River near the mouth of the Laurel River.

After a disappointing first five lines of catching predominately mudpuppies, we caught our first lake sturgeon and pulled it into the boat. A few hooks later, a second lake sturgeon was in the boat.

Crews reset the lines, and the second day proved to be much more impressive than the first. A total of 25 lake sturgeon were collected on day number two including a 35-inch fish that was from the first stocking in 2007.

The luck and good fortune continued for the second sample in January as biologists collected an additional 27 lake sturgeon. A total of 54 lake sturgeon were collected in December and January with fish ranging from 18 to 35 inches, and four



year classes represented in the sample.

The number of lake sturgeon collected shattered biologist expectations, and provided evidence that the Department's efforts towards lake sturgeon restoration are indeed working. Biologists plan on sampling again beginning in December 2015 on the Big South Fork near Alum Ford in McCreary County.

Several anglers have reported catching lake sturgeon in the Cumberland River

and Big South Fork. Current regulations on lake sturgeon are catch and release statewide.

Any individuals caught by anglers should be photographed if possible and then released immediately. We encourage anglers to report this information to Matt Thomas (matt.thomas@ky.gov), Stephanie Brandt (stephanie.brandt@ky.gov), and Jason Herrala (jason.herrala@ky.gov) or call (502) 564-3400.

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WE GET MAIL

Letters to the Commissioner's Office

This note came from a young man by the name of Austin Ferguson. Austin wrote, "Dear **John Coffey**, Thank you for letting me come back to your camp. Me and my Grandpa had a lot of fun fishing and roasting marshmallows. I had a really good time."

The following note came from a young man by the name of Alex Collins (his spelling and grammar). Alex wrote, "I have know idea how to start this letter but I am going to start it out with a simple thank you for inviting me to come be a greenwing at ducks unlimeded program. I had so much fun. I will have stories to tell for a lifetime. You all mean a lot to me. You made me think what hunting realy does mean. I always thought it meant you always had to kill something I also knew that it was about having fun, but I realy didn't think about that that much. You all made me know that hunting means more than just killing something."

My favorite story I would have to tell would be in the blind. Country had to hold me for me to be able to get a shot at a duck because I was to short. But my best story to tell would have to be seeing and meeting all of you guys. You all were pretty awesome. You made this camp very fun and I know it was a houner (honor) to be there. I'm pretty sure I got the duck disease I mean it is so contagious. I just want to let you know that I had a lot of fun, and you are probably thinking this is the best thing I can here right now. You guys make it look so easy when I know it's not. I would like to come back, but it probably won't happen.

So thanks agien for inviting me to come be a greenwing at the ducks un-

limited program. P.S. I was using my ducks unlimited pencil for this letter."

This note came from Keelynn Carter who participated in the greenwing event. He wrote a two-page letter and these are just some excerpts from his letter. "I had the best time at Camp Currie. The best part was being with all the staff playing, joking, and learning from them. I want to give a big thanks to Charles and the Game Warden that took me hunting. I want to say thank you to Catfish and Jamie for helping me learn to blow a duck call. I want to give a big thanks for Bill believing in us. He encouraged us to believe that we could do anything. I want to give a big respectful thank you to Red for being

so sweet, so funny, and caring."

This note came from David Seidehamel who also participated in the greenwing event. He wrote, "Thank you for letting us cook the wild game appetizers! Making the duck poppers was really fun! (Eating them was fun, too!!) The duck calling contest was really amazing. My dad wishes that he could have gone, but he had to work, sadly. My mom had an amazing time though and she said if she could come back she would. One of my favorite parts of the whole hunt was the part of being in the blind. I can't wait until the next time I go hunting. I can't wait until I go back to Camp Currie!"

The following email came to us from Lance K. Danks. "I would like to take this opportunity to commend one of your Officers, **Wayne Wilson**. I and six friends hunted in Somerset in November, 2014. Prior to arrival, we were in contact with Officer Wilson who proved to be extremely helpful in guiding us regarding the regulations in effect in Kentucky.

He was also able to assist us in locating legal areas in which to hunt.

Upon arrival at our camp, we were able to meet Officer Wilson in person while he was off duty and, again, he was extremely helpful and provided valuable guidance.

As a result of Officer Wilson's assistance, all members of our hunting party had a successful, lawful and safe hunt.

Thank you for taking the time to read this. I would certainly have no problem if you should wish to share this with Officer Wilson."

