



Cave Run fish habitat
Page 8

Campbell named NASBLA's national Boating Educator of the Year

During its 56th annual conference held in Wichita, Kansas, Sept. 13-16, 2015, the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) presented its prestigious national Boating Educator of the Year Award to Zac Campbell, boating education coordinator with the Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources.

The Boating Educator of the Year Award was launched by NASBLA in 2011 to recognize those who go above and beyond to engage students and boaters, raise awareness, and make boating education initiatives relevant, thorough and exciting.

Campbell has proven to be a vital asset to the safe boating initiative in Kentucky. He worked diligently with his agency's conservation education personnel to include a boating safety message into their curriculum when they visit local schools. He purchased boating education DVDs to be presented in the classes. His efforts will result in over 75,000 fifth and sixth grade students hearing about boating safety.

Campbell has also been instrumental in developing the Kentucky Boat Safe App for smartphones. This free app will allow the user to contact the closest marina, summon law enforcement, send a float plan to a friend or send their current location at any time. The app will also allow the agency to send notifications on various



boating safety topics.

Examples would be simple reminders prior to major boating weekends to wear life jackets and leave alcohol at home as well as notifications of hazardous water conditions or bad weather. This will be a valuable tool to stay in touch with our boating public.

During the summer weekends, Campbell personally visits several marinas across the state. While there, he meets with each marina owner, distributes safety materials and discusses ways to work together to make Kentucky waterways safer.

He also interacts with boaters, conducting vessel safety inspections with a focus on the importance of life jacket wear.

Campbell's work creating audio public service announcements has earned first place three out of the last four years in the media contest held at the International Boating and Water Safety Summit.

He coordinates the purchase of air time with local radio stations so the public can hear the important messages statewide. He has also shared several of his award-winning PSAs with other states for them to utilize in their programs.

INSIDE:



4 Larval crappie



6 Grazing study



9 Wounded Warriors

New Hires

Please join us in welcoming **Lisa Tolliver** as our new Information Center supervisor.

Lisa comes to us from the Kentucky Department of Transportation, where she served for three years as an information officer with a top-notch operation. Prior to that, she worked 14 years for the Kentucky Standard newspaper in Bardstown, where she started as a writer and gradually worked her way up to editor. Lisa has more than 12 years of management experience in an information setting.

Lisa earned her bachelor's degree in journalism from Western Kentucky University and graduated from Nelson County High School.

Terry Johnson was hired as a GFTL Wildlife Technician 1 on the Otter Creek Outdoor Recreation Area. He has worked as a seasonal laborer/technician since the area opened in May of 2011.

However, Terry's relationship to the area goes back to when the area was owned by the City of Louisville and overseen by Metro Parks. Terry served as a seasonal maintenance man for 9 years. Once the area closed he continued to work for Metro Parks, primarily in Cherokee Park. His knowledge of the infrastructure of the area has been invaluable to KDFWR since it was re-opened.

Terry is an avid bowhunter and lives for the winter. On his days off he spends it with his twin sons, who he adores.

The Fisheries Division would like to welcome **Andrew Stump** to the Critical Species Investigation branch working out of Frankfort. Andrew will fill the Fisheries Biologist II position in the section and will be working with Asian carp primarily on the Ohio River and its tributaries.

Andrew possesses a Bachelor's degree from Eastern Kentucky University in Biology and is finishing up his Master's degree from Eastern Kentucky University in Biology with a focus on Aquatic Sciences.



DONATION FOR CAMP WEBB

Patty Fugate from the Perry County Conservation District presented a \$11,925 check to the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Foundation to go toward camper scholarships to Camp Robert Webb. From left are Foundation Coordinator Chad Miles, Fugate, Camp Director Jack Lee and Information and Education Division Director Tim Slone.

Andrew has an extensive educational background in fisheries and aquatic sciences and has worked as a seasonal this year on the Asian carp project.

