



Whitetail Weekend
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New Gratz boat ramp creates Kentucky River access in Pool 1

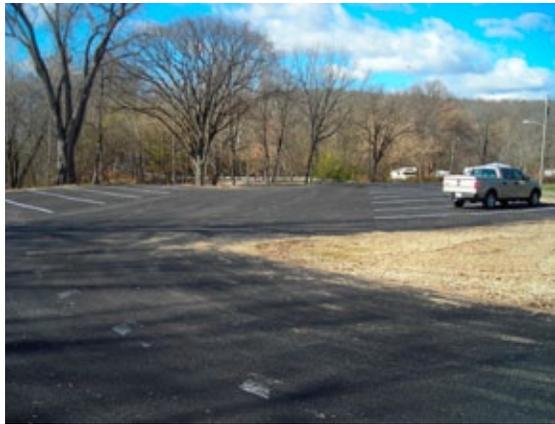
The Engineering Division fully completed a new boat ramp and parking area in Pool 1 of the Kentucky River. This new ramp is located inside the city limits of Gratz in Owen County.

The project was the result of a partnership between the KDFWR, the City of Gratz and the Owen County Fiscal Court. The completed project includes a single paved boat launching ramp and paved parking to accommodate 15 vehicles and trailers.

The new Gratz Boat Ramp was constructed at the site of the old Kentucky River bridge that was removed about three years ago. It is ideally located only 2.5 miles downstream of Lock and Dam #2.

This ramp will offer anglers convenient access to these tailwaters where they can enjoy outstanding seasonal fishing for black bass, crappie, catfish, sauger, white/hybrid striped bass and the occasional musky.

Anglers and boaters can access this new ramp by traveling north on US-127 out of Frankfort. Shortly after passing Monterey, turn left onto KY-355 and take this into Gratz. General maintenance of the boat ramp will be handled by the



Completed new boat ramp in Pool 1 of the Kentucky River in the City of Gratz. *Ryan Oster photos*



Owen County Fiscal Court.

Funding for this project was partially provided by the Sport Fish Restoration

Program. Sport Fish Restoration Funds were used to acquire land, as well as construct the boat ramp.

INSIDE:



2 Rare find



5 Hunting workshop



7 Praise from NBCI

WE GET MAIL

Letters to the Commissioner's Office

The following email came from Steve Spencer with Western Kentucky University. "I want to thank and commend KDFWR and specifically, **John Coffey** for visiting WKU and speaking to three different classes in the Recreation Administration Curriculum.

We enjoyed his visit and professional demeanor throughout his visit.

John is a great ambassador for KDFWR. We hope to make this an annual occurrence."

The following email came to Law Enforcement Director Hank Patton from Mr. Rob Wardrop.

"My purpose in sending you this email is to express heartfelt thanks for the service that **Sgt. Mick Craig** has performed while working with my son in regards to his obtaining a falconry license.

Last week, Sgt. Craig visited our home and inspected my son's enclosure. I very

much enjoyed visiting with him and noted his sincere interest in our preparations for Markus' progression in the falconry application process. He administered the falconry test today and has been a great example of teacher and mentor to my son.

It is a great feeling to see such an experienced wildlife steward take an opportunity such as this to teach and encourage a young man of the rights, responsibilities, and duties we as sportsmen enjoy. I find that it is not every day that we come into contact with true mentors and examples, and am thrilled when my children are influenced by the ones who do show up in their lives.

We have only lived in Kentucky for a year and a half, and I am very impressed with our experiences involving and observations of the Kentucky Department of Wildlife. Thank you for the obvious high standards of the officers and your department."

Bobby Gillis with Kentucky Emer-

gency Management sent the following email. "I wanted to send you a letter of thanks in regards to what a great job your staff did with the recent Peabody Bobwhite Rally held at Peabody WMA. **Ben Robinson, John Morgan and Eric Williams** put together a great event that helped educate and provide hope for a room full of frustrated bird hunters.

I've talked to friends of mine who are old time bird hunters and are aware of your department's current efforts to restore wild quail and they, like myself, feel confident that Kentucky's wild quail population is on the rise."

