



JANUARY 2018

Louisiana

# SPORTSMAN

**RUT  
CALENDAR  
INSIDE**

**DOWN THAT**

# LATE-SEASON BUCK

**411 ON MORE  
MONSTER  
BUCKS**

**GO-TO  
GOOSE  
HUNTING  
TIPS**

**SHOOT MORE  
SECOND-SPLIT  
BIRDS**

**AIR RIFLE  
SQUIRRELS**

**CADDO LAKE  
DUCK  
LIMITS**

**TOP 3  
WINTERTIME  
BASS BAITS**

**PLUS:  
VENICE'S  
WINTER  
HOTSPOTS**

**COLD WATER  
CRAPPIE  
TACTICS**

**COON  
HUNTING  
WITH DOGS**

**BLACK RIVER  
LAKE BASS**



\$3.99 JANUARY 2018



LouisianaSPORTSMAN.com

# 26 FEET OF PURE FISHING JOY

## THE ALL NEW 265XTS

Step up to NauticStar's biggest bay boat, the all new **265XTS** – Xtreme Tournament Series. The carefully designed hull and deck is optimized for performance, functionality and fishability that will give you capabilities never before seen in a bay boat. Inshore or offshore, the STAR Performance hull is designed to minimize draft for skinny fishing and provide a forgiving ride through tight open chops and coastal swells. Check out all the incredible standard and innovative features of the **265XTS** on our website.



**LIFETIME**  
Limited Hull Warranty



**NauticStar**<sup>®</sup>  
BOATS

Call (662) 200-4664 or visit our website or call:

**NauticStarBoats.com**

      @NauticStarBoats

Some photos shown with optional equipment

Factory installed with

 **YAMAHA**





# BOWFISHING MADE SIMPLE

Extend your bow hunting season a little longer. Access shallow ponds at night with a Gator Tail and let your arrows fly!

[WWW.GATOR-TAIL.COM](http://WWW.GATOR-TAIL.COM)

337-229-4864



# CURADO

FOR REEL LIFE

**ICAST**  
**2017**  
**BEST FRESHWATER REEL**



The **NEW, Shimano Curado** lives up to its heritage and sets new standards of **versatility, performance** and **reliability**. This is the one reel you will want to use every day, for life.

# SHIMANO

[fish.shimano.com](http://fish.shimano.com)

DON'T FORGET TO USE YOUR



**GIFT CARD**

Available at



**FOR ALL.  
FOR LESS.™**

[academy.com](http://academy.com)

**REED'S  
METALS, INC.**

**ORDER TODAY, PICKUP TODAY!**

**NOW IN 8 LOCATIONS**

**ACROSS THE SOUTHEAST WITH THE NEWEST LOCATION IN**

**CROSS CITY, FL**



**METAL ROOFS • METAL BUILDINGS • POLE BARNs • AND MORE!**

**[www.reedsmetals.com](http://www.reedsmetals.com)**



**FLORIDA  
BUILDING  
CODE 2010**  
APPROVED  
FL #12725-R1



**METAL ROOFING  
ALLIANCE  
MEMBER**



**FLORIDA  
ROOFING  
ASSOCIATION  
MEMBER**

# Kubota's RTV X-Series: Redefined. Rugged. Ready.



**RTV-X1100C**

Bring on the rain, snow, heat and wind. You'll stay comfortable in the RTV-X1100C's luxurious, fully-enclosed, factory-installed cab with air/heat/defrost and more. Powered by a rugged 24.8 HP\* Kubota diesel engine.



**RTV-X900**

Truck-inspired styling. Improved suspension. Higher ground clearance. More legroom. Plus a rugged 21.6 HP\* Kubota diesel engine. America's top-selling diesel utility vehicle is now even better!



**RTV-X1120D**

Power through tough workloads. Glide over hilly, bumpy or rocky terrain. It's easy with a 24.8 HP\* Kubota diesel engine — plus Extra Duty Independent Rear Suspension (IRS) found on all RTV X-Series models.

## ASCENSION EQUIPMENT & RENT ALL A Cut Above The Rest!

13173 Airline Hwy  
Gonzales, LA 70737  
(225) 647-5881

[www.ascensionequipment.com](http://www.ascensionequipment.com)



[www.kubota.com](http://www.kubota.com)

\*For complete warranty, safety and product information, consult your local Kubota dealer and the product operator's manual. Power (HP/KW) and other specifications are based on various standards or recommended practices. Optional equipment may be shown.  
© Kubota Tractor Corporation, 2016



# Excel BOATS



## Quality | Price | Fit & Finish

### Excel Bay Pro 220, 203 & 183

Up to 200 Horsepower Rating  
Twin Folding Rear Jump Seats  
Twin Locking Rod Boxes  
24 Gallon Rear Aerated Livewell  
Lean Post w/Footrest  
w/16 Gallon Aerated Livewell  
Front Bow 48 qt. Cooler w/220 Model

Exceleration Pad Hull Performance  
up to 55 + MPH  
Dry Box Storage Compartments  
30 Cubic Feet  
.125 Tough Aluminum Alloy  
30 Gallon Fuel Tank  
Deluxe Console w/6 Rod Holders  
w/Three Tray Tackle Center

**Excel-Marine.com | 801-352-8011**

- Features vary depending on boat model -

When it comes to performance, a Pro XS gets you there like no other outboard. Paired with Excel's Exceleration™ pad hull, this dynamic duo enables the Bay Pro lightning-quick acceleration. Mercury Pro XS and Excel Boats- the most serious outboard combo on the water.



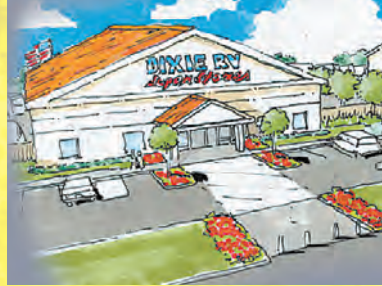


# DIXIE RV

## CAMPING & OUTDOOR STORE!!



**HAMMOND**  
Sales & Service:  
**866-591-2024**  
Located off I-12 Exit 35  
10241 Destination Dr.  
Hammond, LA 70403  
SALES: Mon - Sat 8 am - 7 pm  
SERVICE: Mon - Sat 8 am - 5 pm



**Breaux Bridge**  
Sales & Service:  
**337-889-0011**  
Located off I-10, Exit 109  
657 Enterprise Pkwy.  
Breax Bridge, LA 70517

[www.dixierv.com](http://www.dixierv.com)

**MOMENTUM**



Over **400**  
Trailers, Fifth  
Wheels and  
Toy Haulers  
On Display!

**LACROSSE**  
by PRIME TIME MFG.



Hammond  
Only

**Hideout**  
by Hornet



Hammond  
Only

**Laredo**



Hammond  
Only

**TORQUE**  
by TRAILER WORLD



**SENECA**



**GREYHAWK**



**Bounder**



Over **100**  
Motorhomes  
On Display

**CLASS B**  
**WINNEBAGO**  
*Touring Coach*



*"Helping You Retire One Weekend At A Time"*



INSHORE **TO** OFFSHORE...  
TROUT **TO** TUNA...

**NO SPECIES IS SAFE...**  
**FROM THE NEW BLUE WAVE 2800 PURE HYBRID!**



**BLUE WAVE.**

BlueWaveBoats.com



**YAMAHA**

**BEST OF LOUISIANA OUTDOORS**  
**BEST BAY BOAT 2014, 2015, 2016**

# NEW YEAR, NEW GEAR.

## FOR PERFORMANCE THAT'S PERFECT.

The Sportsman Performance Pique Shirt is made from our premium blend of Peruvian Pima Cotton and micro denier polyester. This blend offers ultimate moisture wicking properties for comfort and year-round durability for the active outdoor life.





# LOUISIANA'S #1 CHOICE FOR CHEVY

ACCORDING TO CURRENT GM DATA



## LOUISIANA'S LARGEST SELECTION OF CHEVY SILVERADOS

*THE MOST DEPENDABLE, LONGEST-LASTING FULL-SIZE PICKUPS ON THE ROAD*

AVAILABLE NOW AT



337-234-9411  
ServiceGM.com

CHEVROLET | CADILLAC

FIND **NEW** ROADS<sup>®</sup>

47

Driven to distraction



# Louisiana CONTENTS

Volume 38 | Number 1 | January 2018



101 Little things count

## FEATURES:

### 47 **Driven to distraction** cover story

Bucks have to venture out of their comfort zones to pursue hot does. Use these 'big tips' to score during the rut.

>>>By Chris Ginn

### 53 **Late-season lowdown**

You can't stick with early season tactics and continue killing ducks this month. Here's how to adjust to track down waterfowl honey holes.

>>>By Humberto Fontova

### 58 **Delta winter hot spots**

Winter in Southeast Louisiana is unpredictable - and so are the fish. Keep these tips in mind when you're targeting specks and reds now out of Venice.

>>>By David A. Brown

### 68 **Air power**

Targeting squirrels with an air rifle is a stealthy, challenging way to fill your game bag. Here's what you need to know if you decide to leave your trusty rimfire rifle at home.

>>>By Terry L. Jones

### 74 **Warm up to winter crappie**

When baitfish go deep in colder months, crappie follow them. Try these tips to load up on winter slabs.

>>>By David A. Brown

### 84 **Ducking Caddo**

This cypress-filled gem on the Louisiana-Texas border offers up some great waterfowl hunting — but knowing some of its idiosyncrasies beforehand will up your odds of bagging a limit.

>>>By Jerald Horst

### 92 **Always bet on Black**

Even in tough wintertime conditions, Black River Lake in central Louisiana can deliver bass — if you crack the code.

>>>By Chris Ginn

### 101 **Little things count**

Geese are famous for being finicky. For staying just out of range, chuckling as hunters grind their teeth in frustration. But these guides know small adjustments can result in birds on the ground.

>>>By John Flores

### 107 **Treed's a crowd**

Or at least barking dogs, spotlights, gunfire — and an angry raccoon — make it seem that way.

>>>By Kinny Haddox

## FISHING HOTSPOTS

- |                           |                              |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>152</b> Venice         | <b>157</b> Pointe a la Hache |
| <b>153</b> Shell Beach    | <b>158</b> Bayou Black       |
| <b>153</b> Lake Claiborne | <b>160</b> Dularge           |
| <b>154</b> Delacroix      | <b>162</b> Mermentau River   |
| <b>154</b> Caney Lake     | <b>163</b> Lake Borgne       |
| <b>156</b> Toledo Bend    | <b>164</b> Grand Isle        |

# MADE IN THE USA!

## METAL BUILDING & ROOFING SPECIALS!

Highest Quality Materials for the Lowest Possible Prices

**Our "in house" team can custom design, engineer & fabricate any size building to meet your needs.**



Custom trim up to 20' lengths • 14 different colors available • 5 panel profiles available • Custom Standing seam roll-forming at jobsite • We carry a complete line of accessories, doors, roll-up doors, hardware, insulation and more



**\$4,380**

24 X 24 X 10



**\$12,945**

40 X 60 X 14



**\$15,290**

50 X 50 X 15 includes 1-3070 Door, 2-10X10 & 1-12X14 openings



**\$5,986**

20x50x14 Boat/RV Storage



**\$9,960**

30X60X12 w/front porch, includes 1-3070 door & 12X12 opening

### All Buildings Include...

- Heavy I Beam Pre-Engineered Bolt Together Construction
- 26 Ga 40 Year Warranty Color Walls & Trim
- Lifetime Fasteners
- Includes Erection Drawings & Anchor Bolt Plans...

Locally Owned & Locally Manufactured...



2727 West Park Ave., Gray, LA 70359 985.876.2555

[www.customcorrugated.net](http://www.customcorrugated.net)



Serving Southern Louisiana & Mississippi For Over 10 Years



58

Delta winter  
hot spots



Louisiana  
**SPORTSMAN**

www.LouisianaSPORTSMAN.com

**PUBLISHER:** Tony Taylor  
**EDITOR:** Patrick Bonin  
**EDITORIAL ASSISTANT:** Alicia LaFont  
**PRODUCTION DIRECTOR:** Jeff Caldwell  
**ASSISTANT PRODUCTION MANAGER:**  
Desiree P. Lewis

**ART DIRECTOR:** Rodney Anouilh  
**GRAPHIC DESIGNERS:**  
Jeff Cashio, Kevin Orgeron, Alissa Zeringue

**SALES DIRECTOR:** Tony Taylor  
504.416.7621/tonyt@lasmag.com

**ADVERTISING SALES:**  
Mark Hilzim (National Sales), Jay Forrest, Asa Faulkner, Brent Comardelle, Mark Boyd, Greg Webb, Liz Lowe, Ron Dorsey, Bret Holten

**CONTROLLER:** Juanita Guidry

**CIRCULATION DIRECTOR:**  
Ricky Naquin 985.859.7744/rickyn@lasmag.com

**CIRCULATION FIELD MANAGER:**  
Tim Stiglets 601.434.1526/timstiglets@comcast.net

**CREDIT MANAGER:** Rachel Champagne

**CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:** Bruce Mehrtens

**CONTRIBUTING WRITERS:**  
Catch Cormier, John Flores, Bill Garbo, Chris Ginn, Glynn Harris, Chris Holmes, Jerald Horst, Keith LaCaze, David Moreland, Don Shoopman, Rusty Tardo, Joel Masson, Capt. Paul Titus, Sammy Romano, Andy Crawford, Kinny Had-dox, David A. Brown, Humberto Fontova and Terry L. Jones

**ADVERTISING INQUIRIES:**

Contact Tony Taylor  
email: tonyt@lasmag.com/504.416.7621

**SUBSCRIPTIONS OR  
SUBSCRIPTION ISSUES,  
CALL 1-855-223-3599**

Monday thru Friday, 6 am to 11 pm  
Saturday & Sunday, 8 am - 5 pm CST

LOUISIANA SPORTSMAN (USPS665390) is published month-ly by Louisiana Publishing, Inc., Allen J. Lottinger, President, 14236 Highway 90, P.O. Box 1199, Boutte, LA 70039. Mailed at periodicals postage rates and paid at Baton Rouge, La., and additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to Louisiana Sportsman, P.O. Box 433294, Palm Coast, FL 32143. All rights reserved. Reproduction of contents is strictly prohibited without permission of Louisiana Sportsman. **EDITO-RIAL:** Louisiana Sportsman uses free-lance writers throughout the state. Call (985) 758-7217 for information on submitting articles and photos. Louisiana Sportsman is not responsible for the loss of queries, manuscripts or other materials.

P.O. Box 1199, Boutte, LA 70039-1199  
800.538.4355

**Volume 38 | No 1**

NEWS BREAKERS:

**20** 199-inch DeSoto Parish monster goes down

**22** World bowfishing record red stuck in Cocodrie

PLUS

**34** Duck calling tips for the second split

ON THE COVER:



After four long years of trail cam hide-and- seek, Logansport's Donald Alexander finally caught up with a magnificent 199-inch DeSoto Parish buck he nicknamed Crab Claws. For the full story on how the big deer went down, go to page 20.

COLUMNS:

**114 Creature Feature** By Jerald Horst

**118 Ask Capt. Paul** By Captain Paul Titus

**120 Fly Lines** By Catch Cormier

**124 Grunts & Gobbles**  
By David Moreland

**126 Lure Review** By Don Shoopman

**128 Game Warden** By Keith LaCaze

**130 Sticks and Strings** By Sammy Romano

**132 Happy Trails** By Bill Garbo

**134 Paddles 'N Puddles**  
By Chris Holmes

**138 Seafood Bible** By Jerald & Glenda Horst

DEPARTMENTS:

**16** Letters to the Editor

**28** November Rut Calendar

**34** Field Notes

**142** New Products

**144** Hunting/Fishing Scrapbook

**146** Hunting Regulations

**148** Sunrise/Sunset Chart

**150** Sportsman Astro Tables

**151** Sportsman Tide Guide

**152** Fishing Hotspots

**166** Louisiana Guides

**167** Sportsman Classifieds

**169** Advertiser Index



# SPORTSMAN®

Exceptional Boats-Surprisingly Affordable



**Tournament 214**

- Yamaha VF150LA
- Tandem Axle Trailer
- Leaning Post



**Tournament 234**

- Yamaha VF200LA
- Leaning Post
- Tandem Axle Trailer



**Masters267**

- Yamaha F300XCA
- T-Top
- Tandem axle trailer



**Island Reef 19**

- Yamaha F90XA
- Leaning post
- Single axle trailer



**Island Bay 18**

- Yamaha F90XA
- Flip/Flop Ice Chest Seat
- Single Axle Trailer



**252 Open**

- Yamaha F150XB
- T-Top
- Tandem Axle Trailer



# YAMAHA

5657 E. St. Bernard Hwy • Violet, LA 70092

**504-682-5252**

[www.tims-marine.com](http://www.tims-marine.com)

\*includes trailer; pricing after all dealer and mfg. rebates applied, prices do not reflect costs related to dealer prep, freight, tax, title, license, reg. fees.