Please help the Engineering Division give a warm Fish and Wildlife welcome to **Josh Morgan**, our new Fish and Wildlife Program Manager.

Josh was born and raised in Boyle County and now lives in Lawrenceburg. He earned his B.S. in Civil Engineering from the University of Kentucky and he is a licensed professional engineer. His experience includes being the Assistant City Engineer for the City of Danville and a Project Manager for the Finance Cabinet in the Division of Engineering.

He enjoys trail running, hiking, fishing, and hanging out with his wife and two kids.

Recently promoted to Game Management Foreman, **Brad Burge** has his hands full with the addition of a new bobcat kitten and bush hogging the pastures of the Salato Wildlife Center's elk and bison exhibits before fall weather sets in. Brad has taken over as foreman after the recent retirement of Johnny Widener.

On September 1, the Information and

Education Division welcomed **Kaelin McWilliams** as the new Conservation Educator in the fourth district.

Kaelin will visit schools in Hardin, Breckinridge, Grayson, LaRue, Marion, Washington and Nelson counties and will recruit campers to attend Camp John Currie.

Kaelin is a graduate of Eastern Kentucky University with a degree in Wildlife Management. Before accepting this position, she was working for KDFWR as an educator in our Aquatic Education program. Prior to that, Kaelin worked for three summers as a counselor at Camp Earl Wallace teaching archery, boating, casting/fishing, gun safety, nature, outdoor survival, and swimming.

In addition to her seasonal work experience, Kaelin has volunteered with the Salato Center, KDFWR Mentor Hunt Program, Camp Currie GreenWing hunt, and at several Hunter Education courses. Her current trainings and certifications include: Wildland Firefighter Type II, Hunter Education Instructor, Basic Archery Instructor, American Red Cross First Aid/CPR, American Red Cross Lifeguard, and Project Wild.

In her spare time, Kaelin enjoys hiking, kayaking, and bow fishing.

Thomas, Brandt receive conservation awards for Kentucky Arrow Darter work

Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Ichthyologists **Matt Thomas** and **Stephanie Brandt** received official commendations from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Forest Service for their conservation work on the Kentucky Arrow Darter at a ceremony held in the Red River Gorge August 31.

Thomas and Brandt conducted intensive field surveys of Kentucky Arrow Darter populations in 2007-2008, an imperiled fish species restricted to the upper Kentucky River drainage, laying the foundation for subsequent conservation efforts aimed at recovering the species.

One such effort was the successful development of a Candidate Conservation Agreement (CCA), which was



officially signed during the ceremony by the U.S. Forest Service's Regional Forester, Tony Tooke, and the Fish and Wildlife Service's Deputy Regional Director, Mike Oetker.

The Red Bird Ranger District of the Daniel Boone National Forest is a stronghold for the Kentucky Arrow Darter, and the CCA will ensure that needed management actions for the species will occur.

In 2012, Thomas and Brandt, in collaboration with Conservation Fisheries, Inc., began the first ever attempt to re-establish the species in a small headwater stream in the Red Bird River drainage through captive propagation and reintroduction, followed by careful monitoring. So far, the results of this ongoing effort have been very encouraging.

River rescue nets kudos for Rice, Mullins

Conservation Officers **Chad Rice** and **Dustin Mullins** received kudos on the Department's Facebook page for assisting some ladies who were accidentally stranded along the Kentucky River during the River Sweep cleanup effort.

Yalunda Taylor-Mason wrote, "Thank you to the two gentlemen who saved us along the Kentucky River today!" and Winnie Abelardo Commare added "Big thank you to these wonderful guys who saved us on the Kentucky River today."

Officers Rice and Mullins safely returned the volunteers to their vehicles so they could be on their way.



From 5mm to 10 inches, the start of a 3-year journey for Kentucky Lake crappie

During the spring of 2015, Western Fisheries District staff conducted weekly nocturnal ichthyoplankton sampling using a small mesh larval tow net in the Jonathan Creek embayment of Kentucky Lake.