The following written note came to Benjy from Valerie C. Brown of Bowling Green regarding the Big Rivers Phase II dedication. "Thank you for the invitation to the dedication ceremony for Phase Two

[See "Mail," page 3](#)



RARE WEHRLE'S SALAMANDER FOUND

KDFWR biologist John MacGregor came across his first live adult *Plethodon wehrlei* Tuesday night, November 5, off Franks Creek Road above Eolia on Black Mountain in Letcher County. He found the salamander emerging from leaf litter just after dark along a steep dry road bank. Temperature was about 50 degrees, and with a slight cooling breeze coming off the mountain. It is only the sixth Kentucky record of the rare salamander and the first from Black Mountain. *John MacGregor photos*



Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia wildlife officers discuss issues

Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife conservation officers from the 7th and 9th Districts attended the Appalachian Regional Wildlife Officers Convention held at Cumberland Gap National Park Visitors Center on September 10.

This regional law enforcement meeting brings conservation officers together from Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia, to discuss pertinent topics that affect the three states in wildlife and fisheries enforcement.

Issues regarding deer, bear, elk, and

turkeys are similar for the three states. Topics of conversation included bear enforcement, internet investigations, Facebook tips and leads, and a Regional Organized Crime Information Center (ROCIC) presentation.

“Mail,” continued

of the Big Rivers WMA. Dr. Marvin Russell, Bobbi Smith, and I attended and enjoyed this function.

We commend you and all those involved for your dedication and focus on purpose. This property is a wonderful addition to our state’s natural resources and a shining example of cooperation.”

The following message came through our Department Facebook page from Mr. Paul Howard of Lebanon, KY. “I’m SO grateful to the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources for using OUR license and permit money the way they do to give people like me the opportunity to hunt. There is public land all across the state and with some effort and time anyone can go into these places and be successful.

I have been hunting Green River

Wildlife Management Area for years and have such great success that I have no reason to search for private land. THANKS Kentucky Fish and Wildlife for what you do. You guys/gals are the top notch game managers in the United States. You have done wondrous things with deer, turkey, elk, and now quail. Kudos to you!”

This note came through our Facebook page as well from Mr. Mike Paul, Ohio. “As a longtime Kentucky non-resident fishing license holder from the state of Ohio, I’d like to personally thank **Mr. Ron Brooks** and the KDFWR for doing the right thing and using the data they’ve collected to make proposals to put regulations in place that will help protect a valuable resource (catfish). It lets me know that my license fees, and money spent on fuel, food, lodging, and tournament fees, etc. are not money wasted. Thank you.”

This email came from Rob Wardrop, Independence, KY. He wrote, “I just wanted to let you know how extremely helpful **Naomi Wilson** was in my son’s application process to become a falconer. As we were hoping to have his paperwork processed in time for him to begin trapping this weekend, Naomi went well beyond what most agencies would do to make the process very timely resulting in his obtaining a permit in time.

I run my own business in a very customer service oriented industry and I can only hope to hire agents and interact with others, that care about the needs and hopes of their customers as Naomi has done for us. I was also impressed with her very thorough communication at each step of the process. Thanks for maintaining such great folks to work with and for the obvious high standards!”

New Hires

Allison George joined the agency on November 1 as an Internal Policy Analyst I. Allison will be located in the Grants Branch of Administrative Services.

Allison has a Bachelor's degree from Berea College in Business Administration. She came to us from the Department of Revenue where she worked in tangible Property Taxes. There she was responsible for analyzing financial documents to determine proper classification of business assets.

Allison enjoys hiking, travel and origami. Please join us in welcoming Allison to the department.

David 'D.J.' Garland joined the Information and Education Division on November 1. Originally from Murray, Kentucky, D.J. earned his Bachelor's degree in Wildlife Management from Murray State University in 2009. His previous work experience includes four summers at Camp John Currie as a counselor and counselor supervisor. Most recently he worked as an Oil Spill Biologist for the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. As our new Conservation Educator I in the 7th district, D.J. will present conservation education programs to students in Lawrence, Martin, Johnson, Magoffin, Pike, Knott, and Floyd counties and will spend his summers teaching outdoor skills to campers at Camp Robert Webb.

Jeff Rogers has joined the Administrative Services Division as a programmer/analyst in the IT section. Jeff retired from the Frankfort Police Department at the rank of Captain and position of Investigations Commander. He received a Bachelor's degree in computer science and a Master's degree in information assurance and security from Kentucky State University. Jeff will be working on new and existing projects for all divisions. Please join us in welcoming him to the IT section.

Branden Adkins has been hired to serve as a Fish and Wildlife Tech 1 GFTL position in the Wildlife Division's North-east Region. Branden's primary responsibility will be habitat management on the region's WMAs. Prior to this appointment, he served 2 seasons at Grayson Lake WMA as a 9-month interim employee for the Department.