# Bayou Outboards Inc.

3710 Robertson St. • Metairie, LA

**504-836-6885**

[www.bayououtboards.com](http://www.bayououtboards.com)

*We offer complete service  
and parts to your...*



- Evinrude
- Johnson
- Yamaha
- Suzuki
- Tohatsu
- Nissan
- Mercury



THE EVINRUDE E-TEC  
**PERFECT 10**  
SALES EVENT  
NOV. 1, 2017 APR. 30, 2018  
**10-YEAR WARRANTY!**  
EVINRUDE E-TEC

**LETTER**  
to the editor

## REDFISH 'SLAUGHTERED' BY POGIE BOAT NET FAILURE

TO THE EDITOR:

An open letter to Louisiana sportsmen and the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries:

Several times a year I travel to your beautiful state to enjoy the wonderful fishing for redfish that your Gulf waters offer.

One day last week, we encountered a pogie (menhaden) boat net failure near Grand Isle that was most disturbing. It was bad enough to observe the thousands of dead pogies floating on top, but it was sickening to witness hundreds and hundreds of beautiful bull redfish that were floating dead as far as the eye could see. It truly looked like a deliberate fish kill. According to our charter captain, this sight is not at all unusual and I hope and pray he is wrong.

My question to your fisheries people: Do you know, and do you care? As you should, you pursue poachers diligently, but it would take years for all the poachers in Louisiana to do the damage that one pogie boat net did to the redfish in just one morning. What an absolute shame!

I am absolutely disgusted with what I saw, and feel a great obligation to share this tragedy with other sportsmen in your state. The pogie boat lobby may be strong, but perhaps our combined voices can be stronger to stop this redfish slaughter.

DR. GARY CLARK  
Kissimmee, FL

## JEFF REGISTER BUILDING & TRUSS



- 40' x 60' x 12' Installed**
- Roof Only, Closed Gables ..... \$7,642\*
- Roof Only, Open Gables ..... \$6,850\*
- 30' x 40' x 10' Installed**
- Roof Only, Open Gables ..... \$3,950\*

[registerbarns.com](http://registerbarns.com)

**228-678-0971-Office**

**228-234-9115-Cell**

**228-234-7241-Cell**

**2611 26th Ave. • Gulfport, MS**

Second location in Highland Home, AL

\*prices do not include taxes and delivery

## HERBICIDES NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR STATE'S DECLINING DEER HABITAT

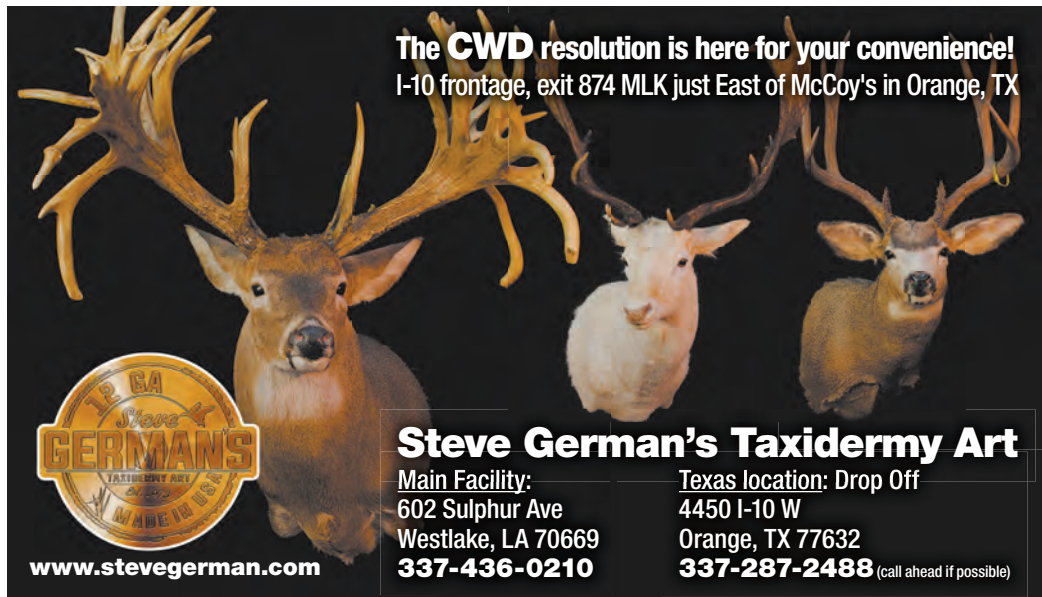
TO THE EDITOR:

I recently read an article by Mr. Dave Moreland about the declining deer population in Louisiana. Mr. Moreland has concluded that the reason we have a declining deer population is because timber companies are using herbicides to kill deer browse in pine plantations. As a graduate forester from LSU and having worked in the timber industry for 29 years, I have seen a lot of changes in the management of our natural resources. Herbicides have become the most economical and effective tool used to manage pine plantations. The basic procedure is to apply the herbicides after the final harvest to give the pine seedling a year to grow free of competition. After that, the only other herbicide treatment may be herbaceous grass control in the first spring, or a mid-rotation treatment after 15 years. Most herbicide treatments are prescribed to control unwanted hardwood, such as sweetgum. Mr. Moreland's article stated that after herbicide treatments, the only browse left was sweetgum, yaupon and climbing fern. Simply not true. A year after herbicides are applied, you will see a variety of vegetation, including weeds, grasses and briars beginning to grow.


Today's timber companies are more focused on sustainable management of all natural resources, including wood, water,

wildlife and recreation. Trees are the No. 1 agriculture crop in the state, covering 14 million acres. The timber industry contributes \$10.8 billion a year, and is second only to oil and gas in terms of economic impact. We employ more than 45,000 people, and state and local governments receive \$14 million a year in severance taxes from timber sales. I would like to know what would provoke someone to attack one of the most important industries in our state with such false information. Has he any data to back up his claim? Does he realize that these same timber companies own land in Arkansas and Mississippi? They have much better deer populations than Louisiana. That leads me to the conclusion that the real problem is not with timber management, but with wildlife management policies adopted by his former employer. Mississippi and Arkansas have instituted antler restrictions, and it is working. If Mr. Moreland wants to break the state record, he needs to talk to his old department about reducing limits, reducing the season and antler restrictions, because the majority of deer hunters are not waiting for a buck that will make the cover of the magazine. Most hunters I know are happy to kill spikes and forkhorns. Thank you.

**JIMMY MOSS, SAF, CF#865  
DEVILLE, LA.**



**The CWD resolution is here for your convenience!**  
I-10 frontage, exit 874 MLK just East of McCoy's in Orange, TX

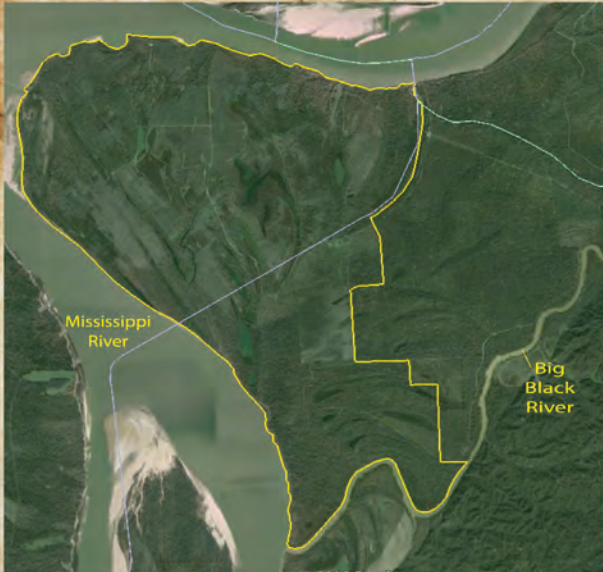



**Steve German's Taxidermy Art**

<b>Main Facility:</b> 602 Sulphur Ave Westlake, LA 70669 <b>337-436-0210</b>	<b>Texas location: Drop Off</b> 4450 I-10 W Orange, TX 77632 <b>337-287-2488</b> (call ahead if possible)
---	--

[www.stevegerman.com](http://www.stevegerman.com)

# TOGO ISLAND Hunting Club


I have been fortunate to hunt up and down the MS River. I can tell you Togo Island qualifies as a game rich environment and a year round retreat that any outdoor enthusiast will enjoy and respect.

*Will Primm*

- Memberships available by invitation only
- 7180 Acres of Premier Recreational Land for Deer, Waterfowl, Turkey & Fishing
- 9.8 Miles of MS River Frontage
- 2.7 Miles of Big Black River Frontage
- Access by all Weather Road from Hwy 61 South
- Togo is a peninsula (rather than a proper Island)

Contact

Brad Farris - [bradfarris@bellsouth.net](mailto:bradfarris@bellsouth.net)  
 Harry Dendy - [hdendy@hughes.net](mailto:hdendy@hughes.net)  
 Lane Mitchell - [flane9@me.com](mailto:flane9@me.com)



For More Information go to  
**togoisland.com**

# LOUISIANA'S #1 ALUMA*Craft* DEALER.

**THE 2018 MODELS ARE HERE!!!**

**YOUR FISHING AND HUNTING HEADQUARTERS**



**1756 CC**

F50 Yamaha, battery, running lights, bilge pump, livewell pump, gauges, built in fuel tank, windshield, seats and pedestals, galv. trailer, tie downs & transom saver and non-skid liner.

**GREAT SELECTION ALL AT GREAT PRICES!**



**SAND**  
Also available in gray or khaki

**2072 CC BAY**

F115 Yamaha w/ SS prop, leaning post, (2) rod boxes full instrumentation, (2) fishing seats, plus passenger seats, non-skid liner, DLX aluminum trailer w/spare tire

## PROWLER SERIES



**KHAKI**

**PROWLER 175**

F70 Yamaha, ss prop, 2 batteries, troll motor, depth finder, non-skid liner, galv. trailer w/spare tire and much more. Ready to fish!!

**BOW TO STERN FISHABILITY...**



**GRAY**

**PROWLER 165**

F50 Yamaha, ss prop, 2 batteries, troll motor, depth finder, non-skid liner, galv. trailer w/ spare tire, and much more. Ready to fish!!

ALL POWERED BY



**CALL US TODAY FOR OUR BEST PRICES!!**

\*According to AlumaCraft business summary 1/1/15 to 12/31/15

**Breaux & Daigle Marine, Inc.**  
**985-252-6411 | Hwy. 70, Pierre Part, LA**

# ALUMA *Craft*

**FAMILIES.  
FISHING.  
FOREVER.**

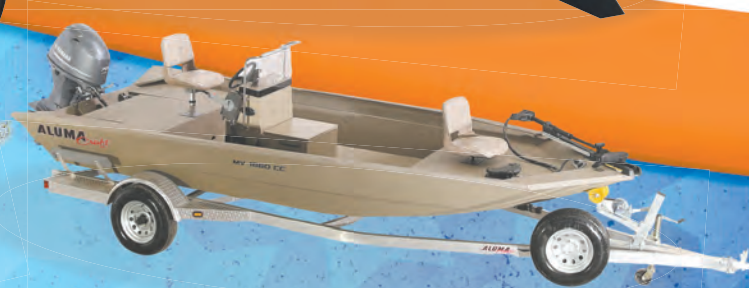
## 2072CC BAY

F150 Yamaha 4 stroke, w/ SS prop, hyd. steering, leaning post, (2) rod boxes full instrumentation, (2) fishing seats, plus passenger seats, non-skid liner, DLX aluminum trailer, w/spare tire



## 1650 SPECIAL CC

F40 Yamaha, galv. trailer, fuel tank, battery



## 1860 CC

F70 Yamaha w/SS prop, battery, running lights, bilge pump, livewell pump, gauges, fuel tank, windshield, seats and pedestals, aluminum trailer, tie downs & transom saver and non-ski liner

**Better Built... Better Ride... Better Value.**



**BIG SELECTION OF...**

**BOAT TRAILERS**

**SIZES 16' - 20'  
GALVANIZED & ALUMINUM**

**CALL US FOR OUR BEST PRICE!!**



## 1860 CC BAY

F90 Yamaha w/ SS prop, leaning post, full instrumentation, (2) fishing seats, plus passenger seats, non-skid liner, aluminum trailer w/spare tire. Available in gray or sand



**YAMAHA**

Reliability Starts Here.™



REMEMBER to always observe all applicable boating laws. Never drink and drive. Dress properly with a USCG-approved personal flotation device and protective gear. ©2008 Yamaha Motor Corporation, USA. All rights reserved.



**YAMAHA**

# "CRAB CLAWS"

## FINALLY CRACKED

199-INCH DESOTO MONSTER DOWNED NOV. 19

By Patrick Bonin

**A**fter four long years of coming up empty-handed, Donald Alexander had to have started to wonder if he'd ever actually cross paths with a majestic DeSoto Parish buck nicknamed "Crab Claws."

The 58-year-old Logansport hunter literally had hundreds and hundreds of trail cam pics of the elusive buck dating back to the 2014 season, when it was a mainframe 8 that earned its nickname because of the pincer-like points at the end of its main beams.

"The next year he was a lot larger, and still had his crab claws. He was a mainframe 8 and he was probably about 19 inches wide — he had put on a lot of width," Alexander said. "The next year, I fed him peanut butter rice bran all the way through the middle of June of that year.

"The next pictures I got of him when he was in hard horns, he was just massive — that was last season when he

was at his height."

But since then, exactly one picture of the buck was snapped during the day — after the season ended this February.

"Every one of them was at night. I put eight cameras out — you can see I was getting obsessed with him," Alexander said with a chuckle. "I watched him all the way through. On Feb. 6 of this year with the season closed, I had a 6:57 a.m. picture of him when it was just daylight. That was the first daylight picture I had of him last year."

The buck moved like a ghost, some-

times appearing on Alexander's trail cams within 30 minutes of him leaving his stand.

"His territory was pretty large. I've talked to several other people who knew he was alive and were hunting him, too .... He had me patterned pretty good," Alexander laughed. "But it worked out. It really did."

Fast forward to the Sunday before Thanksgiving of this year, Nov. 19. Alexander was running late getting to his box stand overlooking a 50-foot-wide pipeline cut through a mixture of hard-



Photo courtesy of Donald Alexander

wood timber and pine. As he got settled in, he noticed what he suspected might be a big doe in the lane to his south, but the deer eased into the woods before good light arrived.

Then, about 6:20, without any warning or fanfare, Crab Claws inexplicably stepped out into the lane and headed for a pile of rice bran just 100 yards away from Alexander.

"I knew it was him. I've killed a lot of deer and have a lot of trophies on the wall, but this was the first time I saw him and I was shook up," he said, recounting his case of pre-shot buck fever. "I thought I had it behind his shoulder, and he fell when I shot him.

"But when I got down there to him, I realized I had hit him in the neck — so I was lucky."

Alexander took a few minutes to compose himself in the stand, then headed down to finally put his hands on a buck he'd come to admire and respect over the years.

"It was very emotional. It was to the point where I just couldn't believe it. I was beside myself knowing that I had the opportunity — No. 1 — to hunt an animal like that the year before and hunt him again this year; and then to actually see him for the first time and take him, it was unexplainable .... I got down there, took pictures of him, petted him and even laid down beside him.

"I looked at it as a major blessing. It's not something that I deserve, it's just something I consider as an honor to have had that opportunity to hunt him and actually get to take him. It's just a privilege and an honor."

And Crab Claw's rack was well worth the wait.

The big non-typical buck, which tipped the scales at 229 pounds and was estimated to be 7 1/2 years old, had a 19-point non-typical rack with a 23 1/2-inch inside spread and 5-inch-plus bases.

A certified Safari Club International scorer measured 199 1/8 inches of impres-

sive bone.

"I actually think he was headed to bed down that morning from the photos of him I looked at the night before. He had prowled all night, so I figured he was headed to bed down that morning," said Alexander, who noted the rut at that point was just about to kick in. "It was like this year he was really homesteaded there on my property. I had more pictures on more cameras this year than I did last year."

With four years of wondering about the big buck's whereabouts behind him, Alexander now knows exactly where Crab Claws will reside for the rest of his days.

"He'll have his own place of honor here in my den," he said. ■



DON'T MISS OUT...

## SUBSCRIBE TO LOUISIANA SPORTSMAN

GET THE LATEST NEWS, TIPS, TACTICS, AND MORE DELIVERED TO YOUR DOOR.