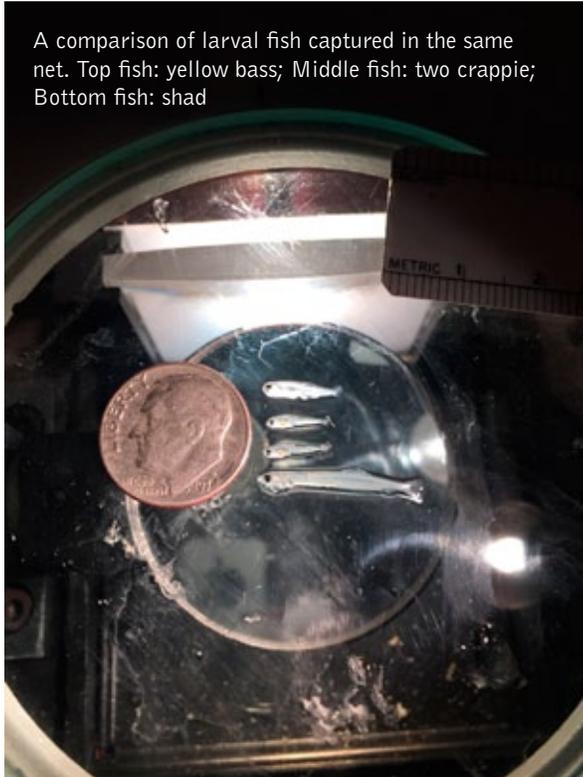
Additional larval sampling was conducted in different areas of the lake by students from Murray State University.

The primary goal of this sampling was to determine the weekly variation of larval crappie density in Kentucky Lake.

Estimates of the number of crappie hatched on a weekly or even daily basis can be used to help define the potential effects of environmental conditions such as variable water levels and water clarity on the success or failure of the spawn. An annual survey of this type has been used as an early indicator of the strength of the crappie spawn.

Biologists can capture a range of larval crappie sizes in their net, although crappie in the 8-11 mm range were the most common.

Even though crappie were targeted, each specimen captured was identified under a microscope to determine the spawn timing of fish that may interact with crappie and compete for resources. The success and timing of the shad spawn is particularly important because they can compete



A comparison of larval fish captured in the same net. Top fish: yellow bass; Middle fish: two crappie; Bottom fish: shad



A jar filled with larval shad.



Larval crappie captured in Kentucky Lake. 9mm in total length

with crappie and frequently outnumber them in the water column.

By identifying each fish, biologists also can monitor for the presence, or in this case absence, of larval Asian carp in the area. Overall, 12 species of fish were identified in this survey including freshwater drum, bluegill, white bass, and

silversides.

Although several more years of data will be required to evaluate the strength of the 2015 year class, the sample does provide an immediate estimate of the timing of the crappie spawn.

In Jonathan Creek

the spawn likely began on April 8th and ended on May 8th, with the peak spawn occurring on April 27th.

By comparing these results with hydrological data, biologists will continue to get a better understanding of the factors that affect the crappie spawn in Kentucky Lake.

Tree removal for boat ramp expansion benefits Kentucky Lake fish

Blood River is one of the largest embayments and most heavily fished areas on the Kentucky portion of Kentucky Lake.

However, access is limited to one free public boat ramp in Wildcat Creek. This boating access site is actually owned by TVA (Tennessee Valley Authority), though licensed to the Department for operation and maintenance.

For many years the idea of expanding the small parking lot capable of handling about 35 trucks with boat trailers has been discussed. That idea is now moving beyond

See “Expansion,” page 6



Woodland owners short course

Bluegrass Region private lands biologists **Chris Grasc** and **Joe Lacefield** partnered with University of Kentucky Forestry Extension and Kentucky Division of Forestry to put on a Woodland Owners Short Course on Aug 15.

