



Ballard
flooded
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Keep current with the Kentucky Afield podcast

The Kentucky Afield podcast is now approaching 50,000 listens in its first year of existence. The first broadcast of the podcast occurred in February 2018.

“Our goal is to educate and inform people about Kentucky Fish and Wildlife regulations, current happenings, outdoor opportunities, habitat issues and hunting and fishing techniques,” said Chase Winger, host of the Kentucky Afield podcast. “We do the same thing as Kentucky Afield television and Kentucky Afield magazine, it is just on a podcast.”

The educational and charitable opportunities presented on the podcast can lead to real results. For example, after hearing Roger LaPointe, the head of Kentucky Hunters for the Hungry on the podcast, a 4-H group in Estill County contacted the organization about a pilot program for donating deer – with intentions of making it statewide.

Then there’s the Boy Scout troop that set up an Anglers Legacy class after hearing Easton Copley on the podcast. Several organizations also contacted Kentucky Fish and Wildlife about the Field to Fork classes after hearing Becky Wallen and Rachel Young talk about the program.

“People are taking action all because



Chase Winger hosts the popular Kentucky Afield podcast program. Every week, Winger discusses topics of interest to outdoors enthusiasts. *Lee McClellan photo*

of the podcast,” Winger said.

The Kentucky Afield podcast is available on iTunes, Soundcloud and other venues for podcasts. “Pretty much any outlet for podcasts offers the Kentucky Afield podcast,” Winger said.

To listen to past or current episodes or

subscribe to the Kentucky Afield podcast, visit the department website and click on the “Kentucky Afield” tab, followed by “podcast.” Co-hosted by Kentucky Afield magazine Associate Editor Lee McClellan, new Kentucky Afield podcasts are usually posted on Fridays.

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WE GET MAIL

Letters to the Commissioner's Office

From: Eden Abshire

Thank you for that amazing weekend! It was the best. Thank you to everyone who made it possible. I hope to be able to do it again next year, or ever again, so thank you for the best weekend ever!!

Sincerely, Eden

This letter came from Paul Durham: "My granddaughter, Eden Abshire, recently had the opportunity to participate in the Green Wing Adventure at Camp John Currie and I was able to escort her as her guardian. She and a second granddaughter, Kendall Campbell, attended Camp Webb in July where they had the time of their lives, boating, fishing, shooting skeet and just generally being kids at camp! While there, they both completed their hunter's safety course and qualified for the Green Wing event. Both applied for the hunt and Eden was selected, first as an alternate and then as a participant when one of the district representatives was unable to attend. She was elated to be chosen and I was happy to be able to attend with her.

Eden hadn't hunted before the event although she does love to fish. I wasn't quite sure how she would do in a hunting situation but the Fish and Wildlife and Ducks Unlimited personnel made it easy for her to be successful. And, yes, even

though she and the group she was with were unable to harvest any waterfowl, the hunt was very successful! The duck call that Ducks Unlimited presented her with and the instruction on its use provided by the Fish and Wildlife folks were worth more to her than all the ducks on Kentucky Lake! I expected her to stop using it when we returned home but she has continued to try to "do it right," has asked for a gun for her birthday and is planning a return trip beginning with her time at Camp Webb again next summer!

YOUR PROGRAM WORKS!
Thanks Kentucky Fish & Wildlife and Ducks Unlimited, as well as the blinds sponsors and guides for your hard work. Please do your best to see that future generation of these kids (as well as their grandfathers!) have these same opportunities."

This letter came from Chris Holland: "I was writing to thank you for the funding of the Green Wing program at Camp Currie. My son, Ryan Holland,

was drawn for this hunt and was able to participate this year. I was lucky enough to go with him for the weekend.

This was a great weekend for both of us. The Department of Fish and Wildlife employees were great. They showed everyone a great time. It will be a memory Ryan and I will have for the rest of our lives.

This is a great way to expose the kids to hunting and nature. Ryan was able to kill his first duck. I know this has created and ingrained a love for hunting and wildlife for the rest of his life. This hunt, along with Camp Currie are great things for the youth of this state. Please continue to support this activity yearly. It truly is impacting the youth of our state."