Branden completed 2 years of study in the Agriculture program at Morehead State University before joining the Department. He is a native of Elliott County and still resides on the family farm where hunting and fishing continue to be his favorite pursuits.

Merle Hacker has been hired as the new private lands biologist in London. Merle is a graduate of Eastern Kentucky University with a degree in Wildlife Management. He previously worked for

KDFWR at Redbird WMA as a biologist in a position co-funded by Daniel Boone National Forest. He also worked as a seasonal technician out of Pineville. Merle is an avid hunter and mountain biker. He resides in London with his wife Brandy. They are eagerly awaiting the arrival of their first child this spring.

Danny Thornton was born and raised just north of the Pfeiffer Hatchery on the Owen County line, and used to fish the Kentucky River commercially with his father. He worked at the hatchery as a technician for the USFWS in the mid-80's until the early 90's after the KDFWR took over operations. Danny returned to work as an interim technician in 2012, and has now been hired as a full-time Fish and Wildlife Technician I. His years of fisheries experience is a valuable asset for the Department.



RESCUED

Trails at the Salato Wildlife Education Center occasionally confuse young hikers, and when a frantic mom informed Kentucky Afield Television's Nathan Sangster that her kids were on the trails and confused about the direction they should take to walk back out, he and producer Scott Moore grabbed their rescue gear, tracked the kids down and led them back to their parents. Parents and lost hikers were all very grateful.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission accepting resumes for department commissioner

The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources Commission is conducting a nationwide search for the agency's next commissioner.

State law calls on the nine-member commission to appoint a commissioner to head the state agency charged with the protection and conservation of the Commonwealth's wildlife resources.

"Without question, this is one of the premier jobs in the country for fish and wildlife professionals," said Commission Chairman Stuart N. Ray. "Kentucky is home to multiple quality fisheries, nationally acclaimed deer, elk and wild turkey populations

and a rich hunting and fishing heritage."

The commission is seeking exceptionally qualified persons with knowledge and experience in the protection, conservation and restoration of the wildlife resources of the Commonwealth.

"Every member of this commission is committed to identifying and hiring the best person for this job," said Ray.

By law, the commissioner works for the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission and has general supervision and control of all activities, functions, appointments and employees of the department. The commissioner enforces all provisions

of the laws of the state relating to wild animals, birds, fish and amphibians. A more complete description of the position and requirements is posted at the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife website at fw.ky.gov.

The commission will accept resumes through Dec. 31, 2013.

Interested individuals should send a detailed resume to: Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources Commission, 1 Sportsman's Lane, Frankfort, KY 40601.

Documents should be marked to the attention of Ms. Pat Barnard. Resumes also may be e-mailed to pat.barnard@ky.gov, or submitted via fax to (502) 696-3849.

White-tailed Deer: A Locavore's Most Valuable Resource II

KDFWR partnered this year with Derby City Branch of the Quality Deer Management Association to offer an introductory deer hunting course during September - October in the Louisville area for the second consecutive year. The course attracted nearly 30 participants, some traveling as far as Lexington and northern Kentucky.

Initial classroom instruction was provided at two sites: the Louisville Nature Center and Parklands of Floyds Fork. Participants learned about hunting tactics and strategies, deer biology and behavior, deer hunting rules and regulations, shot

placement, hunter ethics, aging deer, and deer population health.

A workshop at Otter Creek rounded out the course. The workshop featured introductory lessons about blood trailing, field dressing, butchering and food preparation, hide tanning, habitat, archery; firearms, hunting blinds and tree stands, and hunter education certification.

Jason Nally (Wildlife Division) deserves special recognition for again coordinating the successful event.

Nally was assisted by volunteers who taught various aspects of the course or provided important support. They included Pete Blandford and Steve Daniels (QDMA); Scott King and Rachel Shipley (King's Archery); Tressa Brown (Kentucky Heritage



Jason Nally discusses blood trailing. *Brian Clark photo*



Brian Clark demonstrates "gutless field dressing." *John Yeiser photo*

Council); **Charlie Logsdon** and **Clay Smitson** (Wildlife Division); **Brian Clark** (Public Affairs Division); **Scott Herndon** and **Jason Ice** (Law Enforcement).

Department staff are pursuing a grant to help expand and evaluate the potential impact of this type of program, which is designed to help facilitate hunting by adults who don't come from a traditional hunting background where a parent or other family member introduces them to hunting.



Ballard WMA dedicates Terrel Fields project

Ducks Unlimited joined with the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife to unveil plaques displaying names of recent Kentucky Ducks Unlimited Greenwing Legacy members, and those of Ducks Unlimited major donors during a dedication ceremony of the Terrel Fields Project at Ballard County Wildlife Management Area last month.