Grasc presented on wildlife habitat and Quality Deer Management Association land certification and Lacefield presented on native grass establishment and deer management.

Fisheries Division biologist **Jeff Crosby** also participated conducting a farm pond technical guidance presentation.

Ninety-nine landowners from 36 Kentucky counties representing 11,391 acres attended the workshop. It was well received and the weather cooperated for the field portion of the event!

Other management topics included invasive species treatment, timber management, timber harvest and sales (including ash salvage), and getting to know your woodland professionals.



BGAD completes first season of native grass grazing study

The USDA Conservation Innovation Grant funded native grass livestock grazing study located on the Blue Grass Army Depot in Madison County just completed its first summer.

The study focused not only on beef production on native grass pastures, but also the benefits of these grasses to grassland wildlife, include bobwhite quail.

In preparation for this study, wildlife division staff planted 150 acres of Big Bluestem and Indian grass using the local ecotype seed in production on BGAD. Staff also erected 4 miles of pasture fencing and coordinated installation of livestock waterers and corrals.

Three local cattlemen provided 153 head of cattle that were placed in six pastures in mid-May. All animals were weighed monthly until removed in mid-August. Monthly weight gain results were greatest during the first month with average gains in excess of two pounds per day.

The livestock producers were impressed with the final weight gains and good condition of their animals resulting from the three month period on native grass fields.

While success was achieved in live-

“Expansion,” continued

the discussion phase.

TVA allocated funding to expand the parking lot to about 70 truck-and-trailer slots and construct a new handicap fishing pier with another 7-10 parking slots for the pier. Construction began on the parking lot expansion this past August.

The first thing that needed to hap-



The study proved that cattle readily forage on native grass and experience good weight gains during summer months. Additionally, four different male quail were heard calling “bobwhite” when this picture was taken.



stock production during this first season, bobwhite quail numbers also increased in the project area. Quail were heard and seen within the pastures and nearby cover thickets throughout the summer, supporting the claim that recovery of bobwhites is compatible with cattle production.

pen was to clear out some wooded areas. Working with TVA and the contractor, and rather than piling up the trees to be burned, the Western Fishery District staff used the trees to create some rather large brush piles in Blood River for fish habitat.

Because of the large size of trees being sunk, the Department’s Habitat Barge was used to transport the trees out into the lake. They created 67 brush (tree)

Above: Wildlife Biologist Clay Smitson instructs a group of cattle producers during the native grass meeting held at the Madison County Extension Office. UT’s Dr. Pat Keyser and UK’s Tom Keene made presentations to more than 70 farmers about beef production on native grass and the BGAD project.

piles at 12 different sites. Thirteen of the piles were placed around four existing fish attractor buoys. The other 54 piles were placed at eight new sites that were marked with buoys indicating “Fish Attractor.”

The GPS coordinates for these sites were recorded and will be added to the online fish attractor map for Kentucky Lake on the Department’s webpage: (<https://app.fw.ky.gov/fisheries/waterbodydetail.aspx?wid=64>).

Banding geese in Ontario

West Kentucky Wildlife Management Area Game Management Foreman **Jodie Swain** spent two weeks in Ontario this summer helping in the banding of Canada geese.

These birds are part of the Mississippi Valley population of Canada geese, and part of the Department's annual obligation is to send staff to assist in their management.

Jodie Swain – "On July 15th, I began my journey to Peawanuck, Ontario to assist with goose banding with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

"After traveling for four days, I finally reached my destination, just outside Polar Bear Provincial Park on the shores of Hudson Bay. Our team consisted of nine people, which included conservation officers, interns, pilots, and biologists.

"Each day, weather permitting, six of us would fly out in the helicopter and search for groups of Canada geese along the shorelines.

"We banded, aged, and sexed groups of 20 to as large as groups of 250. After two weeks of banding, despite horrible weather conditions, the team was able to band approximately 800 adult Canada geese and twice as many goslings.