[WWW.LOUISIANASPORTSMAN.COM](http://WWW.LOUISIANASPORTSMAN.COM)

# PROPERTIES FOR SALE IN MS & LA

### ADAMS COUNTY

• 854 Acres & camp..... \$3,500/AC

### AMITE COUNTY

• 23 Acres..... \$3,476 /AC  
 • 24.8 Acres & home ..... \$239,500  
 • 39 Acres..... \$3,950 /AC  
 • 40 Acres & Home ..... \$219,000  
 • 40 Acres & Home ..... \$370,000  
 • 99 Acres..... \$3,787/AC  
 • 115 Acres ..... \$3,750/AC  
 • 125 Acres ..... \$4,300/AC  
 • 127.5 Acres..... \$4,200/AC  
 • 151 Acres ..... \$4,200/AC  
 • 209 Acres ..... \$3,348/AC  
 • 278.5 Acres..... \$4,000/AC  
 • 360 Acres & Home ..... \$3,500,000  
 • 1305 Acres & Home ..... \$7,500,000

### ATTALA COUNTY

• 540.5 Acres..... \$950/AC

### CALHOUN COUNTY

• 75 Acres..... \$1,599/AC

### CLARKE COUNTY

• 234.34 Acres ..... \$2,651/AC  
 • 800 Acres ..... \$3,375/AC

### CLAIBORNE COUNTY

• 176 Acres ..... \$3,181/AC

### COPIAH COUNTY

• 166 Acres ..... \$2,289/AC

### COVINGTON COUNTY

• 162 Acres cabin & river ..... \$5,200/AC

### FORREST COUNTY

• 30 Acres..... \$5,833/AC  
 • 80 Acres river front ..... \$2,850/AC  
 • 80 Acres ..... \$3,125/AC  
 • 123 Acres ..... \$2,500 /AC

### FRANKLIN COUNTY

• 15 Acres..... \$3,400/AC  
 • 43.38 Acres..... \$4,200/AC  
 • 277 Acres ..... \$3,068/AC

### HARRISON COUNTY

• 81.3 Acres ..... \$4,500/AC  
 • 129 Acres ..... \$4,000/AC

• 243 Acres ..... \$4,900/AC

### HINDS COUNTY

• 92 Acres..... \$3,700/AC  
 • 184 Acres ..... \$2,700/AC

### JASPER COUNTY

• 114 Acres ..... \$1,400/AC  
 • 69.5 Acres ..... \$2,500/AC  
 • 58.5 Acres ..... \$3,418/AC  
 • 40 Acres..... \$2,500/AC  
 • 38.5 Acres ..... \$2,077/AC

### JEFFERSON COUNTY

• 722 Acres w/2 houses ..... \$2,100,000

### JONES COUNTY

• 21 Acres..... \$2,000/AC

### KEMPER COUNTY

• 40 Acres..... \$6,000/AC

### LAMAR COUNTY

• 20 Acres..... \$11,250/AC  
 • 35 Acres..... \$8,750/AC

### LAWRENCE COUNTY

• 52 Acres..... \$2,307/AC  
 • 710 Acres & Camp ..... \$1,225,000

### LINCOLN COUNTY

• 87.49 Acres..... \$2,857/AC

### MADISON COUNTY

• Home & 116 Acres ..... \$3,250,000

### MARION COUNTY

• 40 Acres..... \$2,800/AC  
 • 14 Acres..... \$3,950/AC

### PEARL RIVER COUNTY

• 150 Acres ..... \$3,450/AC  
 • 303 Acres ..... \$3,500/AC  
 • 534 Acres ..... \$3,250/AC

### PIKE COUNTY

• 10 Acres & Home ..... \$199,000  
 • 24.87 Acres ..... \$3,397/AC  
 • 28 Acres..... \$4,625/AC  
 • 31.57 Acres..... \$4,497/AC  
 • 40 Acres..... \$2,475/AC  
 • 48 Acres..... \$3,227/AC

• 58 Acres..... \$2,637/AC

• 75 Acres..... \$3,526/AC  
 • 77 Acres..... \$5,181/AC  
 • 135 Acres ..... \$2,350/AC  
 • 140 Acres ..... \$2,350/AC  
 • 248 Acres ..... \$2,818/AC  
 • 275 Acres ..... \$2,350/AC  
 • 423 Acres ..... \$3,850/AC

### SIMPSON COUNTY

• 82 Acres & Home ..... \$675,000

### TALLAHATCHIE COUNTY

• 27 Acres..... \$2,962/AC

### WALTHALL COUNTY

• 38.6 Acres ..... \$3,200/AC  
 • 38.78 Acres ..... \$2,307/AC  
 • 50 Acres & Camp..... \$209,000  
 • 386 Acres & Home ..... \$1,495,000

### WAYNE COUNTY

• 120 Acres ..... \$1,500/AC  
 • 220 Acres ..... \$2,050/AC  
 • 39.5 Acres ..... \$1,974/AC

### WILKINSON COUNTY

• 153 Acres ..... \$3,986/AC

### LOUISIANA

**Bienville**  
 • 89.78 Acres ..... \$2,449/AC  
**Bossier**  
 • 76 Acres..... \$4,500/AC  
 • 68 Acres..... \$5,515/AC  
 • 79 Acres..... \$5,950/AC  
 • 120 Acres ..... \$3,958/AC  
 • 272 Acres ..... \$4,600/AC  
**Caddo**  
 • 1 Acres & Camp ..... \$100,000  
 • 170 Acres ..... \$4,600/AC  
**East Baton Rouge Parish**  
 • 239 Acres ..... \$3,999,000  
**East Feliciana Parish**  
 • 64 Acres & Camp..... \$349,000  
 • 113 Acres & Lodge ..... \$1,150,000  
**Sabine County**  
 • 21 Acres..... \$3,500/AC  
 • Home on Toledo Bend ..... \$550,000  
**Webster Parish**  
 • 958 Acres ..... \$1,252/AC



Gibson Realty & Land Company

(601) 250-0017

8 AGENT/OFFICE LOCATIONS IN LOUISIANA AND MISSISSIPPI  
[WWW.GIBSONREALTYMS.COM](http://WWW.GIBSONREALTYMS.COM)  
 No One Knows The Country Like We Do™

#1 United Country Office  
 Internationally 2008,  
 2009, 2010, 2011, 2013,  
 2014, 2015, 2016

A man wearing a black t-shirt with a logo and a black cap is smiling while holding a large, golden-brown redfish. The fish is nearly vertical, and an arrow is visible in its back. The man is standing on a wooden platform in a marshy area with tall grasses. The background is dark, suggesting it might be nighttime or in a shaded area.

# WORLD BOWFISHING RECORD REDFISH STUCK OUT OF COCODRIE

BIG BULL FREED ITSELF FROM FIRST  
TWO ARROWS ON NOV. 1

By Patrick Bonin

**A**s a bowfishing guide, Capt. Jeremy Cable has stuck more than his share of redfish in the marshes around Cocodrie — but never one like he shot late on Wednesday, Nov. 1.

That bull red — which tipped the scales at 29.55 pounds and ultimately measured 41.89 inches — is now the new state and world record, according to the Bowfishing Association of America.

“I had a night where I didn’t have a charter to go out, but I wanted to test the waters, so I did a scout trip where me and a couple of buddies who are my usual deckhands made a company trip,” said Cable, with Lite’M Up Bowfishing. “Sure enough, we went

out there and just happened to come across a monster.”

Cable, 25, knew instantly the fish was a giant when he spotted it lurking along the outer-edges of his Prodigy 2072’s LED lighting system.

“I was hanging on the high side in deeper water, and my buddies were on the low side by the bank,” he said. “They

didn’t see when I shot. But when you shoot something that big, you don’t want to pull it in directly with one line — you want to chase it down.

“I told them, ‘Go, go, go! That’s a 40-inch-plus redfish.’ And sure enough, I wasn’t off but by about 2 inches.”

One of his friends finally connected with a second arrow, so they were confi-

Capt. Jeremy Cable, with Lite’M Up Bowfishing in Cocodrie, shows off the nearly 42-inch long bull red he arrowed on Nov. 1. It is currently the Bowfishing Association of America’s state and world record redfish.

Photo courtesy of Capt. Jeremy Cable

dent they could land the giant fish. That is, until the big red decided to make things a little more interesting.

“We go to bring him in the boat, and he takes off underneath and knocks out both arrows,” Cable said. “We panicked, pulled the arrows back in, and because he was such a large fish in shallow water, were able to chase him down again.”

Cable connected once more, and his friend stuck the big red, too — meaning it took four shots to finally get the beast in the boat. He was using an Oneida bow and an AMS arrow.

“What happened was with a shot that far through that much water, my first arrow didn’t get much penetration, and it hit that gill plate,” Cable said. “My buddy shot where he saw my arrow, so both arrows ending up hitting him in the thick gill plate and didn’t get much penetration.

## NEED MORE?

visit us online at  
[www.LouisianaSportsman.com](http://www.LouisianaSportsman.com)

“Maybe the fact we hit him in the gill plate might have knocked him a little silly, so fortunately we were able to chase him down again.”

Louisiana doesn’t keep official bowfishing records, but the BAA now lists the big red as the state and world record on its website.

“For bowfishing in shallow marsh, it’s a very impressive fish,” said Cable, who will be displaying a replica mount of the red at the Lite’M Up lodge in Cocodrie. “It was very high water that night, that’s why I think he was able to get in a shallower area of the canal.” ■

**MUST GO! MAKE OFFER!** **REDUCED AND REMODELED CAMP FOR SALE!**  
**FALGOUT LANDING SOUTH OF HOUMA**



**\$155,000**

- 5 bed two bath, sleeps 12+
- 3500 sf
- 3 covered boat slips
- Hurricane shutters
- Fully furnished

**Call 985-637-0471**



**Newest** **Excel** & **MUD BUDDY**



**Dealer in Louisiana!**



7332 Hwy. 1 South Addis, LA  
 225-749-5001 | 877-396-8365

[cajunoutboards.com](http://cajunoutboards.com)

The Castin' Cajun, Tony Fontenot, died Monday, Nov. 27 in Thibodaux.

# CASTIN' CAJUN TV HOST DIES

FONTENOT PASSED AWAY  
NOV. 27 IN THIBODAUX

By Patrick Bonin

**T**ony Fontenot, longtime host of the Castin' Cajun television fishing show, died on Monday, Nov. 27 in Thibodaux. He was 59.

"He was a bright shining beacon for the fishing industry of Louisiana," said Capt. Clyde Folsie, the Crappie Psychic. "Everybody pretty much knew Tony Fontenot — the Castin' Cajun."

When he wasn't out on the water in Southeast Louisiana pursuing all types of fish, the Schriever resident also was a state-licensed contractor who owned Cajun Home Improvements.

"We're going to miss his Boudreaux-Thibodaux jokes. He always had some jokes to tell," said Capt. Tommy Pellegrin, with Custom Charters in Houma. "I always messed with him about them because my grandmother is a Boudreaux.... I messed with him that

he was always talking about my family like that.

"I gave him input on his radio show, and me and him talked pretty much every week about where he should go fishing .... We were really good friends. He was a good friend of the family."

Capt. Eddie Berthelot Jr., who operates Spots and Specks Charters out of Grand Isle and Golden Meadow, said he fished several times with Fontenot for his television show.

"He was a high-spirited guy who was exciting to be around," Berthelot said. "He loved to learn, and teach people about fishing. One of the biggest things we did together with lots of other captains was the Wounded Warriors Rodeo in Cocodrie.

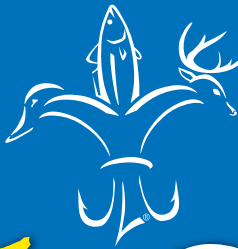
"He spearheaded the organization of it

down there, and I helped him out the last five years or so."

In lieu of flowers, the family accepted donations to Wounded War Heroes, 2152 Highway 1, Raceland, La. 70394.

Keep on castin', Tony. ■





Louisiana

39<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL

# SPORTSMAN<sup>®</sup> SHOW & festival

2018  
**March 15-18**

Lamar-Dixon Expo Center  
Gonzales, Louisiana

LOUISIANA'S OLDEST & LARGEST FISHING & HUNTING SHOW

## Mark Your Calendar

It's back...

the South's largest  
hunting, fishing, boating,  
atv, tractor show...

Everything you need to make your  
outdoor activities a success.

For exhibitor information, contact Jack Fisher 504-415-8847 or [jackf@lasmag.com](mailto:jackf@lasmag.com)

### March 15-18, 2018

Lamar-Dixon Expo Center  
Gonzales, LA

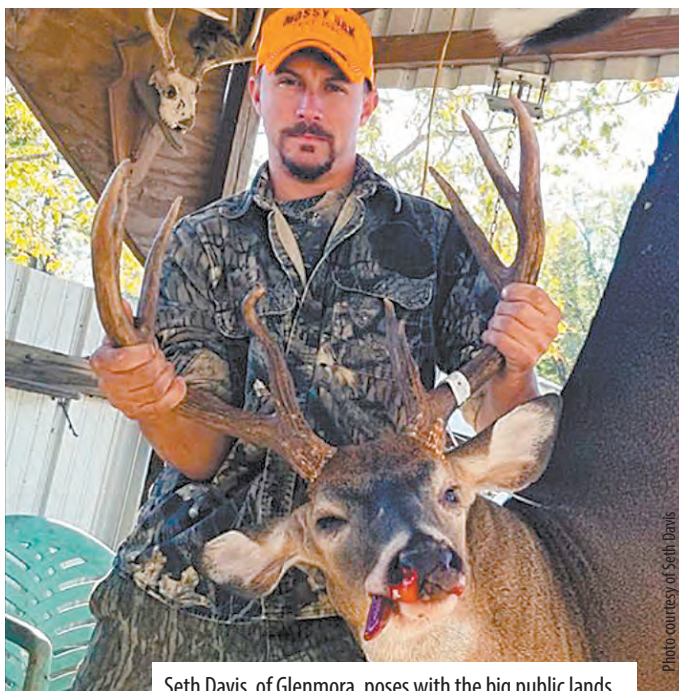
# GLENMORA HUNTER DROPS 165-INCH PUBLIC LANDS BUCK - FROM THE GROUND

BIG 9-POINT GOES DOWN ON DEWEY WILLS WMA IN CATAHOULA PARISH

By Glynn Harris

**T**he majority of deer hunters today follow a basic pattern: They bush hog, disc and plant food plots, use feeders and then climb into stands often outfitted with carpet, a heater and a comfy swivel chair.

Then there are hunters like 30-year-old Seth Davis of Glenmora. He heads east across the state from his home to do it like it was done decades ago: He walks deep into the forest — farther than the average hunter wants to go — until he finds buck sign. Then he leans up against a tree and waits.



Seth Davis, of Glenmora, poses with the big public lands 9-point buck he shot on Dewey Wills WMA in Catahoula Parish. The deer green-scored 165 inches.

On Nov. 26, his strategy paid off when a massive 250-pound buck stepped out at 40 yards.

“This is the way I hunt, and my go-to spot is in the Catahoula Parish portion of the Dewey Wills Wildlife Management Area,” Davis said.

For the past six seasons, Davis has hunted Dewey Wills, and he said he uses squirrel season to find out where the deer are hanging out, what trails they use and where they make rubs and scrapes.

“When I go over there to squirrel hunt, I keep one eye on the trees for squirrels and the other on the ground, looking for

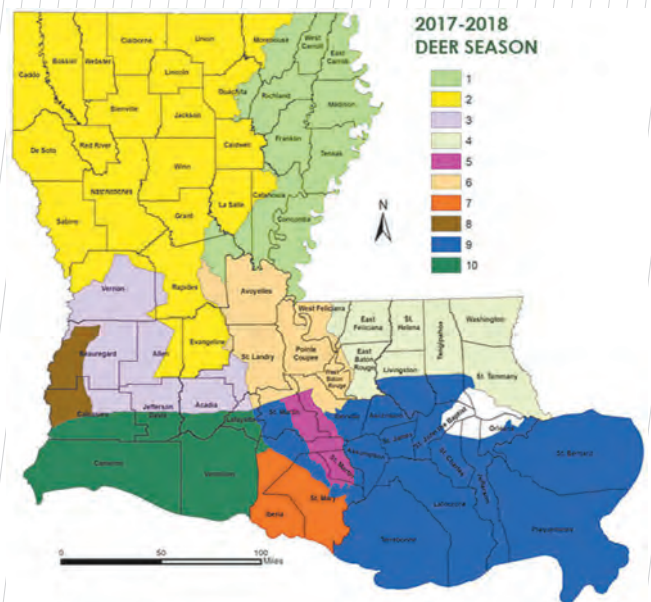
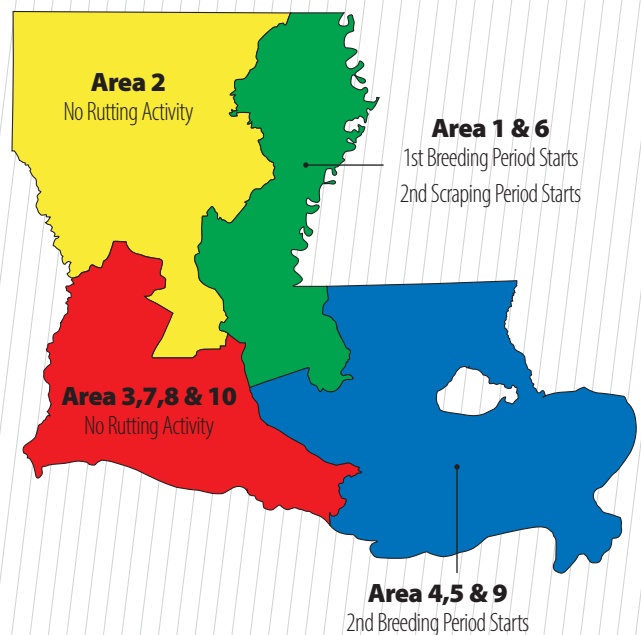
continues on page 28

## JANUARY RUT CALENDARS

**T**his month marks the end of deer season for most hunters, and rutting activity is pretty much limited to the eastern half of the state.