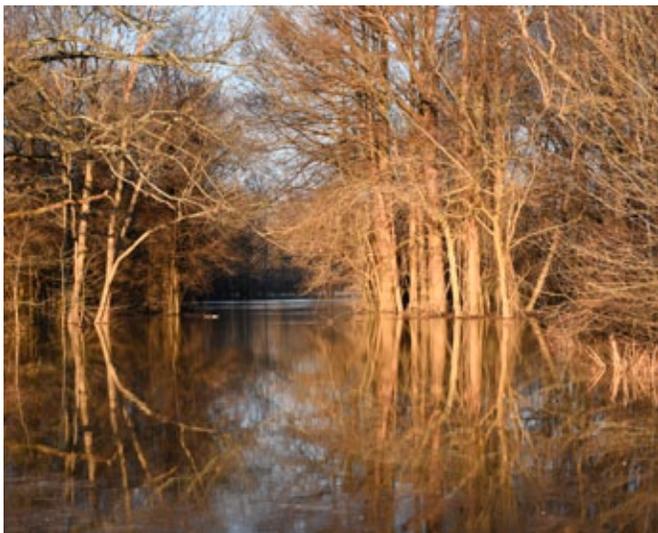
From Ryan Holland:

"I was a participant in the 2019 Green Wing Adventure. Thank you for helping fund the experience this year. I hope you consider funding it again next year because I personally truly enjoyed it and hope that it never ends."

NWTF CONSERVATION OFFICER OF THE YEAR



Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Sgt. Chris Fossitt was selected by the National Wild Turkey Federation Kentucky State Chapter Board of Directors as the 2018 NWTF Conservation Officer of the Year. Fossitt, center, represented Kentucky at the NWTF National Convention in Nashville, Tenn., Feb. 14 – 17.



Ballard Wildlife Management Area battles flooding

Hunters at Ballard Wildlife Management Area were looking forward to the 2018/2019 waterfowl season. More than a year of planning produced several moist-soil habitat renovation projects, and 14 new waterfowl hunting units for hunters to enjoy.

Each November, when the blinds are brushed in and winter is near, managers at Ballard take a quick breath and start looking for rain. This year... they got it. Following one of the wettest years on record,

winter continued to dump rain into the region. Ballard WMA missed 17 regular season days of hunting, and had to cancel the two-day youth hunt in February.

As Ballard is closed each Monday and Tuesday, as well as the Christmas and New Year holidays, nearly half of the hunters drawn to hunt this year could not do so. When the Ohio River approaches 40 feet at the Cairo, Illinois, gauge, the river begins to cause safety issues. Ballard staff watch closely, and continue to allow hunt-

ing until it becomes unsafe.

This season, there were three flood events that affected hunting on the WMA. Two of the floods cut off access to the hunting units and closed the WMA. Pictures taken Feb. 13 show an aerial view of the Shelby Lake Field hunt units, the Hill Ridge Hunt Units and the flooded road at the front gate. The Ohio River is higher now than it has been all season, and is not predicted to fall below 40 feet until March 3.

New employees join Purchasing and Property Branch

The Purchasing and Property Branch recently welcomed two new employees – Jason Monarch and Alison Simpson.

Monarch joined the Purchasing and Property Branch Dec. 17 as a Purchasing Agent II. He will act as the uniform officer for the department and also handle all Fleet requests. Monarch will also be the contact for questions regarding master agreements. Along with the rest of the branch, he will also handle the day-to-day purchases. Monarch joins the department

from the Energy Cabinet. He enjoys spending time with his family and fishing, hunting and coaching baseball in his spare time.

Simpson joined the Purchasing and Property Branch Feb. 4, as a Purchasing Agent I. She will handle all boat slip and property leases, as well as act as the branch's contact person with all agency construction projects. She will also handle the day-to-day purchases. Simpson



Alison Simpson

comes from the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Office of Administrative and Technology Services, where she was a contract specialist. In her free time, she enjoys writing, running, reading and spending time with family. She lives in Frankfort with her husband, Tim, and her children, Sam and Anna who are currently juniors in high school.



Grouse habitat in the making at two WMAs

Members from the Ruffed Grouse Society's Tri-State Chapter donated two chainsaws along with multiple safety items to the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources to aid its ruffed grouse management program.