"Overall, the trip was a wonderful experience, and by the way, I got to see nine polar bears!"





Volunteers make 2015 Cave Run Lake fish habitat project a success

The 2015 Cave Run Lake Fish Habitat Project was a huge success thanks to a massive group of volunteers.

Department crews from Fisheries and Wildlife divisions received help from Musky Inc Chapter #52, Frenchburg Job Corps, Woods Bend Juvenile Facility, Ashland Group Home, Rowan County High School FFA and a number of dedicated individuals.

This year we created new habitat sites using approximately 1,000 cedar/pine trees, 360 pallet structures, 200 stake buckets and 50 concrete culverts.

A few days after deployment, shad were associating with the habitat, and within several weeks, anglers were catching fish off the new structures.

Last year's sites are also receiving a lot of fishing pressure from anglers targeting just about every sport fish in Cave Run Lake.

Over the next few years we are excited to go through the data and tease apart the possible effects on harvest, recruitment and growth.

Again, a huge and sincere thank you to all who assisted.





2015 Ronnie Rich Memorial Wounded Warriors Dove Hunt

A partnership between Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife, Riverbend Whitetails and Wild Wing Lodge helped dreams become realities with the 2015 Ronnie Rich Memorial Wounded Warriors Dove Hunt Aug. 31 - Sept. 2.

What started as an idea between **Ronnie Rich** (retired Conservation Officer) and **Curt Divine** (Game Management Foreman at Higginson-Henry WMA) to host a hunt for wounded soldiers became the third annual event this year when seven soldiers from Fort Campbell arrived for a two day dove hunt.

The Soldiers had a great home cooked meal on the first evening, and plans were made for the next two days. They went to the clay pigeon course the next morning and discussed gun safety and practiced the type of shots they would encounter while hunting.

Then they moved to the sunflower field at Big Rivers WMA/SF office for the opening of Dove Season.

Some were past hunters and some had never been hunting at all. All had a great

time and were able to see that there are public areas where everyone has access to a place to hunt. They concluded the evening by glassing for velvet bucks on the Big Rivers WMA/SF at sunset!

Three of the doves taken the next morning and one from the first afternoon were BANDED! Also, the two Soldiers who had never dove hunted before took their first dove during this event.

The event was underwritten by sponsors. The Tradewater Foundation, River View Coal, The Eagles Club, Bud's

See "Warriors," page 10



Lexington archers take aim at Bluegrass Archery Tournament

Information and Education Division Director **Tim Slone** joined Lexington Mayor Jim Gray and other Lexington officials in announcing the city's inaugural archery tournament.

The heralded Bluegrass Archery Tournament attracted archers as young as 10 years old, and took place Sept. 5 at Lexington's Hisle Park on Briar Hill Road and was hosted by Lexington Parks & Recreation, the competition is open to archers age 10 and older.

"The sport of archery is growing in popularity in Lexington," Mayor Jim Gray said. "The Bluegrass Archery Tournament is a great way for archers to test their skills.

Four different competitions were organized by age groups:

- Standard (ages 10-17, 18-40, 40+)
- Long Distance (ages 10-17, 18+)
- Single Shot 3D (ages 10-17, 18+)
- Speed Shot (ages 10-17, 18+)

"The Bluegrass Archery Tournament adds to Parks & Recreation's lineup of archery programs offered throughout the year," said Parks & Recreation Director Monica Conrad. "We hope to make the tournament an annual tradition at Hisle Park."

The Hisle Park archery range opened in October 2011 with a grant from the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wild-



life Resources. In 2013, Fish and Wildlife contributed funding to create a shelter and a covered archery shooting station. Hisle Park features a 10-lane target range with two permanent targets.

"More than 660 Kentucky schools participate in archery programs," said Fish and Wildlife Information and Education Director Tim Slone. "Twenty-two of those

are in Fayette County. There is a growing interest and need for facilities like the archery range at Hisle Park."