In Areas 1 and 6 in the Tensas River / Mississippi River deltas, 2018 kicks off with a bang as the first breeding period will take place from roughly Jan. 1 through Jan. 15. The second scraping period will begin immediately thereafter, from about Jan. 16 through Jan. 30, with the second rut slated for Jan. 31 through Feb. 14.

Deer in Areas 4, 5 and 9 in Southeast Louisiana are predicted to start their second rut Jan. 1 through Jan. 15. ■





# 77

# WIN UP TO \$200,000!

# WIN UP TO 20 TIMES!



[louisianalottery.com](http://louisianalottery.com)



Ticket purchasers must be at least 21 years of age. If you or someone you know has a gambling problem, call: 1-877-770-7867.

## PUBLIC LANDS BUCK CONTINUED

buck sign,” he said. “With so much water on this area, I will sometimes take a boat and navigate the streams, looking for deer sign.”

On the morning of the 26th, Davis’ dad, who lives in Texas, came over to deer hunt with his son. After dropping his dad off at a good-looking spot, Davis marked his dad’s location on his GPS, and then continued on another 200 yards until he found an area that looked good to him.

“I found a spot where I had found buck sign earlier, an area with some openings and natural lanes through the woods where I could see, then leaned up against a big tree and waited,” he said.

As Davis waited, watched and listened, he heard approaching footsteps in the dry leaves behind him. Turning his head just enough to be able to determine the source of the noise, he saw a big deer coming from behind and just to his right. When it was about 50 yards away, he saw antlers.

“I couldn’t see his rack very well but the body size let me know this was a good mature buck. I hadn’t shot a decent buck in probably 10 years so I got a little excited when I saw how big this buck was,” Davis said. “At 40 yards, I got the scope of my Winchester .270 Short Mag on him and fired. The deer hit the ground and began crawling forward toward me. The buck died not 10 yards from where I was standing. I just stood there for several minutes trying to calm down and come to grips with the trophy I had just shot.”

The buck, which tipped the scales at 250 pounds, was a main-frame 8-point with a kicker. The inside spread was 17 6/8 inches, with heavy mass carried through the rack. The deer was later measured and scored 165 inches of antler bone.

“The cool thing for me was having my dad there with me,” Davis said, “because he had never experienced anybody getting a big swamp buck like this one.” ■

## JANUARY 2018

## Areas 1 &amp; 6

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
	1 First Breeding Period Starts	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15 First Breeding Period Ends	16 Second Scraping Period Starts	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30 Second Scraping Period Ends	31 Second Breeding Period Starts			

## JANUARY 2018

## Areas 4, 5 &amp; 9

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
	1 Second Breeding Period Starts	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15 Second Breeding Period Ends	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

## For more on the Rut:

[www.louisianasportsman.com/details.php?id=11290](http://www.louisianasportsman.com/details.php?id=11290)

# TIMBER HARVEST CHANGES HUNT PLANS, RESULTS IN 166-INCH BUCK

By Lynn Harris

## HOT DOE SPELLS DOOM FOR BIG 11-POINT

**T**he call from the timber company where Dean Wainwright has a hunting lease in Vernon Parish carried news he wasn’t anxious to hear: The timber harvest was set to begin.

But Wainwright had trail camera photos of a big buck on his hunting club — a deer that had been hanging out right where the harvest was planned. So he devised a new plan that worked like a

charm when Wainwright got the big 11-point in his sights on the morning of Nov. 19.

“I realize that timber companies are in the business of managing and harvesting timber, and it was what I first saw as a case of bad luck on my part,” Wainwright said. “I knew I had to do something different if I hoped to have a chance at this buck.”

So instead of hunting from his box

stand on his food plot and waiting for the buck to show up, Wainwright had a good idea where the buck was hanging out — so he set up a ground blind in an area that would hopefully allow him to spot the buck if it made a move.

“I hunted Saturday on a warm, windy day in the blind and didn’t see anything. The next morning, I was back in my blind before daylight,” he said. “The wind

was still blowing, but fortunately it would carry my scent away from where I had a feeling was the buck's core area."

As he got comfortable in his blind, listening to skidders and shearers working just a few hundred yards from his location, a doe stepped out at 80 yards.

"I got my .300 Win Mag up and ready in case there was another deer following her. Sure enough, I made out the movement of another deer and could see antlers and a black hock," Wainwright said. "I felt like it was the big one I had been after."

As the buck slipped along, Wainwright saw that with the cover so thick, it was going to be difficult to find an opening where he could shoot.

"I looked ahead in the direction the deer was walking and saw a tiny window in the brush I thought I could get a bullet through," he said. "When he stepped into the small opening, I fired and quickly jacked another bullet in. I could no longer see him nor could I hear him running. I was beginning to wonder what happened when I saw the buck slowly walking in my direction, trying to pin-point where the shot came from. I later learned that my shot had glanced off a tree, totally missing the deer."

The buck stepped behind a big tree, and all Wainwright could see was the neck and shoulder. Placing the cross-hairs of his scope on the deer's shoulder, he squeezed off another shot and the buck hit the ground. But unfortunately, it got up and disappeared again into the thick brush.

"I called my buddy to come help me," he said. "I felt I had hit the deer good but not hearing or seeing anything, I was afraid he had run off."

Fortunately, the buck lay dead not 10 yards from where

it was shot. The trophy sported 11 points with an inside spread of 16 inches. Main beams were 23 inches each; G2s were 10 inches, G3s were 11 inches and G4s were 8 inches. The rack measured 166 inches of antler bone.

"When I shot the deer, I was within 200 yards of the log loader. Log trucks were driving through my food plot," Wainwright said. "I assumed that when the activity started with the timber harvest, the buck just tightened his circle and held tight until the hot doe caused him to throw caution to the wind." ■



Dean Wainwright poses with the 11-point Vernon Parish buck he shot on Nov. 19. A timber harvest on his lease forced Wainwright to employ a ground blind to hunt the big buck, which green-scored 166 inches of bone.

Photo courtesy of Dean Wainwright

# Trophy Fallow Deer



Management Fallow, \$1,750  
Trophy Fallow, \$3,200

\*Limited Time Offer

Call **601-842-5771**



[mcclainhunting.com](http://mcclainhunting.com)

Please visit website to see additional animals that are available. Prices listed.



# FAMILY LAND PRODUCES 164-INCH BUCK FOR LA. TECH SOPHOMORE

HUNTER'S DREAM OF PHOTO  
WITH MONSTER DEER FINALLY  
CAME TRUE

By Glynn Harris

**C**onner Gay, a sophomore at Louisiana Tech, lives in Ruston and is fortunate to have access to 100 acres of

family property in Lincoln Parish to pursue his passion for deer hunting.

On the morning of Saturday Nov. 25, the land belonging to his grandmother paid off in spades when a heavy-antlered buck stopped to check what would prove to be its last-ever scrape.

At 75 yards, Gay's Remington .270 dropped the big deer where it stood, collapsing it onto the scrape it was working.

"This family land is the only place I like to deer hunt because the woods are so nice with a creek bottom with big stands of hardwoods," Gay said. "For the past several trips to the property, I had been getting to my stand later than I wanted to but on this morning, I made sure I got there early so if any-

thing moved early I wouldn't miss it."

His favorite stand is an old but sturdy metal ladder stand that has been used by the family for decades. He moved it to its present location about five years ago, and because of the location it's his go-to place to hunt.

"The stand sits on a ridge line where I can look out through the hardwoods, giving me a good view of any activity going on in the area. I've killed a few deer sitting on the stand at the location where it sits today," Gay said. "There is a huge beech tree next to the stand, and I had always dreamed of being able to have a photo made of me and a big buck next to that big beech."

Sitting in the dark waiting for daylight, Gay heard a crashing noise he couldn't

immediately identify. About 20 minutes later, he heard what sounded like a grunt.

"I texted my dad, telling him what I'd heard and dad said, 'It's probably a buck so get ready.' I got my gun up and was looking in the direction of the sounds I'd heard when I heard footsteps in the dry leaves," Gay recounted. "It was not good daylight yet when I got a glimpse of the deer, walking with its head down. I let him walk a little further and he stopped broadside to me over a fresh scrape.

"I still couldn't tell much about the deer except that it was a good buck. I made the decision that even though I couldn't see the deer too well, I had a clear shot so I took it and he dropped right there."

Then he had to endure the longest 10 minutes of his life, resisting the urge to

Conner Gay, 19, lived out a dream when he got to pose with a monster buck next to a big beech tree near his stand on family land in Lincoln Parish. The 11-point, shot on Nov. 25, stretched the tape to 164 inches.

Photo courtesy of Conner Gay



## SULPHUR MAN CITED FOR ALLEGEDLY SPOTLIGHTING DEER IN CALCASIEU PARISH

From News Reports

immediately head down and check out the big deer.

"I sent a text to my dad telling I had a buck down and kept checking the time on my phone — and when 10 minutes were finally up, I climbed down and hurried over to the fallen deer," he said. "When I saw the massive antlers, I texted my mom that I'd just killed a monster buck."

Although the body weight of the buck -165 pounds - didn't match the heft of the rack, Gay had indeed dropped a genuine trophy — a buck that had never been seen nor showed up on trail cameras on the property.

The buck sported 11 points on a gnarled rack. Its inside spread was 19 7/8 inches, and the main beams were over 22 inches each with 5-inch bases. The buck was green-scored by a family friend who is adept at measuring antlers and tallied 164 inches of bone.

"When my dad got there," Gay said, "I was finally able to live the dream of having a photo of me with a big buck next to that old beech tree." ■

**E**nforcement agents with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries cited a Sulphur man for allegedly spotlighting deer in Calcasieu Parish on Dec. 1.

According to a press release, Jared L. Adams, 34, was cited for hunting from a moving vehicle, hunting during illegal hours, hunting deer from a public road and discharging a firearm from a public road.

Agents working a night-hunting complaint near Carlyss allegedly observed a person shining a spotlight off Fabacher Road into nearby fields around 6:30 p.m. Then they saw the vehicle stop in the road and the subject shoot at a suspected deer from

his vehicle, the release states.

Agents stopped the vehicle and found Adams with a loaded .30-06 rifle in the passenger seat and a handheld spotlight, according to the release. A freshly fired .30-06 casing was located on the driver's side floorboard, and agents seized the rifle with a scope and the handheld spotlight.

Hunting deer during illegal hours carries a \$900 to \$950 fine and up to 120 days in jail. Hunting deer from a public road carries a \$100 to \$350 fine and up to 60 days in jail. Discharging a firearm from a public road brings up to a \$50 fine and 30 days in jail, the release states. ■

**We have what Deer want at the Best Price!**

**50 lb. bags & bulk available:**  
Deer Corn • Soybeans  
Rice Bran • Milo  
Roasted Soybean Mix  
(the best attractant available!)

**Super Bags:**  
Corn • Soybeans • Oats

Supplements,  
Salt, Minerals,  
Protein Pellets



**R. Schexnayder & Sons, LLC.**

3100 Poydras Bayou Erwinville, LA

**225-627-6806**



**THE MOLPUS WOODLANDS GROUP, LLC**

- **Cleveland County 1,272+/- acres** located just south of Rison, Arkansas on AR State Highway 79, just one hour from Little Rock. This tract is an ideal deer, turkey, squirrel and duck hunting tract with tremendous amounts of ecological diversity. This tract boasts approximately three miles of Saline River frontage, as well multiple interior ponds/lakes and sloughs. Well worth checking this out! **\$3,250 per acre.**
- **Hennessey Bayou 1,685+/- acres** located on the MS River in Warren County, MS with mature hardwood and cypress. Several man-made weirs are allowing for accretion to occur rapidly. Excellent hunting and fishing opportunities. Great views. **\$2,500 per acre.**
- **Calcasieu Parish 334 +/- acres** located south of Starks, LA adjacent to Highway 109. Large contiguous block perfect for recreation with options for development along the road frontage while providing a significant timber investment. A mix of 2014 pine plantation and adjacent hardwood streamers. **\$2,500 per acre.**
- **Beauregard Parish 145+/- acres** with ¼ mile of Highway 26 frontage for easy access surrounded by undeveloped forestland with plenty of excellent wildlife habitat. A mix of 2013 well stocked pine plantation and hardwood streamers breaking up the landscape. **\$2,840 per acre.**

Timberland and Recreational Hunting land available across the country!!!

**Toby Trowbridge, III**  
Value Added Specialist, South Central Region  
Louisiana Licensed Real Estate Salesperson  
(318) 324-9068 Ext. 103 office

**Tina Meiners**  
Value Added Specialist, South Central Region  
Louisiana Licensed Real Estate Salesperson  
(337) 463-9700, ext. 113

www.molpus.com

John Michael Garcia, of Bossier City, poses with the big DeSoto Parish 8-point he shot on Saturday, Nov. 18. The big buck hasn't officially been scored, but is estimated to measure in the 150-inch range.



# GIANT DESOTO PARISH 8-POINT GOES DOWN

GARCIA'S BIG BUCK ESTIMATED  
AT 150 INCHES

By Patrick Bonin

Photo courtesy of John Michael Garcia

**J**ohn Michael Garcia got a 'sweat equity invitation' to deer hunt on some prime property in DeSoto Parish in exchange for his help on a construction project there — and took full advantage when he downed an 8-point buck of a lifetime on Nov. 18 in DeSoto Parish.

"They invited me out there because they needed me to work and come help them build a bridge. All the flooding up here in North Louisiana washed out all their bridges, and there's a lot of sloughs that run through there," the 31-year-old from Bossier City said. "They needed some manpower, some help."

"They told me, 'If you come help us build this bridge, we'll hunt that morning and that evening, and build a bridge during the day.'"

Garcia had gotten the invite from Jeremy Jeansonne, who oversees the Rockin' S Hunting Club near Dolet Hills owned by Mike Smith.

So he was positioned in a box stand that Saturday morning overlooking two lanes on a pipeline surrounded by hardwoods — and action was steady from the start.

"I passed on like 10 deer that morning, does and small bucks ... They shoot mature deer only there," he said. "But when that joker walked out, there was no doubt in my mind. If a deer like that hadn't come out, I'd have been real hesitant to shoot anything."

Garcia, who was using doe-in-estrus scent and a bleat call, spotted the big 8-point on the edge of the woods at about 100 yards.

"When he came out, he wasn't hot on a doe. He came out looking for sure,"

Garcia said. "I knew they were rutting because I saw several of the small bucks chasing does. He just came on across the lane ... I didn't have but a split second to shoot him."

Garcia's Browning .270 Short Mag found its mark, and the buck bolted about 100 yards before piling up. He didn't wait long to go and find the deer, and had little trouble after locating large amounts of blood.

"All of a sudden, it was like somebody had 5-gallon buckets of blood," said Garcia, who wasn't prepared for the buck's actual size when he walked up on it. "I was just blown away, honestly. I just got back from a week in Illinois to



bowhunt some islands in the Mississippi River. We went up there and all struck out — if it could have gone wrong for us, it did.

“We had some opportunities, but I came back to my home state and ended up with a deer like that .... I just felt so blessed.”

The giant 8, estimated to be 4 ½ years old, is expected to score about 150 inches, with a 19-inch inside spread and 5-inch measurements at the bases. In all the years of hunting on that property, it was the largest buck ever taken there.

Garcia is getting the buck mounted — but is donating it to Smith, so it will be featured at a lodge on the property with loads of other impressive whitetails taken there over the years.

“I actually told him for him allowing me to hunt, and for it being such a monumental deer, that I was going to have the deer mounted and put it at his lodge for his Hall of Fame down there,” Garcia said. “I’m going to put my name on it, but it’s going to be with the 60 or 80 whitetails mounted there.” ■

## ALLEGED NIGHT-TIME RABBIT POACHERS CITED IN PLAQUEMINES PARISH

**E**nforcement agents with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries cited two Port Sulphur residents Dec. 4 for allegedly spotlighting rabbits on Highway 23.

Mikal Black, 19, and Adrienne Black, 49, were ticketed for hunting wild game quadrupeds during illegal hours and hunting from a public roadway, according to a press release.

Agents on patrol in West Pointe à la Hache allegedly observed a vehicle driving slowly along the shoulder of Highway 23 around 12:45 a.m., and then watched the subjects shine a spotlight in a manner consistent with hunting, the release states.

The agents made contact with them, and found they were in possession of six freshly killed rabbits and two firearms. The rabbits, rifles and two spotlights were seized in the investigation, according to the release.

Hunting rabbits during illegal hours brings a \$250 to \$500 fine and up to 90 days in jail. Hunting from a public roadway brings a \$100 to \$350 fine or imprisonment for not more than 60 days, or both, for the first offense. The two subjects may also face civil restitution totaling \$190 for the replacement value of the illegally taken rabbits, the release states. ■

# YOU DON'T BECOME #1 UNLESS YOUR CALL GROWS STRONGER EVERY DAY

How do you become America's #1 deer call maker? You dedicate 40 years to recording and listening to their language. Then you put everything you learn in the hands of expert craftsmen. Then you test everything you make until it's right. Some call it extreme. Others just call it Primos. [primos.com](http://primos.com)

**PRIMOS**  
HUNTING  
SPEAK THE LANGUAGE

Canaan Heard, with Faulk's Game Calls, said if second-split ducks appear interested in your spread, keep the calling to a minimum and avoid blowing any long hail calls. Less is more at this point in the season.