KDFWR and DU worked together and used donated partner funds as a match to secure a \$75,000 North American Wetland Conservation Act grant. The grant and matching partner funds were used to enhance 168 acres of palustrine emergent wetland habitat within two Terrel Field units.

The enhancement included low profile

berms, water control structures and a new deep well and pipe for water delivery to the newly enhanced units. The project directly increased the department's ability to enhance wintering waterfowl habitat on the WMA, and improved overall waterfowl carrying capacity within the Missis-

sippi Alluvial Valley.

Prior to project completion, the Terrel Units were used primarily for agriculture purposes as there were no water control structures or earthen levee infrastructure present that would have enabled area staff to manage the units as shallow water wetlands.



BLUEGRASS ARMY DEPOT QUAIL SURVEY

Heavy morning fog failed to dampen a recent quail survey at Bluegrass Army Depot. Six Eastern Kentucky University Students joined KDFWR staff in the survey. They recorded at least 13 coveys at eight listening stations. EKU students in the photo, from left, are Zach Beyer, Brett Stayton, Rachel Parrett, Savannah Dyer, Charles McIntosh and Alexis Wood.

“Quail,” continued

partment quail coordinators and non-game program, lead by **Sunni Carr**, pooled funds and staff to restore native grassland habitat on nearly 1,000 acres of fescue pasture. Within three years, the bobwhite population increased from ~6 coveys to ~50 coveys, while grassland songbirds responded likewise, making Shaker Village a national showcase and inspiration for grassland bird restoration. Such effective collaboration between game and nongame agency staff is exemplary.

- At the national level, KDFWR administrators provide key leadership:
 - * Commissioner Gassett stepped up in 2009 to Chair the new NBCI Management Board, providing high-level guidance and oversight to the Initiative. Gassett served until this autumn, building the Board into a potent support and leadership mechanism for bobwhite restoration.
 - * Assistant Wildlife Director **Dan Figert** chaired the 25-state NBTC during its challenging transition period from a southeastern to a national group, and during the rapid growth period of the NBCI.
- KDFWR has developed a national-caliber solid relationship with its state USDA offices and the State Technical Committee, with enviable results:
 - * The University of Kentucky Extension Service, with Tom Barnes in the lead, conducted ground-breaking research on eradicating fescue and other invasive introduced species, and restoring native grasslands.
 - * Native plants (instead of fescue) are becoming the norm for USDA conservation programs across Kentucky.
 - * KDFWR has probably the second-highest number of private lands/farm bill biologists of any state, achieved in large part by cost-sharing with USDA and the former Quail Unlimited (QU).
 - * KDFWR instigated a collaboratively developed Green River Conserva-



tion Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) focus area, which established more than 100,000 acres of native grassland across a several-county area of central Kentucky. Today, monitoring data documents a four-fold increase in quail abundance in the focus area.

- The KDFWR public information and education section, led by **Tim Slone**, recently created a popular, attractive and informative quail exhibit at the Salato Wildlife Education Center in Frankfort, complete with native prairie and a walk-in cage bustling with live birds.
- KDFWR now is elbowing its way to the front of the line, trying to become the first state to launch an “official” NBCI focus area – in Livingston County, in western Kentucky, with the management leadership of **Philip Sharp** – following completion early in 2014 of the new NBCI Model Focal Tiers Program, which will set standards and guidelines for how to design and implement successful quail restoration projects.

With all these right things already happening in Kentucky, why convene a sportsmen’s rally? The Department realized one crucial piece is missing: a powerful, organized support base of quail sportsmen. Until its demise early this year, QU played a major partnership and support role for KDFWR, linking sportsmen with the agency, and channeling sportsmen’s contributions to boost agency projects. The

vacuum left by QU remains, leaving a gaping sportsmen’s hole at the foundation of the Department’s grand vision for quail restoration in the state. So KDFWR did what KDFWR does: the agency took the initiative by hosting a rally to solve the problem.

Four quail-related NGOs were invited to participate in the rally, and two participated:

Quail Forever and the Quail and Upland Game Alliance. Those two groups enjoyed quality time and many new memberships with some 125 enthusiastic quail hunters, some of whom drove several hours for the opportunity to be rallied. More than 30 of those sportsmen arrived long before daylight to participate in a quail covey call count. The agency and the NGOs wanted the same thing from the rally: sportsmen to get excited about quail progress, and to join the quail organizations that, in turn, could lend their increasing weight to supporting the state’s aggressive quail initiatives. The National Wild Turkey Federation and the Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation also sponsored, but were unable to attend the rally.