See "Mail," page 3



COMMISSION MEMBER STOTTS SEATED

Barry Stotts, of Adair County, and a lifetime hunter and fisherman, was formally sworn in as the Fish and Wildlife Commission Member representing the 4th Fish and Wildlife District during Commission Committee meetings earlier this month. Franklin District Judge Chris Olds administered the oath of office. Stotts, 47, is Supervisor/Foreman at Stotts Construction of Columbia. He replaces Dr. James R. Angel, and shall serve for the remainder of the unexpired term ending Aug. 13, 2017.

Quail Forever help paying dividends at Peabody WMA

A letter to Commissioner Johnson:

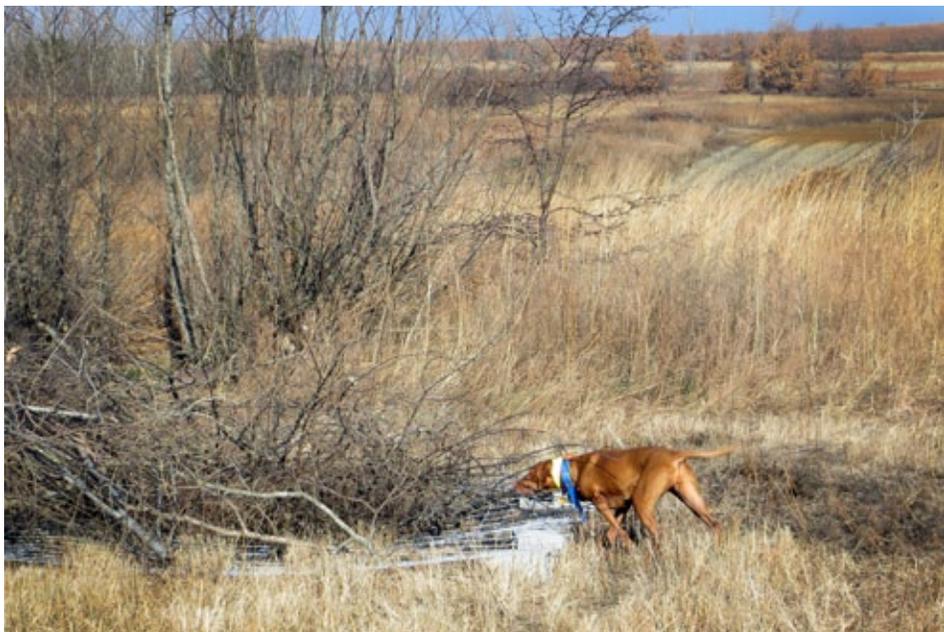
Mr. Johnson,

Attached you will find a photo that I believe will be of interest to you and your staff. We have enjoyed it.

Last fall, the Commonwealth Chapter of Quail Forever (Louisville, KY) purchased a \$12,000 shear for the Peabody WMA team for the purpose of cutting small timber and building brush piles. We also spent another \$1,000+ for materials to provide a solid base for the brush. The purpose of this project was to provide brushy shelter areas, albeit small, for Bobwhite quail to use as shelter in the homogeneous fields that lacked any significant amount of brushy cover.

KDFWR worked with the Boy Scouts and recruited enough folks to build 82 of these brush piles. In addition to the field work, the Boy Scouts were exposed to lots of outdoor activities including camping, shotgun shooting, rifle shooting, archery, lessons on prescribed burning, and quail biology among others.

Recently one of our Chapter members was hunting on the Sinclair Unit and was able to take this photo of his Visla pointing quail using these brush piles for cover.



The picture speaks for itself.

The Commonwealth Chapter of Quail Forever has supported KDFWR activities since our inception in 1991. Back then it was “Quail Unlimited”, but at the local level we are the same guys/gals doing the same work - trying to make life a little better for Quail in the Commonwealth. We have raised and spent in excess of

\$500,000 over the years and look forward to continuing that effort.

I thought you might enjoy a look at the fruits of the success of this particular project.

– Chuck Juengling
Secretary and Co-founder,
Commonwealth Chapter, Quail Forever
Louisville, KY

“Mail,” continued

This note was sent to **Charlie Logsdon** at Otter Creek Outdoor Recreation Area from Steve Woodring. He wrote: “Hey Charlie - Just want to let you know what a wonderful job I think you and your guys are doing at Otter Creek. I know its your vision and hard work that have transformed an under performing put-and-take meat drop into a truly splendid off-season trout fishery. Thanks to your efforts, Otter Creek has become not only picture perfect beautiful, but an outstanding urban recreational resource as well.