# LATE-SEASON DUCK CALLING TIPS

By Darren Digby

**A**s many manufacturing processes trend toward computerized, assembly-line production techniques, there are still some things best done the old-fashioned way — like Faulk's Game Calls.

With roots dating back to the 1930s, the Faulk family has been handcrafting wooden duck and goose calls for the better part of a century in Lake Charles.

Clarence "Patin" Faulk founded Faulk's Game Calls as a hunter and trapper in the Big Lake area, handcrafting calls from his home, with his son Dud picking up the craft and taking the business on the road in the 1950s to spread the name.

Today the longtime Southwest Louisiana call-making tradition is carried on by Dud's grandson. A native of Lafayette, Canaan Heard has the waterfowling bug just as his grandfather and great-grandfather had before him — and he has the call-making skills to match.

As we hit the home stretch of the Louisiana waterfowl seasons, Heard offered his Top 3 tips when heading out to chase late-season ducks.

## 1. DON'T CALL IF YOU DON'T HAVE TO.

If the decoys are doing their job and birds are coming in, stay off the call. Focus on putting out the best decoys you've got, and let them do the talking.

**2. DON'T BLOW LONG HAIL CALLS.** It's not a contest out there. A few quacks strung together and a feeding call will work just fine. Pay attention to how the birds are reacting and adjust accordingly. Less is definitely more at this point in the season.

**3. IF THE DUCKS ARE CIRCLING AND APPEAR INTERESTED, KEEP CALLING TO A MINIMUM — IF AT ALL.** When you do call, try working in alternative species calls like a wigeon or pintail whistle, or a mallard drake — anything but the usual mallard hen quack they've heard for the last two months.

For more information on the full line of Faulk's calls, visit [www.faulkcalls.com](http://www.faulkcalls.com).

# The Perfect Truck For Hunting Season



**Mike Dickinson**  
General Manager

## **FULLY LOADED** EDITION **F-150s & F-250s**



- 20 Inch Rims
- 33"-35" Tires
- Road Force Mount and Balance and Tire Pressure System
- Lift or Leveling Kit
- "Fully Loaded" Branding

**Supreme**  
  
Of Slidell

400 E. Howze Beach Road  
**985-643-8900**

[SupremeFordOfSlidell.com](http://SupremeFordOfSlidell.com)  
**EXPECT MORE!**

# TOP 3 WINTER BASS BAIT

By Andy Crawford

**W**intertime bass fishing can be tough, and that can cause anglers to look for all kinds of gimmicks and off-the-wall tactics to get bites.

But FLW pro Brian Latimer said it's actually a time to settle down.

"A lot of my stuff is so basic, but that's what works," Latimer said.

Here are the South Carolina pro's Top 3 baits he has to have when he's probing around for cold-water bass.

## 1 Z-MAN CHATTERBAIT

"I absolutely have to have a ChatterBait," Latimer said.

That's because the vibrating jigs are extremely effective when winter rains send stained waters into the system he's fishing.

"You need something that pushes a lot of water and puts off vibration so fish can find it," Latimer said.

Of course, it's also a bait that allows anglers to cover a lot of water to pick up scattered bass.

"And it's a good bait for big fish," he said.

He said the propensity for the lure to run shallow during a normal retrieve means anglers can nab fish that are pulled up on flats when the water warms up as the sun reaches its zenith.

"Don't forget that shallow zone," Latimer said. "Even when it's cold fish will be in water 2 feet or less."

But there's more to the lure than that.

"I can fish that shallow zone, but I can also slow down and fish (a ChatterBait) 6 to 8 feet deep," Latimer explained.

## 2 MEDIUM-DIVING CRANKBAIT

Latimer said crankbaits that effectively cover the 6- to 8-foot depths offer the ability to pick up bass pulled back off the shallows.

But the lures offer an important advantage during this time of year.

"The fish are kind of spread out through the system that time of year," Latimer said. "I can cover tons and tons of water with those crankbaits."

That means he can quickly run down a bank or rip rap and pick up scattered fish, but he can also pick apart an area when the need arises.

## 3 Z-MAN ZINKERZ

Soft-plastic stick baits don't have any discernible action, but Latimer said they are incredibly effective tools during the winter doldrums.

"It's one of the dumbest things you've ever seen, but (the lure) definitely works," he said.

Flexibility is the chief advantage to the lure.

"There's just so many rigging options: I can fish it weightless wacky, Texas rig it, shaky-head it, wacky shot," Latimer said.

Of course, some anglers hate soft-plastic stick baits because of their reputation as being slow-falling lures.

"It does take a lot of patience," Latimer said. "But don't underestimate the amount of water you can cover with them. Usually, a fish is going to get it on the fall, so if I pick it up and (a fish) doesn't have it I can just reel in and move on."

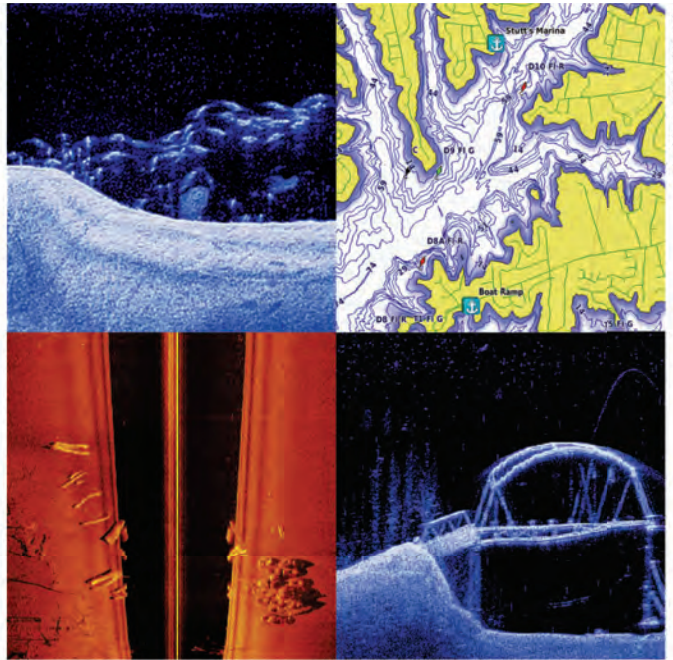
"When I get to that sweet spot, I can slow down and fish it thoroughly," Latimer said.

Keeping things simple and slowing down your presentation are key tips for cold-water bass fishing.

Andy Crawford



# ECHOMAP<sup>TM</sup> PLUS CV / SV SERIES



©2015 Garmin Ltd. or its subsidiaries

**GARMIN**

Preprogrammed data card  
Carte mémoire préprogrammée



**BlueChart<sup>®</sup> g2  
w/ High Resolution Satellite Imagery**

Includes tides, currents, marine POIs and IALA symbols.  
Port plans and standardized depth contours  
Basic chart navigation with 2-D or 3-D perspective view



**Coastal Louisiana Bayou satellite card works  
with most all new Garmin products**



Easy to use, easy to install with the clearest scanning sonar.

Experience the Power of Simple... Fishing with the clearest scanning sonar on the water. The Echo MAP PLUS cv series combos with 7" or 9" displays offer traditional HD-ID<sup>TM</sup> sonar plus Garmin ClearVu<sup>™</sup> scanning sonar the Echo MAP PLUS sv series with 6", 7" or 9" displays give you HD-ID sonar plus ClearVu and SideVu<sup>™</sup> scanning sonar. All come as a Hybrid display (touch screen & key button assist) with either BlueChart g2 U.S. coastal charts or U.S. LakeVu HD maps and 5Hz GPS.



**SEA-TRAC OFFSHORE SERVICES, INC**

114 Hickory Avenue Harahan, LA 70123

(504) 737-0591

info@seatraccoffshore.com

www.seatraccoffshore.com



Marine Electronics

**SALES,  
SERVICE,  
CUSTOM INSTALLATION  
& MORE**

# HOW TO PREVENT, REMOVE WIND LOOPS FROM SPINNING REELS

By Andy Crawford

I have a lifelong hatred of spinning reels, mainly generated by the loops that often form in the spooled line and create real messes.

"Whenever you're throwing that line, there's no tension to hold it on the roller bearing, so it goes limp and lays over itself," Delacroix fishing guide Capt. Austin Plaisance said.

But there's an easy way to remove these knots, the Louisiana Charter Fishing guide said.

"You just pull the main line," Plaisance said. "You don't want to pull the loop because that loop is under the main line."

He said gently pulling on the main line will remove line from the spool until the loop is revealed.

When the loop finally peels off the spool, it can create a knot in the line if it's not handled properly.

"You have two tag ends," Plaisance said. "Pull the tag ends and, most of the time, the loop will come out."

But you have to be patient.

"You don't want to pull tight," Plaisance said. "You don't want to pull (the tag ends) hard against each other or it'll dig in."

It's a particular problem with braided line because of the reasons anglers choose to use it.

"It forms mainly on braid because it doesn't have any memory," Plaisance said. "Memory helps on a spinning reel."

Of course, prevention is the best defense — and Plaisance said there's

an easy way to minimize the occurrence of loops.

"Most of the time they form because you have too much line on a reel," he explained.

To prevent loops, he adds line onto the reel until he's just short of the lip of the spool.

"I like to leave a fingernail of space (between the spooled line and the reel lip)," Plaisance said. "You have to have some lip to keep the line from looping." ■



Wind loops can be maddening when using spinning reels, but gently pulling on the main line is the best way to remove them.

# Load up with power and efficiency.



## Kubota MX Series

Take on everything from livestock chores to property maintenance with Kubota's versatile MX Series ag utility tractors — featuring rugged Kubota diesel engines from 49.3–61.4 HP\*, HST or gear transmission and more. The Kubota MX Series — a winning combination of power *and* efficiency.



5909 COLISEUM BLVD. • ALEXADRIA, LA 71303

**318-487-9495**

[www.loewerpowersports.com](http://www.loewerpowersports.com)



[www.kubota.com](http://www.kubota.com)

\*For complete warranty, safety and product information, consult your local Kubota dealer and the product operator's manual. Power (HP/KW) and other specifications are based on various standards or recommended practices. Optional equipment may be shown.  
© Kubota Tractor Corporation, 2016



# BE AGGRESSIVE WHEN TARGETING PONTCHARTRAIN REDS UNDER BIRDS

By Patrick Bonin

## SPEEDY APPROACH TRUMPS STEALTH, ANGLER SAYS

**W**hen you're working a flock of birds and targeting speckled trout, everyone pretty much knows the basic ground rules: Put the wind at your back. Use your trolling motor and approach quietly from a distance. Don't spook them, and make long casts along the outer edges of the school.

Those rules change drastically, however, if you're targeting redfish under birds in Lake Pontchartrain.

Schools of marauding reds devouring white shrimp move lightning fast, so Chas Champagne, creator of the Matrix Shad line of soft plastic lures, takes much more of an "in your face" approach when trying to hook up with Pontchartrain reds under a flock of birds.

"I'll come up to it on plane and as I get closer, I do like a real fast idle and I'm just sitting there. Whoever is with me, I have them ready to cast. Everybody has their rod and reel in their hand, and as soon as I see a bird swoop down, I'll punch it right to within casting distance from where that bird swooped down and I'll throw it in neutral — I won't even kill it," Champagne said. "We usually use ½-ounce jigheads so we can throw it a country mile, and you want to be able to throw it in an area about the size of a kitchen.

That's about the radius you



When targeting big reds under birds in Lake Pontchartrain, time is of the essence — so don't approach them like you would a school of specks. Move into casting distance quickly when you see a bird dive, throw to that spot and then prepare for battle.

have of where that bird swooped down. It's not as small as a hula hoop, so you have some margin for error. But if you make that cast, everybody typically hooks up."

But time is of the essence — that's why Champagne doesn't even bother to shut down his motor.

"When that bird swoops down, you have about 20 seconds max to make sure you get as many lures into that kitchen as you can, because if you just blink, by the time you look up, the next swoop down will be 50 yards from you," he said. "You blink again, and then you see a bird swoop down 300 yards from you."

You can use a popping cork, but Champagne typically keeps things simple with a Matrix or Vortex Shad on that heavy jighead.

"I use a plain jighead so I can have more pinpoint accuracy and further casting distance," he said.

And unlike with specks, Champagne said in his experience the sound of the motor doesn't seem to affect the bite.

"You have to get in there. That's so much more important than being stealthy," he said. "Even if it does spook them a little bit, it's better than trying to come in quiet because you'll never keep up with them. You have to get right in there — they're just moving too fast."

Champagne emphasized he wasn't just blind casting into the school — he was targeting a specific spot where he saw a bird dive. Seagulls are the best indicator for reds, he said.

"If you just see birds hovering, you're not going to catch anything. You have to see where he swoops down and grabs that shrimp," he explained. "When that bird swoops, there are probably five or 10 reds running at that shrimp — so you have to put it right there, and you've got about 20 seconds to do it."

Champagne said birds working over schools of reds happen more often near daylight in Lake Pontchartrain, and a falling tide is better. Some common spots where schools of redfish roam include in front of Lakeshore Estates near where the Rigolets meets the lake, Salt Bayou, the Hospital Wall and in front of Irish Bayou.

"White shrimp can stay in the estuary all the way to March," he said in early December. "It just depends how cold it gets. With the warm winter we've had so far, it looks like they'll be here into January for sure." ■



Photo courtesy Chas Champagne

**TOHATSU**  
Outboards

**Technology for the  
Next Generation**



**DUVIC'S BOATS**  
3650 Westbank Expwy. Harvey, LA  
**504-341-1654**  
Monday - Friday 8am - 5pm

Oldest Marine Dealer in the USA – 127 Years Strong

**KING MAC IS WHAT WE DO!**



Best Source For King Mackerel Tackle

Largest Selection of  
**Custom Bait Rigs**  
& Same Day Shipping on Most Items!

Over 40 years of saltwater experience:  
We outfit everyone from novice to pro!

Buy online or Download Our Catalog at:  
[www.KingMacTak.com](http://www.KingMacTak.com) • 919-900-8998

BALLOON FISHER KING

Blue Water Candy  
Fishing Lures  
Suits For "Reel" Men

100% SEIGLER  
SEALING BALLS

OWNER

AFW  
AMERICAN FISHING WEAR

R & R  
Tackle

KMT  
CUSTOM RIGS

EAGLE CLAW®

# SAVE MONEY, PREVENT BACKLASHES BY SPOOLING LESS LINE ON BAITCASTERS

By Andy Crawford

Short-spooling can save you some money by using less line — and also save you some aggravation with fewer backlashes.



**P**rairieville angler Adam Cook uses fluorocarbon on almost every reel he owns. The fact that it virtually disappears under water is a huge factor.

But he has other reasons for his choice in line.

"It sinks," Cook explained. "It's got a good stretch, but not too much. And I never have to worry about breaking off."

But he does believe in respooling every few trips because he fishes most weekends and wants his line to be fresh and strong.

"Whenever my line starts to get that curl in it, I put new line on," Cook said.

But that's a pricey proposition, since the

P-Line he prefers runs as much as \$30 a pack.

So he saves money by doing something most anglers have been taught is wrong — he short-spools his reels.

"I never put more than half a spool of line on," Cook said. "You don't need it. You save a lot of line."

What about casting distance, right? Well, this angler said he can cast just as far as he could with a full spool, even when using spinnerbaits and crankbaits. So that's not an issue.

And another significant advantage is icing on the cake.

"You'll get a lot fewer bird nests," Cook said. "If you try to fish a reel that's full, you'll get a lot more backlashes."



# Catch the **G3** Life

## INSTANT REBATES

### HURRY LIMITED TIME OFFER!



Sportsman up to **\$1500\***

Bays up to **\$1500\***

Angler V up to **\$1500\***

Gator Tough Jons up to **\$500\***



## LIMITED TIME OFFER - ACT NOW!

\*Rebates in effect at participating dealers only. Purchase one of the new (unused and not previously warranty registered) G3 Boats fishing boat, Yamaha motor and trailer packages between 12/15/17 and 3/31/18 and receive a Catch the G3 Life Instant Rebate off the participating dealer's retail price ranging from \$500 to \$1500 depending on the model purchased. Rebates end 3/31/18. This promotion offer is void where prohibited by law. Promotion valid in U.S. and Canada. The G3 Boats Military Instant Rebate Program is open to all U.S. Armed Forces personnel that are on active duty, in the Reserves or National Guard, honorably discharged or retired, including current spouse. This rebate can be used in addition to the other great promotional programs from G3. G3 reserves the right to change, end or cancel this Program at any time. Other restrictions and conditions apply. See g3boats.com for complete details. Some optional equipment shown in some photographs. No model substitutions or rain checks. Not redeemable for cash. G3 reserves the right to change or cancel this promotion at any time. Follow instructional materials and obey all laws. Ride responsibly, wearing protective apparel and USCG approved personal flotation device. Always drive within your capabilities, allowing time and distance for maneuvering, and respect others around you. Never drink and ride. ©2017 Yamaha Motor Corporation, USA.