It’s easy to criticize and casually dismiss the value of government. It is more difficult to recognize and appreciate circumstances when government not only lives up to but even exceeds expectations. The KDFWR is aggressively doing everything it can and should for bobwhites, in a methodical, thorough and effective manner. Now the ball is in the court of Kentucky sportsmen and the non-government organizations that enlist them, to stand tall in support of their Department’s leadership and initiative for bobwhite restoration.

If the quail sportsmen rise to the level set by KDFWR’s examples, expect much more good quail news from Kentucky in coming years.



Taylorsville Lake WMA Youth Whitetail Weekend attracts 20

Twenty youth hunters turned out for this year's edition of Youth Whitetail Weekend last month at Taylorsville Lake State Park.

The youth hunt was a joint effort by employees of the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife, Kentucky State Parks, Kosair Charities, Bullitt County Rod and Gun Club, Spencer County 4H, Cabelas and the Kentucky Conservation Officers Association.

A parent or guardian accompanied each youth during the hunt. Employees and volunteers selected and set up 20 blind locations in the week prior to the hunt.

When Saturday morning rolled around the youth and their guardians were treated to breakfast and blind locations were drawn. Shortly after, the first deer, a doe, was harvested.

As the hunters returned from the field they were treated to lunch. Management Area Foreman **Bill Mitchell** then presented them with an educational program in aging whitetail deer.

They drew for blinds again for the afternoon hunt, and one young hunter took his first buck.

Hunters took two more deer the next morning. Many of the participating youth had never hunted before.

A huge thank you goes out to the members of the Bullitt County Rod and Gun Club, conservation officers **Jason Ice, Darvin Chesser, Thomas Blackwell, Jeff Hall, Sgt. Ed Mahurin, Sgt. Doug Detherage, Sgt. Scott Herndon**, Management Area Foreman **Bill Mitchell**, and



Wildlife Tech **Craig Jenkins**, and Private Lands Biologist **Jason Nally**. Without their assistance and participation this event would not have been possible.

Above: Everyone listens closely as Taylorsville Lake WMA Foreman Bill Mitchell teaches them to determine a deer's age from its jawbone. Below: Conservation officer Jason Ice with a young hunter before her hunt. Left: A successful youth hunter poses for photos with his buck.



West Kentucky Fishing Club adopts Kentucky Lake Tailwater access

Everybody knows how the internet, innovative technology, and social media networks have revolutionized the world we live in.

Social media networks, in particular, allow anglers a unique opportunity to share their passions and experiences on the water with other anglers both locally and on a regional basis. They also allow anglers to learn new information/techniques, as well as share pictures of their catches.

For anglers in western Kentucky who use Facebook, you might be interested in a group called the West Kentucky Fishing Club. The club first originated in the summer of 2013 and has presently grown to include over 1,500 members.

Group administrator, Jason Spears, envisioned more than just access to fishing reports, scenic pictures, and advertising fishing equipment for sale. He wanted the group to actually provide some type of pub-



Several trash bags were quickly filled along one of the banks below Kentucky Lake dam.
Jason Spears photo

lic service effort to help protect Kentucky's most premiere sport fishing resources.

After contacting District Fisheries Program Coordinator **Paul Rister**, the group offered to "adopt" the Kentucky Lake Tailwater bank fishing areas, in addition to the Kentucky Lake Tailwater Boat Ramp.

On October 19, the group held their first official trash pick-up day. After roughly six hours, the group filled 32 trash bags from both banks of the tailwater and the boat ramp area itself. Mr. Spears envisions the group's next clean-up day to be scheduled during the spring

of 2014.

The Fisheries Division appreciates these types of partnerships throughout the state. In an effort to promote these types of collaborations, the Fisheries Division posted signs at both the tailwater bank access sites and the boat ramp displaying that the West Kentucky Fishing Club has "adopted" the areas for trash maintenance.

Other groups interested in potentially "adopting" other boat ramp sites or bank fishing access sites should feel free to contact their local fisheries program coordinator.



Left: The Department appreciates the efforts of such groups to help keep our bank fishing areas and boat ramps clean from litter. *Paul Rister photo*
Above: A member of the West Kentucky Fishing Club removes old fishing line along the popular Kentucky Lake Tailwater bank fishing area. *Photo by David Green, Marshall County Tribune-Courier.*