"Archery has a fairly large following, not only in Fayette County, but the surrounding counties too," said Recreation Supervisor Kenneth Black. "It also doesn't have a discernable age group. People of all ages love the sport."

"Warriors," continued

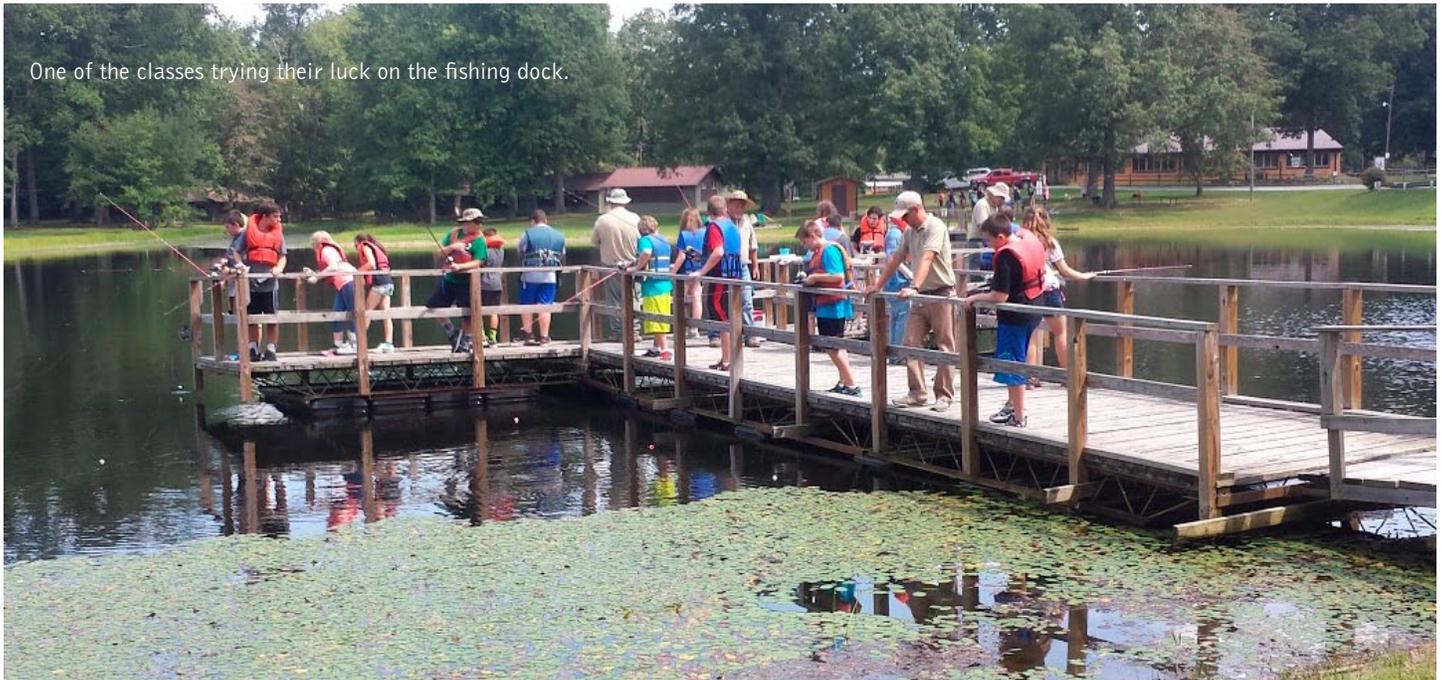
Country Corner, Helena, Ervin Cable Co., Greenwell Farms and the Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife supplied the soldiers with hunting licenses, migratory bird permits, full sets of camouflage, stools and dove decoys to keep.

The outpouring of support for this event was larger than imagined and the result was an event that is eagerly anticipated by the Soldiers in the HOOAH (Healing Outside Of A Hospital) program each year.