I know some folks look down their noses on the notion of tossing trout into

a stream that cannot hold them over from year to year, but I am not one of them. The fact is that for 8 months of every year, Otter Creek now looks like, behaves like, and fishes like a first class Eastern trout stream. The bugs are the same as in any Pennsylvania limestone, and once the fish are in the water, it doesn't take them long to figure things out. When a complicated hatch is under way, the fishing can get downright technical, and you wouldn't know you weren't on one of the best of the best. And who cares that for the other four months it becomes an excellent smallmouth stream? What a treasure you have created.

Just wanted to let you know that you

are noticed and appreciated by some of us grubby fly fishermen.”

PLANNED OVERTIME

Please keep in mind that planned overtime opportunities for KDFWR employees are those specific overtime requirements, as part of the agency's general presence, to support trade shows and public/partner events such as State Fair, NASP tournaments, Boat and RV shows, and other outdoor-related exhibitor functions. Employees wanting to work such events must access the sign-up form by visiting Personnel/KHRIS on KDFWR's intranet (fw.ky.gov/fwnet if outside HQ) to read the instructions and complete the form.

Hope Carleton Sr., longest serving host of “Kentucky Afield” TV dies at age 89

Former “Kentucky Afield” television host Hope Carleton Sr. died at his home in Grand Rivers Thursday, Feb. 26. He was 89 years old.

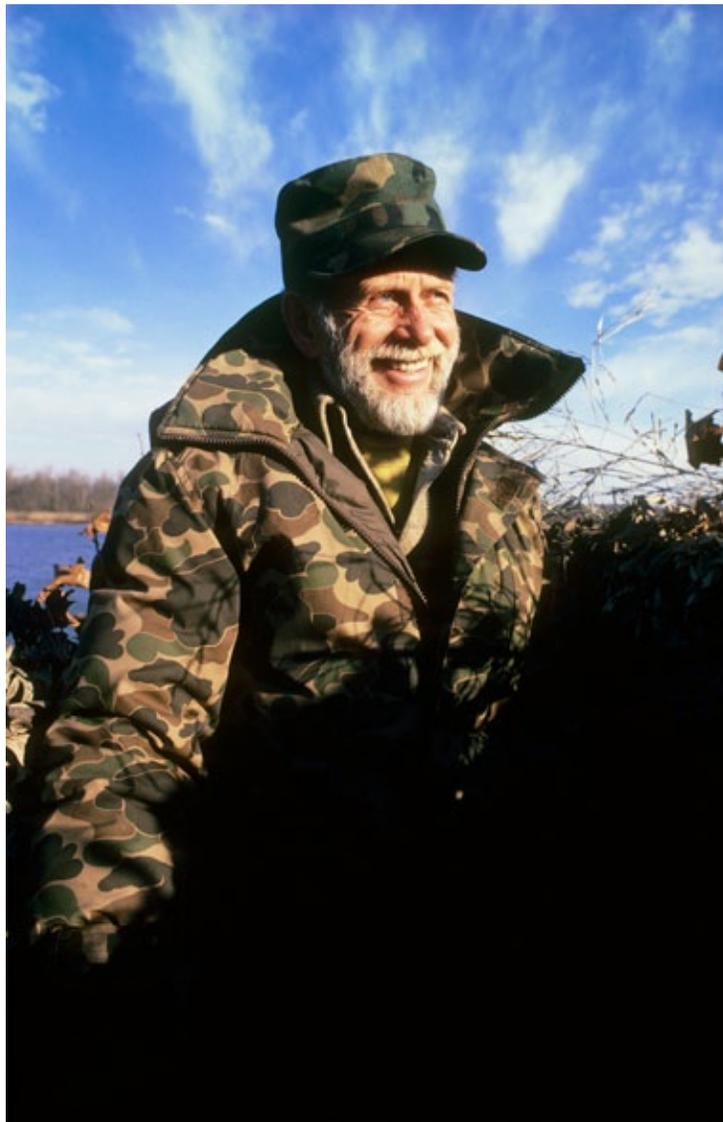
Carleton appeared on the show for 23 years, serving longer than any other host.

“He was a consummate, gentleman sportsman,” said Norm Minch, assistant director of the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources’ Information and Education Division.