The Tri-State Drummers Chapter covers southwest West Virginia, southeast

Ohio and northeast Kentucky. The equipment donation will assist staff on Grayson Lake WMA and Yatesville Lake WMA in creating and maintaining early successional habitat on these areas to benefit a multitude of species.

Staff on these areas have been dedicated toward planning and implement-

ing forest management. The assistance provided by this chapter is crucial to meeting departmental goals and objectives. Staff have already put the equipment to use by conducting an acre patch cut. We look forward to more great habitat that will be made over time with these donations!



KENTUCKY WILD JOINS EAGLE WATCH WEEKEND

Attendees of a recent Kentucky State Parks' Eagle Watch Weekend took the time to join Kentucky Wild in between spotting bald eagles on the cruise. Even the ship's captain Paul Masterson, center, got in on the action. Conservation Educators Geoff Roberts and Rachel Young, at left, helped spot eagles, and helped participants understand how they could become involved in other wildlife success stories by becoming members of Kentucky Wild.

Pigs Running Wild 2018

A Pendleton County farm was the source of a joint operation that rounded up more than 119 free-roaming pigs and rescued another 350 pigs that were contained in pens inadequate to hold them.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Conservation Sgt. Scott Horn and Officer Paul Sorrell began investigating in July 2018 after receiving several complaints about free-roaming pigs from nearby landowners and deer hunters.

Wild pigs are extremely adaptable and can thrive in a variety of habitats. They eat almost anything, robbing native wildlife of food and often preying on native animals as well. Wild pigs primarily feed by “rooting,” where they turn over the topsoil in search of roots, tubers, invertebrates, anything edible. They use an incredible sense of smell to locate food and in addition to rooting, will graze, scavenge, and predate. Their presence creates massive amounts of destruction to the land. It’s this reason and the pigs’ abilities to procreate in large numbers that make the releasing of pigs, either intentionally or unintentionally, illegal in Kentucky.

When Horn and Sorrell arrived at the 200-plus acre property, the officers counted at least 119 pigs that were roaming freely. This number did not include the more than 350 pigs in poorly constructed pens.

After continued investigation, the officers contacted several agencies to aid in the issue. Terri Brunjes, wild pig biologist with the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources; Janelle Cox, USDA Department of Agriculture; and the Pendleton County Attorney joined with the officers to tackle the problem.

The investigation revealed that the same landowner had similar complaints about free-roaming pigs in 2017 and at that time was given a warning and two weeks to contain the pigs. This time, the landowner was charged with 119 counts of releasing pigs into the wild, and 119

counts of pigs/livestock to be penned up.

In August, Sorrell and Horn met with the landowner and she agreed to keep her original 30 pigs, allowing the remainder of the pigs to be turned over to Fish and Wildlife.

In mid-August, Horn was contacted by Atti’s Acers Inc. to discuss the possibility of relocating and rescuing the pigs. Horn worked closely with Atti’s Acers Inc. and Red Oak Animal Rescue to find homes for the displaced pigs.

Prior to being relocated to nine states, the more than 450 pigs were either spayed



or neutered, microchipped and dewormed. From talking to the nine sanctuaries, this was the largest pig rescue in the country to date.

Thanks to the quick work from department employees, Sorrell, Horn and Brunjes, the 119 free-roaming pigs didn’t get a chance to establish themselves in the hills of Pendleton County.



KENTUCKY WILD PROGRAM ADDED TO SHOW BOOTH

The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources show booth grew a little this year with the introduction of Kentucky Wild. Show attendees in Louisville, Lexington and Cincinnati were able to learn and immediately join to support wildlife and conservation

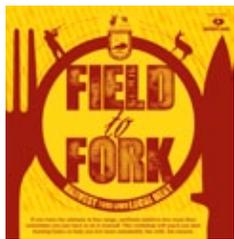
in a new way. Many were first-time customers with the agency, while others added a membership in addition to purchasing their hunting or fishing license. Only halfway through the show season, and the Kentucky Wild program has gained 83 members at the shows and educated many others about this new program. The exclusive Kentucky Wild-branded gear is very popular as well.