**g3boats.com** 901 COWAN DRIVE, LEBANON, MO 65536



# SQUARE-BILLS ARE KILLER IN THE BASIN

By Andy Crawford

**J**anuary is when Atchafalaya Basin bass are on the verge of pulling up tight for the spawn, with water temperatures dictating when exactly that happens.

Bassmaster Elite Series pro Cliff Crochet knows the fish will be staged up near spawning areas, so he'll be working slow-moving bayous and dead-end canals whenever he's not traveling for national tournaments.

"Early in the day, you're dealing with cool mornings, so I'm probably chilling out," the Pierre Part angler said. "I'm probably going slow, flipping a jig."

He said casting a ½-ounce black/blue Santone Lures jig and bumping it back to the boat will pick up some bites while he waits on the water to warm just a bit.

"I'm looking for those lazy fish," Crochet said.

But when the sun gets up and starts pushing water temps upward, Crochet puts down his jig and turns to a winter pattern he said South Louisiana anglers often don't think about.

"The most overlooked lure in January in the Basin is the square-billed crankbait," he said.

Crochet said a Luck-E Strike RC2 Series 4 allows him to cover a lot of water and get bites from fish as they gorge for the coming spawn — bass that often won't hit anything else.

"The jig is on the bottom and a jerk bait is on top, but that square-bill covers everything in between," he explained. "I think there are certain times the fish are almost suspended."

He said the larger profile of the Series 4 offers some advantages compared to smaller square-bills.

"It's easier to cast, for one," Crochet said. "It's also rattling and pushes more water, so it's creating more commotion down there."

"Especially this time of year, you're dealing with hungry fish, aggressive fish, so I don't think you give up anything using a bigger bait."

Although he bangs the lure off any cover he sees, he isn't just cranking and winding.

"You can change your retrieve," he said. "In fact, stop-and-go is a real fun deal."

So cast the Luck-E Strike square-bill and give it a few cranks — and then stop reeling.

after the pause), you're going to feel that vibration again," Crochet said. "You get to know the timing, so when you throw out there, whenever you start again and you don't feel what you've been feeling — that's when the fish has it."

"A lot of times you'll start reeling and it'll feel like you're in grass. That's a fish."



"Crank it six, seven, eight times to get it going, and you can feel the vibration of the bait," Crochet explained. "You stop it just briefly, and then you're going again."

"I think it gets you some reaction bites."

He said it's important to pay attention to the retrieve, learning what it feels like when the lure stops and starts again.

"When you start (reeling

Many Atchafalaya Basin anglers don't think about throwing square-billed crankbaits this time of year, but Bassmaster Elite Series pro Cliff Crochet said the lures will catch fish that won't sniff a jig.

**ALWELD**  
COMMERCIAL BOATS, INC.



Alweld Boats offers a wide variety of makes and models for 12' to 28' of all welded aluminum boats.



**337-433-7019**  
**3909 HWY 90 EAST**  
**LAKE CHARLES, LA**

[lamarine@suddenlinkmail.com](mailto:lamarine@suddenlinkmail.com)

**TOHATSU**  
Outboards

There are times, however, when you start reeling and you feel absolutely nothing.

"It'll feel like somebody cut your line," Crochet said. "That's the fish swimming to you. When that happens, you want to reel, reel, reel until you feel the fish, and then just lean into it."

Best Basin colors are Cajun Baby red, green copper shad and spotted shad.

To maximize his square-bill efforts, the angler uses a 7-foot, medium/heavy, fast-action Deuce rod; a reel with a 7:1 gear ratio and 20-pound Seaguar Rippin' monofilament.

The fast reel allows Crochet to get his crankbait rattling again quickly after a pause, while also providing the ability to reel in slack to catch up with fish that run toward the boat.

The heavy mono achieves two things.

"I don't want to dig this thing — I want to bang it off of everything I can," Crochet said. "I don't want it to run more than 2 feet deep; the heavier line helps keep it running 1, 2 feet deep.

"And then I have durability so I don't have to worry about it breaking."

The great thing about the lure is that, even though bites might be subtle, a bass usually isn't playing around when it decides to strike.

"I've caught fish on these square-bills that choked on it, have it sideways in their throat — you scratch your knuckles getting it out," Crochet said. "And those fish wouldn't hit a jig." ■



Perfect on  
Front & Rear Decks



No more  
Slipping & Sliding  
Just Fishing

**HYDRO-TURF**

**Marine Traction Mats**  
**NON-SLIP SURFACE**

Many  
**COLORS**  
to choose from  
including *Camo*

- Light Weight • Color Through and Through
- Waterproof • Ultra Durable • Noise Reduction



**Most Sheets 40" x 62"**  
**Also available with peel and stick backing**

Flat, Straight Groove, Diamond or Waffle Groove

Increases the Value  
of Your Boat



**Order Today**

**504-340-0344**  
**504-340-5221**

2018  
XPRESS BOATS  
COMING IN  
WEEKLY

2018 MODEL BOATS AT 2017 PRICES!



**XPRESS**  
BOATS

BASS BOATS

LIFETIME  
HULL  
WARRANTY  
ON ALL  
BOATS

BBB  
A+  
ACCREDITED BUSINESS

Five Star  
Certified  
YAMAHA  
Service Dealer

YAMAHA TECHNICIANS



From left to right are Ronald Primeaux, Allen Hebert, Robbie Simon.



**XPRESS**  
BOATS

BAY BOATS



VERANDA  
PONTOONS

YAMAHA OUTBOARDS WINTER SUPER DEAL

**H&M MARINE**

1217 W. 2ND ST. • CROWLEY, LA  
337-783-1194



**YAMAHA**

**12 MONTHS**  
Interest Free  
Financing Sale!  
**GOING ON NOW**

**KNOWLEDGEABLE STAFF • BEST SELECTION  
COMPETITIVE PRICE MATCH • LE & MILITARY DISCOUNTS**



**LAFAYETTE  
SHOOTERS**

OUTFITTING SERIOUS SPORTSMEN SINCE 1967

3520 AMBASSADOR CAFFERY • LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA  
337.988.1191 • WWW.LAFAYETTESHOOTERS.COM



By Chris Ginn

# DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION

Bucks have to venture out of their comfort zones to pursue hot does. Use these 'big tips' to score big during the rut.



**B**ehind my house five years ago at 5 p.m., I killed a buck that I captured on camera 4 miles down the road at 2 a.m. that very same morning.

Four miles may not seem like a lot of ground to cover in 15 hours, but it forever solidified in my mind the fact that rutting bucks are constantly on the move.

And just think how many loaded rifles that deer slipped by before walking out in my plot like a boss.

A few miles up the road from my house, Alan Fussell, a lifelong deer hunter who has refined his techniques in the pine stands of Washington Parish, has experienced much the same thing during our rut.

“Bucks have core areas where they stay all summer long,” he said. “Then I think they have an area they go to during the rut. I finally killed a deer last year that I saw during the rut three years in a row. But I never saw him any other time where I hunt.”

Fussell, who is a member of the Horseshoe Hunting Club near Franklinton, keeps feeders out all year long — and he never got a picture of this

buck any time other than the rut.

“He would leave right after the rut and show up back at my stand about December 15th every year,” Fussell said. “During October, he was probably 6 miles away. My buddy had pictures of him the entire month of October before he came back to my place for his last time last year.”

These core areas are much like our houses.

Like humans, deer spend much of their time outside the rut in the security of their home base, where they are just about impossible to fool. Not much different from us being able to feel our way through our house when the lights are out, deer in their core area know every little nook and cranny, and live in relative peace and comfort.

But when they step outside their safe spaces, they walk into unfamiliar surroundings — and make fatal mistakes.

## LOOK DOWN LONG LANES

While there is a time to try to get up close and personal with a buck, Fussell feels like the rut is not that time.

In the pine stands that he hunts, he likes to set up box stands in locations that give him maximum visibility down a long lane or road. Pine trees set up great for this since the thinning process leaves lanes that can be maintained for as long as the trees continue to grow.

Logging roads that span clear-cuts after all the trees are eventually removed offer the same possibilities, as long as they aren't allowed to grow up over time.

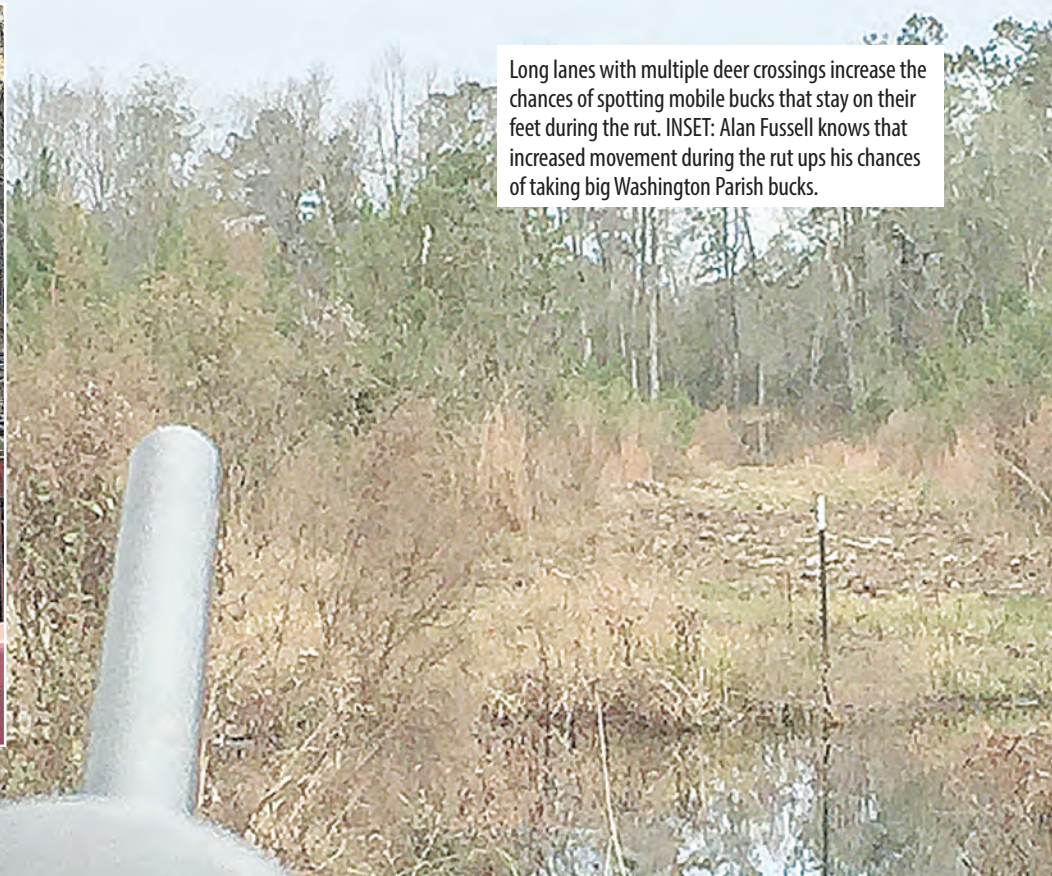
“When the rut starts, I want to hunt a long food plot that has lots of crossings on it,” Fussell said. “I have plots on roads and on power lines that allow me to see a long way. They're going to come to the plots during the rut because that's where the does are, but they aren't coming for food; they're coming for the hot does.”

The presence of many different crossings on these long plots provides Fussell ample opportunity to catch a buck that's on the move.

“With a long lane you've got a lot to look at so you've got to be on your toes,” said Fussell. “When they cross they're probably going to be moving quick, so keep scanning and be ready with your rifle.”



Long lanes with multiple deer crossings increase the chances of spotting mobile bucks that stay on their feet during the rut. INSET: Alan Fussell knows that increased movement during the rut ups his chances of taking big Washington Parish bucks.



## GIVE THEM A GRUNT

With so many bucks on the move during the rut, it's entirely possible one could slip by without you noticing it. That's why Fussell relies on grunt calls to pull them out in the open.

"If I'm not having any action, I'll break them out," he said. "I actually keep three set up - one that sounds like a doe bleat, one that sounds like a young buck and one that sounds like a mature buck."

Fussell hits the doe bleat a time or two before alternating the other two, with the intent of making sounds of a mature buck defending his hot doe from a young buck trying to move in on his territory.

One thing he has learned by playing around with his calls is the more aggressively and loudly he blows, the more effective they tend to be.

"I used to blow them kind of quiet," Fussell said. "Then I started trying different things to see what those young bucks would react to. It took me making a commotion before they would even look my way. Now I believe that if I have a buck way out or out of sight, he's going to come running if I hit those calls hard."

Since bucks could be anywhere around him as they cruise for hot does, Fussell likes to blind call with his fighting grunts every 30 minutes or so. That way he stands a good chance of pulling in a buck that might not have otherwise crossed his lane.



When bucks start chasing does, their defensive mechanisms melt away to the point they are less concerned about their own safety.

## PUT OUT PERFUME

Perfume is a powerful attractant that tends to stick to our brains like some kind of girl Gorilla Glue — and bucks are no different. When they smell a doe in heat, they're going to come running — or at least pay close attention.

With so many scents lining the deer-attractant aisle at sporting goods stores, it's challenging to figure out which one to buy. "I just stick with the old school Tink's 69," Fussell said. "It's

continues on page 50

### LOUISIANA

- 20 Acres Tensas Par.**  
Perfect hunting spot located between Tensas River NWR & Davis Island. Food plots, feeders & stands on this property which is 10 ac. of mature timber & 10 ac. of CRP paying \$1750/year. Great hunting & fishing! \$100,000. Call Bill.
- 2+/- Acres Tensas Par.**  
Located only 700' from north end of Lake Bruin & ½ mile from MS River landing on Hwy 606. Perfect for Commercial, residential or recreational use. \$78,000. Call Bill.
- Lake Bruin Lodge Home Tensas Par.**  
Beautiful 3500 sf home w/3BR, 3 ½ BA & hardwood floor Built in 2010. Big dock with 2 boat landings on this well-known fishing lake. \$475,000. Call Bill.
- 30 Acres Tensas Par.**  
Just Reduced! Home/Camp, Work Shop/Office, Tractor Shed, Metal Building, Ducks & deer. 10 ac. open land. Nice cypress breaks. \$235,000. Call Bill.
- 77 Acres Tensas Par.**  
Prime Hunting Land with Income. Planted in hardwoods. CRP enrolled, \$6,348 annually. \$192,500. Call Bill.
- 335 Acres Tensas Par.**  
South Tensas, on Tensas River, includes 50 ac., beautiful clear lake with great freshwater fishing. Great Hunting-deer, duck, geese, turkey. Prop. has annual CRP income. \$1,038,500. Call Bill.
- 80 Acres West Carroll Par.**  
Excellent deer/duck hunting land in Oak Grove w/ 1/4 mile frontage on Allen Rd. There are 28 acres in a big reservoir w/ shared well. Property adjoins 1000 acres of prime farmland. \$160,000. Call Bill.
- 48 Acres West Carroll Par.**  
Blacktop frontage. Great small deer and duck tract consisting of 28 acres of timber with nice duck pond and 20 acres of CRP with income. \$144,000. Call Bill.
- 3 Acres Tensas Par.**  
125' on Lake Bruin. Precision leveled down to gentle lake bank with white rock sea wall. Young live oaks and beautiful giant cypress lining the bank. \$180,000. Call Bill.
- 25 Acres Tensas Par.**  
Located on Hwy 573 between Glade Woods on Tensas River & thousands of acres of prime hunting land that adjoins 9,000 acre Buckhorn WMA. Unbelievable hunting & fishing! \$81,250. Call Bill.
- 116 Acres LaSalle Par.**  
Duck Hunter/Fisherman's Dream, 2 mi. frontage on Little River & Catahoula Lake, beautiful waterfront with giant cypress. \$230,000. Call Bill.
- 2.3 Acres Tensas Par.**  
280' frontage on Lake St. Joseph w/2 nice homes adjacent to Winter Quarters Plantation. \$339,000. Call Bill.