“If the subject was anything related to the outdoors, he was exceptionally knowledgeable, but I particularly recall how his eyes literally would light up when he talked about it,” Minch continued. “It was indisputable that he cared greatly about our resources and improving opportunities for people to enjoy them – you could just see it and hear it each time he talked about it. It was an attitude that I wanted to model. He was the real deal. He was in love with the outdoors.”

Carleton started his career with the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources as a conservation officer in Fayette County in 1947. His broadcasting career began when the president of a local radio station asked him to do a half hour show about hunting and fishing in the area.

In 1957, Carleton left law enforcement to replace Ron Rhody as the host of “Kentucky Afield” television. Carleton,



Norm Minch photo

who said he felt insecure in front of the camera, served as host until his retirement in 1980. “I had a ball – I enjoyed it,” he said during a 2008 segment on “Kentucky Afield” television.

Carleton was among a group of department employees who helped establish the striped bass fishery in Kentucky. In

the 1950s, officials in South Carolina allowed this group to keep all the stripers they could catch on fishing poles – as long as they bought non-resident licenses first. “In a 24-hour period, we caught 1,005,” Carleton said in a 2008 interview. “We sent both (hatchery) trucks back to Kentucky loaded.”

Kentucky began its striped bass stocking program in 1957.

Current “Kentucky Afield” host Tim Farmer knew Carleton as a true outdoorsman.

“Hope lived for the outdoors until the last day of his life. He duck hunted, fished and enjoyed every aspect of the outdoors,” Farmer said. “He spent the last years of his life in western Kentucky, where he could pursue his outdoor lifestyle. He lived and breathed it until the end. He will be remembered by Kentucky sportsmen and sportswomen forever.”

Tim Slone, director of the department’s Information and Education Division, said Carleton was

planning to celebrate his 90th birthday next week. He stayed active until the end.

“Hope still rose early every morning and rarely missed a day in the duck blind,” Slone noted. “This last duck season, he hunted 57 out of 60 days. Those of us who were lucky enough to know Hope will miss his wit and wisdom.”

New Hires

Brandon Jacobs officially began his tenure with the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources on February 1. He will serve as the Game Management Foreman in northern Kentucky responsible for five WMAs within the Bluegrass Region, including Curtis Gates Lloyd, Mullins, Adair, Griffith Woods and Veterans Memorial.

Brandon is originally from Mays' Lick, Kentucky and earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Wildlife Management at Eastern Kentucky University. Brandon's previous employment includes two summer internships with both the US Forest Service and KDFWR, employment as a field technician with Eastern Kentucky University, and nearly three years with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission working as a regional wildlife biologist.

Brandon's well rounded experience managing WMAs and implementing management plans, conducting wildlife surveys and inventories, providing technical assistance to private landowners and clubs, hosting public information field days, farming background, and supervising seasonal technicians makes him an excellent choice for this position and we are glad to have him onboard.

On February 1, the Information and Education Division welcomed two new Conservation Educators to the third district.

Eric Schulte is a University of Kentucky graduate with a degree in Natural Resources and Environmental Science. Eric has worked as a youth ski instructor, intramural sports official and supervisor, and lifeguard. He's been on summer staff for the past five summers at Camp Earl Wallace.

He has four seasons as a camp counselor teaching gun safety, fishing/casting, and swimming and worked last summer as a counselor supervisor at the waterfront where he taught campers and

supervised interim staff. Eric is a certified lifeguard and lifeguard instructor through the American Red Cross and also holds certifications as a basic archery instructor and hunter education instructor.

Eric will visit schools in Jefferson County and will recruit campers for Camp Earl Wallace.

Lori Shoup earned her bachelor's degree in Biology at Western Kentucky University. Her previous experience with the Buckley Wildlife Sanctuary and Salato Center includes developing and presenting environmental education programs, training volunteers, and working with raptors

and other program animals.

Lori is a certified interpretive guide, hunter education instructor, basic archery instructor and certified lifeguard through the American Red Cross. In addition, Lori most recently worked as an administrative assistant for the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Foundation where she completed grant applications, organized events and fundraisers, and secured scholarships for children to attend our conservation camps.

Lori will visit schools in Bullitt, Meade, and western Jefferson County and will recruit campers for Camp Earl Wallace.

Lillpop recognized by 5th District Federation



Josh Lillpop (currently Wildlife Management Foreman at Taylorsville WMA) was recognized with an award from Fifth District Federation of Kentucky Sportsmen President Chet Hayes recently.