Where are they now? Field to Fork participants share their stories

By Brian Clark, Marketing Division

Field to Fork, Kentucky's adult learn-to-hunt program designed primarily for food-motivated do-it-yourselfers, continues to recruit and retain hunters from nontraditional backgrounds. The Department and partners are offering two *Field to Fork – Wild Turkey Hunting* courses in March.



Here are vignettes from three *Field to Fork – Deer Hunting* alumni, who posted their updates in KDFWR's Legacy Programs Facebook page, reflecting on their development as hunters after taking a *Field to Fork* course. These participants demonstrate the diversity of demographics and backgrounds represented by participants in *Field to Fork* courses. Michelle is a university administrator, Roger an engineer, and Felix a medical professional. Providing opportunities for and including nontraditional audiences are vital to the future of hunting and fishing, and funding fish and wildlife conservation.

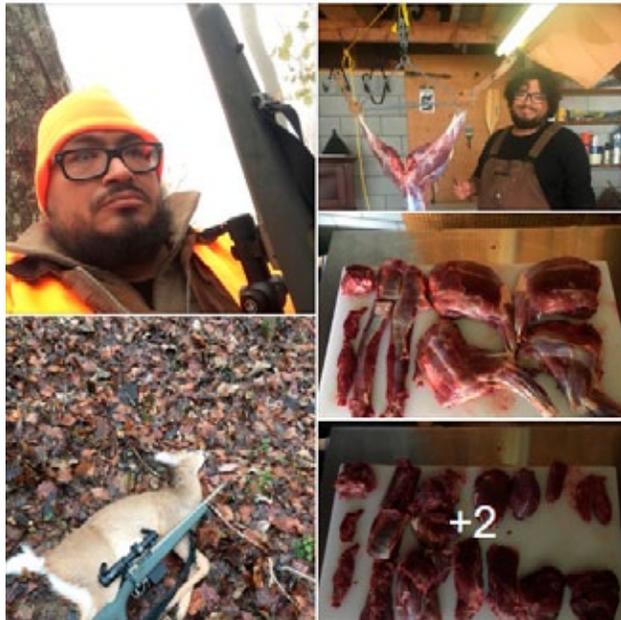
Roger Quinn is 🙏 feeling thankful.
November 24, 2018 · Add Topics

I wanna thank everyone Ky Fish and Wildlife Legacy Programs for all the support and education that led to this point Without the Kentucky feild to fork program I would not have been confident enough to hunt, process, and share my success with friends and family!



Felix Galiz
November 17, 2018 · Add Topics

Today's hunt and subsequent harvest is a big milestone along my path as a hunter. Today I harvested my 3rd deer but it was the first hunt that I did all by myself. I built this rifle myself in my garage. I secured permission to utilize a small parcel of land, scouted, planned, prepared a stand, and gathered materials to allow me to process the meat. When the time came a single perfectly placed round resulted in a clean immediate death, fell right where she stood. This ha... See More



Michelle Rawlings is with Kris Robinson.
November 24, 2018 · Add Topics

Another shout out to the KY Dept of Fish and Wildlife and the Field to Fork and Becoming an Outdoors-woman programs. I shot a doe tonight (my 5th deer in 3 years) but tonight's ran after the shot which was new for me. I had to search for blood and I remembered Katie Haymes telling us there might not be much to go on when she showed us how to blood trail. There were only a few drops but luckily we followed it and found my deer!





Above: Management Foreman Dirk Steenbergen grabbed some ducks for banding. At right, Area Manager Ryan Taylor gave a presentation during the event. *John Goodin photos*

Wildlife students help band waterfowl at Yellowbank WMA

Around 25 wildlife students from Muhlenberg County High School traveled to Yellowbank Wildlife Management Area to spend a rainy day learning about waterfowl and deer management.

The students toured the waterfowl refuge to learn about the importance of the banding program, waterfowl identification and moist-soil management from area manager Ryan Taylor.

While on the tour, students observed four bald eagles in a tree overlooking the Ohio River.

Jared Handley, wildlife biologist in the Green River Region, demonstrated how to age deer by tooth wear and discussed methods for screening deer for Chronic Wasting Disease.



A student releases a gadwall after it was banded.