### MISSISSIPPI

- Adams Co.** - 227.7 ac. - SUPER deer/turkey hunting tract 10 min. from Natchez w/ 10 food plots, 3 box stands. Timber harvest executed to enhance deer habitat. Ongoing deer mgmt. program. Kittering Creek traverses the property and enhances beauty. \$730,000. Call Tom.
- Copiah Co.** - 24 ac. - Great hunting tract w/pond & 25 yr. old mixed pine/hdwd timber located in a rural area east of Hazelhurst. \$68,000. Call Ken.
- Holmes Co.** - 294 ac. - Trophy deer hunting with totally remodeled 110 yr. old 3400sf home/lodge overlooking stocked lake. Land is set up with food plots, 9 box stands & new pole barn. Neighbors are trophy deer conscience. Near Morgan Break, Acona & Black Hawk. \$1,071,000. Call Ken.
- Humphreys Co.** - 715 ac. - Delta Cropland located between Belzoni & Cruger w/high quality soil, shop/equip. shed, grain bin, 2BR, 1BA home, 4 wells & 4 pivots. \$3,575,000. Call Ken.
- Jasper Co.** - 100 ac. - This tract consists of hardwood w/some pine, camp, good road system w/5 ac. lake and live creek. This property has est. food plots w/shooting houses & stands. Property has good duck hunting as well as deer/turkey/small game. \$299,950. Call Wayne.
- Jefferson Davis Co.** - 41 ac. - Property located near Prentiss consisting of 3 yr. old plant. pine w/pipeline. This tract has est. food plots in a great deer hunting area. \$70,000. Call Ken.
- Jefferson Co.** - 168 ac. - Fronts Natchez Trace w/83+/- ac fenced pasture & 83+/- ac. hdwd/pine. This tract has hay barn, equip. shed, & abundant deer/turkey. \$722,400. Call Charles.
- Newton Co.** - 18 ac. - Property consist of double wide M.H. with car shed & shop. Approx. 5 ac. Open w/barn & rest is mix hdwd/pine timber. Owner will sell home w/3ac. & 15 ac. separately. \$88,000. Call Ken.
- Pearl River Co.** - 30-50-75-100-2900 ac. - Located on Hwy 43N adjoining Bogue Chitto NWR & Old River WMA offering great deer/turkey hunting. \$2950/ac. Call Ken.
- Pearl River Co.** - 410 ac. - Deer/Turkey/Bass Fishing Showplace! 343 ac. enclosed w/ game fence since 2006 using QDMA guidelines. 6000 sf lodge on an 18 ac. Trophy Bass Lake. 5 irrigated food plots 3-5 ac. w/ box stands & over 25 bow stands. Metal building that stores 2 tractors w/implements, 2 golf carts & 60 kw generator. Lighted skeet range & 3-D bow range is a night time favorite. 67 ac. outside fence w/2300 sf caretaker's home on stocked lake. \$2,500,000. Call Ken.
- Quitman Co.** - 61 ac. - Duck Hunters Dream! Adjoins a 300 ac. US Fish & Wildlife Preserve (Peterson Lake) in Lambert. 12 yr. old, nice 2 story lodge overlooking Dorsey Lake w/625sf insulated shop. \$392,000. Call Ken.
- Rankin Co.** - 10-25-50-100-650 ac. - Beautiful wooded homesites w/light restrictions & exc. deer/turkey. \$3000-\$5000/ac. Call Ken (owner/agent).
- Sharkey Co.** - 1.88 ac. - Located in the middle of Delta National Forrest. Very close to Panther Swamp & Sunflower Waterfowl Project. Utilities available. .94 ac. \$40K or 1.88 ac. \$80K. Call Andrew.

worked for me over the years, so I stick with it. I used to just sprinkle some out on the bushes but eventually figured out I was leaving scent behind when I wasn't in the stand.

"That's not what you want."

Fussell now uses scent wicks so he can pull them in when he exits.

"That way the scent is there only when I'm there," he added. "Plus you can stick those wicks back down in the bottles. It's pretty easy to deal with that way."

Rather than just use scent with no rhyme or reason, Fussell always puts it out so the wind will carry it toward bedding areas, or in whatever general direction he believes bucks will be coming from.

## WATCH THE WIND

"If a buck is not chasing a doe, he's traveling upwind to catch one," Fussell said. "I wish I would have realized how big of a deal the wind was when I was younger. It's a huge factor in hunting rutting bucks, but at the same time, they're just love-struck enough to not pay it any attention."

Bucks are going to come in from downwind to scent-check a plot for does before they step out into the open. While some hunters may try to set up downwind of where they believe a buck will set up to sniff out a plot, Fussell feels

hunting the long lanes helps him avoid that situation altogether.

"On those long lanes, when a buck tries to circle around and get down wind, they're going to move down 80 to 100 yards and still cross my lane 100 yards in front of me," he explained. "So I guess it's the same concept of getting behind where they're going to scent-check, but I don't have to worry about continually adjusting my position since I've got so much real estate in front of me."

After that explanation, Fussell mentioned that he believes bucks are less likely to try to smell him or try to see him during the rut.

"They get tunnel vision," he said. "It's like having blinders on a race horse to keep them focused only on the mission at hand. Rutting bucks throw caution to the wind and pretty much have a one-track mind when it comes to finding a hot doe."

That's not to say hunters should throw caution to the wind like bucks do. Rather, you're more likely to get a free pass on a mistake during the rut than you would any other time of year.

## BE A SHARPSHOOTER

When hunting long lanes, it pays to be able to make a shot out to 250 yards or so. Fussell has killed several rutting bucks at 250 yards, but he tries to keep it under that distance.

"Even though I can see a lot farther, I'm

not very likely to take a shot over 250," he said. "I shoot a Ruger .308, so I can get on out there and touch them long distance, but I don't see any need in trying to shoot one at 300 yards."

Even taking shots at 250 yards means practicing at that distance before making an unethical shot at a deer. Understanding ballistics and having a high-quality scope can pay big dividends, as will learning how high you're going to have to hold over at different ranges.

According to an article written by Brian McCombie for Outdoor Life, zeroing your rifle at 200 yards rather than 100 yards will help you make longer shots.

McCombie's premise is that zeroing a .308 at 100 yards means you would have to hold over about 16 inches on a buck standing 300 yards away. But with a 200-yard zero, you're hold over is only 9 or 10 inches - a much easier shot considering your crosshairs wouldn't be hovering in thin air.

Everything in Fussell's bag of rut tricks seems to be big. Big lanes, big grunts, big smells, big stands and big shots.

And for him, the end result is big bucks. During the rut, bigger is definitely better. ■



**Chris Ginn** has been covering hunting and fishing in Louisiana since 1998. He lives with his wife Jennifer and children Matthew and Rebecca along the Bogue Chitto River in rural Washington Parish. His blog can be found at [chrisginn.com](http://chrisginn.com).

Zeroing in your rifle at longer distances can better prepare you when you have to reach out and touch a buck at 250 yards-plus.

# HUNTING LAND FOR SALE

**\$2.3  
BILLION  
& 615,000  
ACRES**  
sold company  
wide in the last  
5 years



**LARRY STEWART**  
Agent, Land Specialist  
Southern Louisiana  
**(985) 320-9112**

**CADE TAYLOR**  
Agent, Land Specialist  
Southeast Louisiana  
**(225) 719-0495**

**BLAKE CHARLES**  
Agent, Land Specialist  
Northern Louisiana  
**(337) 945-4061**

**BART SHIRLEY**  
Agent, Land Specialist  
Eastern Louisiana  
**(225) 324-5229**

**BRAD FARRIS**  
Agent, Land Specialist  
West Central Mississippi  
**(601) 506-1304**

**CHIPPER GIBBS**  
Agent, Land Specialist  
West Central Mississippi  
**(601) 248-8984**

**MICHAEL CLAYTON**  
Agent, Land Specialist  
South Central Arkansas  
**(870) 818-5418**

**CONTACT AN AGENT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT BUYING AND SELLING HUNTING, RANCH, FARMLAND AND TIMBERLAND**



**WHITETAIL PROPERTIES REAL ESTATE**

HUNTING | RANCH | FARM | TIMBER

**WHITETAILPROPERTIES.COM**



Whitetail Properties Real Estate, LLC | dba Whitetail Properties | Nebraska & North Dakota DBA Whitetail Trophy Properties Real Estate LLC | Lic. in IL, MO, IA, KS, KY, NE & OK - Dan Perez, Broker | Lic. in AR, CO, GA, MN, ND, TN, SD & WI - Jeff Evans, Broker | Lic. in OH & PA - Kirk Gilbert, Broker | Lic. in NM & TX - Joey Bellington, Broker | Lic. in IN - John Boyken, Broker | Lic. in LA, MS, GA & AL - Sybil Stewart, Broker | Lic. in TN - Chris Wakefield, Broker | Lic. in TN - Bobby Powers, Broker | Lic. in AR - Johnny Ball, Broker | Lic. in SC - Rick Elliot, Broker | Lic. in NC - Rich Baugh, Broker | Lic. in MI - Brandon Crosey, Broker





# Brookhaven Honda

**YOU'LL LIKE WHAT YOU SEE, YOU'LL LOVE WHAT YOU SAVE!**

**2016 PIONEER™  
1000  
SXS10M3**



**5 AVAILABLE**

MSRP ..... \$13,999\*  
**SALE..... \$10,697\*\***

**2017 PIONEER™  
500  
SXS500M2H**



**5 AVAILABLE**

MSRP ..... \$8,999\*  
**SALE..... \$7,097\*\***

**2017 PIONEER™  
700  
SXS700M2**



**5 AVAILABLE**

MSRP ..... \$10,499\*  
**SALE..... \$8,497\*\***

**2017 RANCHER®  
DCT IRS TRX  
420 FA5  
4x4 Automatic  
Shift**



**5 AVAILABLE**

MSRP ..... \$7,399\*  
**SALE..... \$5,997\*\***

**2017 RINCON®  
TRX 680 FA  
4x4 Automatic  
Transmission**



**5 AVAILABLE**

MSRP ..... \$9,399\*  
**SALE..... \$7,597\*\***

**2017 RANCHER  
TRX 420 FM1  
4x4 Manual Shift**



**5 AVAILABLE**

MSRP ..... \$6,399\*  
**SALE..... \$4,997\*\***

**2017  
RANCHER®  
TRX 420  
TM1 2x4  
Manual Shift**



**5 AVAILABLE**

MSRP ..... \$5,349\*  
**SALE..... \$4,197\*\***

**2017 RANCHER® 420  
TRX 420 FA 2**



**5 AVAILABLE**

MSRP ..... \$7,599\*  
**SALE..... \$6,197\*\***

**2017  
FOREMAN®  
500  
TRX 500 FM1  
4x4 Manual  
Shift**



**5 AVAILABLE**

MSRP ..... \$7,299\*  
**SALE..... \$5,797\*\***

# Brookhaven Honda

**8-5 Mon.-Fri. • 8-2 Sat.**

**1-866-546-6328 • 1-601-833-6041**

**www.brookhavenhonda.com**

**EXIT 40 OFF I-55 IN BROOKHAVEN, MS  
NEXT TO HOME DEPOT**

honda.com RECOMMENDED ONLY FOR RIDERS 16 YEARS AND OLDER. BE A RESPONSIBLE RIDER. REMEMBER, ATVs CAN BE HAZARDOUS TO OPERATE. FOR YOUR SAFETY, ALWAYS WEAR A HELMET, EYE PROTECTION AND PROTECTIVE CLOTHING, AND NEVER RIDE ON PAVED SURFACES OR PUBLIC ROADS. KEEP IN MIND THAT RIDING DOESN'T MIX WITH DRUGS OR ALCOHOL. Honda RECOMMENDS THAT ALL ATV RIDERS TAKE A TRAINING COURSE AND READ THEIR OWNER'S MANUAL THOROUGHLY. For rider training information or to sign up for a rider training course, call the ATV Safety Institute at 1-800-887-2887. FourTrax Foreman®, Rubicon™, Rincon™ and GPScape™ are trademarks of Honda Motor Co., Ltd. PIONEER IS ONLY FOR DRIVERS 16 YEARS AND OLDER. MULTI-PURPOSE UTILITY VEHICLES CAN BE HAZARDOUS TO OPERATE. FOR YOUR SAFETY, BE RESPONSIBLE. ALWAYS WEAR A HELMET, EYE PROTECTION AND APPROPRIATE CLOTHING. ALWAYS WEAR YOUR SEAT BELT, AND KEEP THE SIDE NETS AND DOORS CLOSED. AVOID EXCESSIVE SPEEDS AND BE CAREFUL ON DIFFICULT TERRAIN. ALL MUV DRIVERS SHOULD WATCH THE SAFETY VIDEO MULTIPURPOSE UTILITY VEHICLES: A GUIDE TO SAFE OPERATION AND READ THE OWNER'S MANUAL BEFORE OPERATING THE VEHICLE. NEVER DRIVE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF DRUGS OR ALCOHOL. ON PUBLIC ROADS OR WITH MORE THAN ONE PASSENGER, DRIVER AND PASSENGER MUST BE TALL ENOUGH FOR SEAT BELT TO FIT PROPERLY AND TO BRACE THEMSELVES WITH BOTH FEET FIRMLY ON THE FLOOR. PASSENGER MUST BE ABLE TO GRASP THE HAND HOLD WITH THE SEAT BELT ON AND BOTH FEET ON THE FLOOR. RESPECT THE ENVIRONMENT WHEN DRIVING. Pioneer is a trademark of Honda Motor Co., Ltd. \*Manufacturer Suggested Retail Price (or MMSRP) excludes destination charge. Visit www.powersports.honda.com to view applicable destination charge amount.  
\*\* Prices subject to change after 1/1/2018

**"S**ome honey hole!" Eddie wailed as he stomped onto the porch after tying up the boat. "We was watching ducks most of the morning! But NONE would come NEAR Doc's blind!

"And we was calling like crazy! But dey was all landing behind us in the middle of da marsh!"

Doc was right behind him, shrugging.

"Well," he smirked, "we were limiting out easy at my honey hole blind from the youth hunt till almost Christmas! Remember? Mostly teal and greys — SOME guest!"

"Here I figured I'd take my favorite brud-n-law to my favorite duck honey hole for his only hunt of the season, and LOOK at the thanks I get!"

Doc had a point. His brother-in-law Eddie was acting more the spoiled brat than usual — which is really saying something.

But Eddie had a point, too, as Artie was quick to clarify. "You ain't hunting the same deer stand in January as you did for bow season are you, Doc?" Artie asked. "You ain't hunting around persimmon and white oaks in late January, are ya? Then why're ya hunting the same duck blind in late January that you hunted for the opener?"

"You gotta be outcha mind! Just like for deer, the food sources for ducks have changed drastically since the early season! Get wit da program! Think you'd know that by NOW!"

"Right, Artie!" Doc yelled. "For somebody who spends 95 percent of his time at da hunting camp watching football, making gumbo and sipping brewskies, how'd you suddenly become Joe Expert duck hunter?"

>

By Humberto Fontova

# How to Down Late-season



You can't stick with early season tactics and continue killing ducks this month. Here's how to adjust to track down waterfowl honey holes.

# Pelayo was in the corner by the keg, **smirking up a storm.**

He recognized that Artie had just regurgitated — almost word for word — his own spiel about our usual late-season duck strategy.

We'd just arrived at Doc's place and were pumped for a dy-NO-mite hunt — despite (or actually because of) the “terrible duck weather,” as traditionalists would call the warm, blustery spell we were experiencing.

The temperature, you see, was only dropping to the mid-60s at night and the wind was howling from the southeast — as often happens between January cold fronts.

“It ain't the temperature that affects duck movement! Dey ain't like deer!” Artie blurted, addressing Eddie but acknowledging Pelayo from the corner of his eye. “It's the WIND! ANY wind is good for duck hunting! Makes 'em move around. And it's gonna be howling tomorrow from the southeast!”

“Yeah, great!” Doc countered. “Tides will be even higher than today! That scatters the ducks in our southeast marshes — that's probably what hurt us today. Be even WORSE tomorrow!”

“OK — then Eddie's coming with us,” Pelayo offered. “How's that?”

“Fine with me,” Eddie said with a shrug. “Can't be any worse than today.”

“But be prepared for a little work,” Pelayo said. “Maybe some push-pole

action, like when we duck hunted in our younger days — might bring back some good Tigerland and Fat City memories!”

“OK: You're on!” Eddie said.

In Southeast Louisiana's tidal marshes, ducks are notoriously nomadic.

Naturally, all ducks — regardless of habitat — respond to hunting pressure. By January, this is obviously a major factor in their flight patterns.

But, on top of that, in the tidal marshes we've got those fickle water levels that scatter or concentrate ducks from day to day, depending on wind direction.

Just a 5-degree shift in the wind from north to just slightly northeast (or vice versa) can mean a 10-inch tidal change in two days.

An area crammed with greys and teal during your scouting trip might have two mergansers and three dos gris when you come back.

The high tides put the milfoil, coontail and widgeon grass out of beak range.

According to most aerial surveys, Southeast Louisiana generally holds more ducks near season's closing than during the opener in November. But they're usually holding in different places — and have altered their flight patterns because of hunting pressure, food sources and tides.

Earlier, during a fishing trip, Pelayo and I had noticed that a section of marsh no more than 400 yards from Doc's “Honey Hole blind” (which sat in a deep pond) had been covered by peavine and more of that freshwater vegetation that's becoming so common in this area due to the damming of the MRGO.

We made a note of it for a potential duck honey hole on a high tide.

Now this seed-rich area — prime dabbling-duck fodder — had been flattened by the short sunlight and freezes.

And to cap it off, the blustery southeast winds made for a super high tide that we surmised would cover it right at perfect dabbling level.

Close scrutiny of Google map close-ups, plus a little scouting on a fishing trip during a super-high tide, showed one skinny trenasse winding through this area from a slightly bigger ditch into a little pond, which it seemed to drain.

## THE HUNT UNFOLDS

The next morning at 7:30, we beached Pelayo's skiff in the flooded spartina and hauled out the two pirogues. Yes, we were late by most duck hunting timetables, but the lateness was deliberate.