Hayes presented the award for Josh's work on Lloyd WMA and in the sur-

rounding area and supporting activities of Sportsmen's clubs.

He specifically mentioned Josh's outstanding dedication and service to the Outdoor Community of Kentucky, and for his unwavering support for youth programs.

Commissioner

Gregory Johnson attended the meeting and ceremony and was very proud to see Josh get this award.

"It is representative of all the great work all our folks do across our Department working with our partners," he said.

Good job Josh and thanks all for all you do.



KDFWR HELPING OUT

Seventh District conservation officers and Wildlife Division staff rolled out to help after more than two feet of snow and cold temperatures shut down Harlan's water supply system. They used trucks and ATVs to deliver water and supplies, and conduct wellness checks in areas inaccessible to most vehicles in Kentucky's most mountainous region. *Sgt. Greg Watts photos*





David Baker and Ryan Kausing hold a pair of 30-pound class trophy blue catfish collected during February sampling efforts at Taylorsville Lake. At right, Nick Keeton holds a 55-pound blue catfish collected from Taylorsville Lake during winter sampling efforts.

Taylorsville Lake blue catfish stockings paying big dividends

Blue catfish have been stocked into Taylorsville Lake since 2002 in effort to develop this new fishery.

During January and February, fisheries personnel braved the cold in effort to begin gathering data on the larger fish in this population using 5-inch mesh gill nets, since it appears that summer electrofishing may not be effectively capturing

this segment of the population.

Preliminary results were positive with blue catfish being sampled up to 55 lbs, with excellent numbers of 15-25-pound fish present.

This population continues to have good growth rates and excellent body condition, with overall catch rates improving. Blue catfish stocking at

Taylorsville Lake has been a very successful program providing anglers with an opportunity to not only catch dinner but to also have the potential for catching trophy size fish.

Winter gill netting and summer electrofishing will continue as the fishery division continues to evaluate the blue catfish population in Taylorsville Lake.

Deer hunters enjoy great results at Jenny Wiley State Resort Park

Six of seven mobility-impaired hunters combined to take 10 deer at Jenny Wiley State Park.

The New Year hunt was open to mobility-impaired hunters and seven hunters took advantage of the warm weather to participate. Park Naturalist Trinity Shepherd provided a brief hunt orientation for each hunter on Friday, the day before the hunt.

The 1,200 acre park was divided into

15 hunting units that were located away from any public structures. Some of those units included the golf course, campground, and trails that were mobility-impaired friendly. Each hunter was drawn for a particular hunt area.

Ten deer were harvested by six of the seven hunters. First time hunter Richard Rohr was one of the lucky ones to harvest two deer, one right after the other, on the last evening of the weekend hunt.

Richard received help from several individuals and groups to make his hunt possible. Members of the Backyard Outdoors hunting club set up a .308 caliber rifle on a tripod for Richard to shoot with. Then Dewey Lake Fish and Game Club President Joe Bolton purchased a device that allowed Richard to pull the trigger with his mouth.

See "Park," page 8



2014 Taylorsville Lake Youth Hunt

Conservation Officer **Jason Ice**, along with other 3rd District conservation officers organized a youth deer hunt at Taylorsville Lake State Park.

The hunt included 20 youth, chaperones, and a staff of helpers from Bullitt County Rod and Gun Club.

Kosair Charities, as main sponsor, made the youth hunt possible. With their help, organizers were able to buy 20 blinds, with chairs and camo packs for each child, as well as a hunter orange hat and vest.

Other Bullitt County companies stepped up and helped make this event

a success. S.O. Contracting donated the food and tent for the event. Crossroads Gun Shop in Mt. Washington donated a .243 rifle for the event that was raffled off and given away. This was the second rifle that was raffled off during the event.

One deer was taken during the weekend. But the main focus of the event was to get the children involved in the outdoors, the hunt experience, and to learn of the friendships gained while hunting. This is the third annual youth hunt Officer Ice has put together, and he plans for it to continue for years to come.



“Park,” continued

Nathan Harless and P.J. Collins accompanied Richard for both days of the hunt. Richard's preparation and fantastic hunt can be seen here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=baMyJsWltDM>

Additional partners for this hunt included the Floyd County Hunter Education Organization and the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources. Hunters who are mobility-impaired may participate in this hunt next year by contacting Trinity Shepherd at the park at 606-889-1790.