This event was an excellent way to honor the memory of former conservation

officer Ronnie Rich, our Service men and women, provide a needed change of pace for the soldiers, showcase the Wildlife Management Areas and work jointly with Outfitters in our general area.

When we left this event there was no doubt in any one's mind that this event had made a difference!



One of the classes trying their luck on the fishing dock.

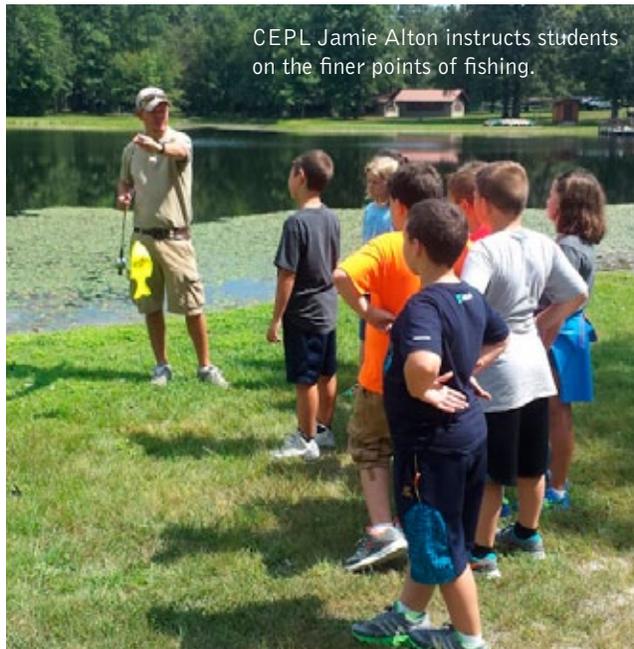
It's four days of fishing at Laurel County 4-H Eco EDventures

Southeastern Fishery District staff **John D. Williams, Marcy Anderson, Danny Parks** and **Dirk Bradley** joined forces with Information and Education Division Conservation Educator **Jamie Alton** for four days of fishing at Feltner 4-H camp for the Laurel Eco EDventures.

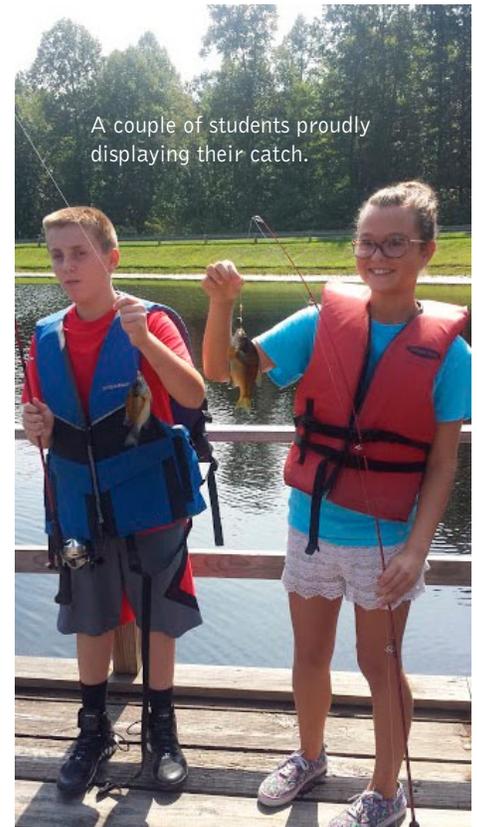
This annual event is an environmental educational program hosted by Laurel County 4-H that focuses on a variety of ecological themes, including fish, forestry, water, soil conservation, and air quality.

Students rotated through each ecological station throughout the day.

More than 500 youth fished dur-



CEPL Jamie Alton instructs students on the finer points of fishing.



A couple of students proudly displaying their catch.

ing the event, some for the first time. The young anglers caught several bluegill and bass, despite the hot weather.

We're hoping these students got hooked on fishing and will become our next generation of anglers.