On high tides, teal and greys flock into flooded marshes with food at “beak range” — about 8 to 15 inches deep.





**40 years of hunting and fishing equipment**



**Dependable shallow water equipment since 1977**



Go-Devil Manufacturing started the mud motor industry in 1977 with the original Go-Devil. Since then the addition of the Go-Devil Surface Drive, Go-Devil Boat Blind, and Go-Devil Floating Blinds has kept Go-Devil Manufacturing at the top of the mud motor industry for 40 years. Call today to order the Go-Devil product that meets your needs.

**GO-DEVIL MANUFACTURING CO. OF LA LLC**  
**1-888-490-3254 WWW.GODEVIL.COM**





**W**e waited for those southeast winds to really kick up, blow the fog away and hopefully get the ducks flying.

As we paddled to our honey hole, a few flocks were already dropping in. Pelayo pointed and we all thumbs-upped.

We paddled furiously through the skinny trenasse against the wind for about 300 yards. As expected, the super-high tide allowed us to glide easily through a scrawny ditch toward our spot.

A pair of greys drifted overhead, and we stopped to gawk. They were a couple: drake and hen. They were already pairing up.

They cupped while directly over, banked and set a gliding course for the feast and orgy raging up ahead.

Then some greenwings buzzed over and quickly plunked into the duck gathering.

I was panting by this point — but not from the exertion.

We hit the edge of the opening and at least 100 ducks promptly took wing.

The sight and sounds were glorious.

As usual, they quickly split up by species. We kept paddling until we got a glimpse of the place that attracted them.

Yes! It was that matted-down area consisting of peavine, smartweeds and three-square grass with a little spartina poking through it.

This honey hole stretched for about 100 square yards.

Our 'roggs were almost scraping bottom as we started chunking out the 27 dekes.

We jammed the pirogues into a small patch of marsh alders, stuck some palmetto fronds and stalks of fluffy bamboo around them and went to work on the calls, mixing short quacks with whistles.

Six greenwings buzzed in immediately, circled once and plopped in the dekes.

A pair of bluewings followed.

We opened up just as they touched down. Both stayed with us, along with a slow greenwing.

Off to my right, I caught movement: a small flock of wigeon, no mistaking

them. In flight they always remind me of chubby wood ducks.

Eddie was pointing to his left and hun-kering down as another flock of greenwings blazed our way.

Two toots from Pelayo's whistle and the wigeon locked-in on the decoys. In seconds they started cupping. Those necks started craning back and forth.

But at 70 yards the three in the lead started veering off.

My own whistle came up, and I tooted softly — twitting my tongue against the roof of my mouth.

Pelayo kept up his tooting — and then Eddie offered a short-sharp hail, followed by a few chuckles.

It worked like a charm.

to stifle guffaws.

But it was shooting time. Four of the wigeon had drifted. They were over the center of the decoy spread.

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

Three shots, and two wigeon crumpled. A third staggered off to my left.

I followed it with the bead, led him about 2 feet and touched the trigger — BLAM!

Its neck sagged, and the wigeon splashed down.

The whoops and high fives lasted almost three minutes and scared off the flocks of teal that were closing from two sides.

But it hardly mattered at the moment.

By 11:30 a.m., we were two shy of the



Poling through the flooded marsh beats a workout at a health club any day — and gets you to dabbling duck honey holes. But it's usually not easy.

The birds swung back on course. Their wings started gliding again, barely moving — the landing gear started to go down, but they were still 50 yards out.

Just a l-i-t-t-l-e too far!

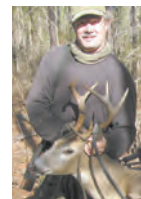
Then a jet-like roar of wings came from behind, and a flock of greenwings rushed in from behind, practically knocking off our caps. They swerved just in front of the wigeon, blazed out into the opening and started turning back.

Pelayo and I looked at each other trying

three-man limit (mostly greys and teal) but plenty pumped and still high-fiving up a storm.

So we called it a hunt.

Shoulda seen Doc's face when we pulled up! ■



Humberto Fontova is the author of four books and a frequent commentator on national media. For more details visit [www.hfontova.com](http://www.hfontova.com).

# Gator Trax Marsh Series



- 3-Man: 14' x 50" - 420lbs
- 4-Man: 16' x 50" - 480lbs
- Runs Great with 23 hp or 35 hp mud motors
- Hides easily
- Run mud flats with ease

**THE ULTIMATE DUCK KILLIN' MACHINE!**



225.294.9991

[www.gatortraxboats.com](http://www.gatortraxboats.com)





# DELTA WINTER HOT SPOTS

By David A. Brown

Winter in Southeast Louisiana is unpredictable — and so are the fish. Keep these tips in mind when you're targeting specks and reds now out of Venice.

**S**tep outside and the chilly winter air stings your nose and ears. What do you do? You grab a jacket, gloves and maybe a neck gaiter. Pretty standard stuff, but fish have no such options. They gotta deal with whatever nature throws their way by being smart and seeking refuge in life-sustaining habitat.

Fortunately, the vast Mississippi River Delta abounds with such cold-weather sanctuaries that keep redfish and speckled trout warm during winter's chill. Some are more obvious than

others, but this estuarine wonder often rewards anglers who realize the differences between these top-billing species.

"As a given, reds are almost always active and catchable in the winter," said Capt. Anthony Randazzo, of Venice-based Paradise Plus Guide Service. "Specks, on the other hand, are susceptible to lockjaw when water temperatures plummet and barometers skyrocket. It may take three days for specks to recompose themselves after a sharp cold front, whereas redfish will bite before, during and after the fronts."





Capt. Ross Montet likes cork rigs for winter marsh fishing, so he can keep a lure in the strike zone longer.

## MISSISSIPPI RIVER LEVEL IS KEY

According to Randazzo, specifics of winter fish location can be very dynamic based upon the river height and corresponding salinity levels. The southern terminus for one of the nation's largest drains answers to many upstream influences, so fluctuation is the norm.

"The higher the salinity, the more likely the multitudes of speckled trout and redfish will be drawn to the winter wonderland of the main river system," Randazzo said. "When this scenario is present, we catch lots of specks and reds — not to mention some of the most consistent stringers of the year in the river itself.

"The fish have all of the comforts of deep water, moving water, fresh and saltwater forage, and a variety of structure to keep them pacified. When the river stays low for extended periods of time as it did in 2000 and 2001, the specks and reds can be caught many miles upriver from Venice, not just in the lower Delta.

"Unfortunately, Old Man River throws us a few curveballs, and we have to make adjustments to remain consistent. The redfish may find the lower salinities acceptable and remain near the main river or slightly closer to the open water of the coastal bays within the tributaries of the Mississippi River. However, the specks will move away from the lower salinities quite rapidly and flee to the coastal bays where conditions are preferable."

Randazzo goes on to say that, if river salinity remains low, it will force the specks in the coastal bays to migrate along the coast in search of warmer bait-filled backwaters as a second choice for winter solace. Many trout, he said, will push as far north and inland as possible in search of the warmest bays and bayous, where they are also more likely to find clean water after frequently passing cold fronts.

continued on page 64



When Capt. Joe Dimarco is seeking winter reds, the various drilling structures throughout the marsh earn a lot of his attention.

## COLD WEATHER CONSIDERATIONS

Locating winter fish can be challenging, so the last thing you want is to squander an opportunity by allowing the elements to negatively impact your comfort and functional ability. Venice guide Capt. Anthony Randazzo offers these tips to prevent such frustrations.

• **Waterproof shoes/boots:** "If your feet get wet, you are done. I also suggest heavy wool socks," he said.

• **Layered clothing:** Patterson Leeth, lifetime outdoorsman and marketing guy for SIMM'S, suggests a three-layer system.

### Layer 1 - Base Layer

A next-to-skin garment made of polyblend, merino wool, etc. will move moisture away from the skin to keep you dry and allow you to go from high activity events like, launching the boat and loading up, to making that first run without getting chilled. Skip this step in favor of a cotton T-shirt and, even with a nice insulated jacket, you're gonna get cold.

Suggested product: WaderWick™ Core Crewneck (\$49.95)

### Layer 2 - Mid-Layer

This step further advances the moisture wicking duty, but also addresses the all-important core warmth. Pointing to gridded fleece, Polartec fleece and PrimaLoft materials, Leeth notes that mid-layer vests offer a good option for those who prefer more arm mobility.

Suggested product: Axis Hoody (\$199.95) or Fall Run Vest (\$149.95)

### Layer 3 - Outerwear

This is the layer that continues to work in unison with Layers 1 and 2, while keeping the nasty stuff out. Water-resistant, breathable materials with a fully waterproof Gore-Tex outer shell will keep you comfortable and ready to fish.

Suggested products: Contender Insulated Jacket (\$499.95) and bib (\$449.95).

• **Protect the extremities:** Randazzo suggests a knit hat in place of the standard baseball cap, as a warm head covering is essential for heat retention. And don't forget an extra pair of warm gloves in case the first pair gets wet.

• **Warm thoughts:** Hand warmers are nice, but they're no good when your hands are occupied — or are they? Try slipping hand warmers into the top side of your fishing gloves, tuck one into your waist band for lower back heat and into the tops of those winter boots. (If you're wearing Long Johns or a technical base layer, snugging hand warmers against your thighs keeps the southern hemisphere toasty.) ■

- David A. Brown



It's a New Year,  
stop by and see our  
selection of boats,  
**you won't believe  
the deals until you  
see them...**



DENHAM SPRINGS



947 Florida Blvd. West • Denham Springs  
225-664-5141 • sales@aquamarineds.com



www.aquamarineds.com



From camps to custom  
homes, build with



Netterville Lumber Company is your complete solution to professional moldings like Crown Molding, Wall Paneling, and Trim Moldings. Custom Trim & Solid Hardwood Floors. We look forward to working with homeowners, designers and builders.



www.nettervillelumber.com  
**800.343.4577**

# 2018 MODELS ARRIVING DAILY

# XPRESS BOATS

**BLOW OUT SALE ON ALL 2017 MODELS**



**H22B**

Available in 18', 20', 22', & 24'

**HYPER-LIFT SERIES**



**H17 w/F70**

ALSO AVAILABLE H18/X19/X21



**ALL ALUMINUM DECK-NO WOOD**



**WE BUY USED BOATS AND MOTORS!!  
TRADE-INS ACCEPTED!!**

[www.XpressBoats.com](http://www.XpressBoats.com)



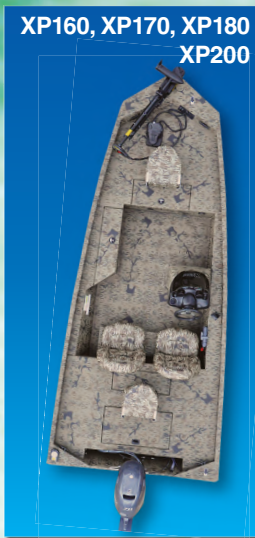


#1 **XPRESS**  
**DEALER**  
in the nation

**XPRESS**  
**BOATS**



Panfish 16



XP160, XP170, XP180  
XP200



H17PFC, H18PFC



H-17, H-18, H-20  
H-22



X-19  
X-21



H18



H20B



H22B



H24B



XP16CC  
XP18CC



165 Bay Skiff  
185 Bay Skiff



Tunnel  
Boat  
SW 18B  
SW 20B  
SW 22B



XP20CC

# Boats Unlimited

7035 AIRLINE HWY.  
BATON ROUGE



**YAMAHA**

225.357.3118

Certified Master Yamaha  
Technician On Site

[www.BoatsUnlimitedLA.com](http://www.BoatsUnlimitedLA.com)

## DEPTH RULES

Spring through fall sees a more gracious and forgiving Delta, as redfish roam just about every grass edge, duck pond and roseau cane island, while trout can be found from open water oyster reefs to passes, flats and nearshore rigs. But the challenge of finding fish intensifies when winter inflicts harsh weather restrictions and shrinks the playing field. If there is one consistent element of winter fishing it's this: the greater the depth, the greater the stability.

"When fishing in the river system we are focusing on flats adjacent to deep water, eddies in the deep water, points/cuts along the river and its tributaries and rock structures along the river banks that may or may not extend out into deeper water," Randazzo said. "When the fish opt for the coastal bays and marshes of the Delta, we are targeting deeper natural channels that connect the bays, pipeline canals that are able to stay protected from the wind and flats

that contain oyster shells (shell bottoms warm quickest on cold and sunny days)."

For most of his winter marsh fishing, Randazzo likes a 4-inch Bass Assassin Sea Shad on a 1/8- to 1/2-ounce unpainted jig heads for speckled trout and redfish.

When the water is stained or cold and the fish need a little extra incentive, he sprays his lures with Bang fish attractant.

Following a similar game plan, Delta guide David Iverson said marsh habitat with deep cuts and canals flanked by skinny flats with grass lines, shell and other common feeding features are golden for the copper brutes. Bottom line: The ability to feed, while



A mix of shrimp and baitfish-mimicking plastics top the winter fishing arsenal.

maintaining proximity to stable water, makes a redfish very happy.

"Those redfish will come out of the marshes and get in those areas when it's really cold; but if it's not really cold,

**The Right Lines...  
Great Service...  
At the  
Best Prices!!**



**Metro Boating**

www.metroboating.com

3028 4th St. • Harvey, LA • 504-341-4852



**FEEL THE POWER,  
NOT THE VIBRATION.** **VERADO**

THE SMOOTHEST, QUIETEST, MOST POWERFUL FOURSTROKE OUTBOARD.

**MERCURY**

**TAKE CHARGE.**

mercuryoutboards.com

they'll stay up in the shallows in the same places they were the rest of the year," he said. "But when it does get really cold, they'll look for a little area with 4 or 5 feet of water or better, where they can hang out until the weather warms up."

When he's searching for chilly redfish, Iverson likes a Bomber Who Dat spoon and a Bomber Model A crankbait. The classic gold spoon is a stalwart anywhere redfish swim, but Iverson said the gold with orange accent matches common redfish forage.

"If you look closely at the crabs and the cocahoe minnows, most of them have a little tinge of orange or red in them," he said. "When you add that little bit of orange flashing back and forth in that spoon, it looks like (what redfish eat)."

Iverson likes the Model A in chartreuse with blue back, or any crawfish colors. He'll crank this lure along marsh grass edges and pay particular attention to the areas outside the mouths of marsh drains, which serve as redfish food funnels on falling tides.

"If I get a bite or two on the crankbait or spoon, I might go back through with a grub or a Bomber Paradise Popper Xtreme cork rig," Iverson said. "With the Paradise Popper, I'll fish the 4-inch YUM Houdini Minnow (black back with glitter) on a ¼-ounce Bomber chartreuse head and an 18-inch leader."

For the deeper holes where redfish settle during cold spells, Iverson casts a Bomber Mullet into the depths to entice active fish. He'll use a jiggling motion to probe these cold weather refuges.

Elsewhere, Capt. Joe Dimarco of Cajun Fishing Adventures in Buras often searches for reds throughout the network of canals cut for the oil and natural gas industry. Noting that he's particularly fond of dead-end canals

with prominent well heads, valve stations (aka "Christmas trees") and various other structures, he'll throw a selection of artificial shrimp and minnow-style jigs.

Work all reachable sides of a canal structure and know that the larger ones with decks and walkways offer overhead shelter that fish may favor during bright, post-frontal days. Skip your bait underneath the cover to see what's lurking in the shadows.

When trout top Capt. Ross Montet's target list on a cold winter's day, the Cajun Fishing Adventures guide leverages natural Delta features like turns or elbows in canals or bayous, which hold a deeper pocket on the outside bend. Trout hold in these areas, and the most inconspicuous of pockets can offer a gold mine of opportunity.

Cast with light jigs or artificial

continued on page 66



Small swimbaits on Ned rig-style heads can prove highly effective for winter fishing.

**GatorTail**  
OUTBOARDS

**XPRESS**  
BOATS

**Boats Unlimited**

7035 Airline Hwy. Baton Rouge  
**225.357.3118**

**YAMAHA**

Certified Master  
Yamaha Technician On Site

[www.BoatsUnlimitedLA.com](http://www.BoatsUnlimitedLA.com)



shrimp and let the baits slowly flutter through the target zone. Work your bait with the slow, fluttering movements to mimic cold-stunned baitfish, and employ the occasional twitch-and-descend of a live shrimp.

“I’ll also fish my bait under a popping cork, because this lets you pause your retrieve and hold your bait in the strike zone longer,” Montet said.



## WIND PROTECTION

In addition to the depth consideration, winter success also takes into consideration wind exposure. A windward location may not only be difficult to fish, it could require a rougher-than-you’d-like run on the way or returning. On the flip side, calm winds may bring distant options into play.

### STRATEGIC WINTER SPOTS INCLUDE:

• **GARDEN ISLAND BAY:** Located on the northeast side of South Pass, shallow roseau cane-lined shorelines and points offer classic redfish habitat that’s protected from the strong north winds associated with winter fronts. Direct tidal influence from the Gulf of Mexico keeps the salinity high. Randazzo prefers low water and rising tides.

Here, Randazzo likes a Heddon Swim’n Image or a 3 ½-inch YUM Wooly Bug on 3/8-ounce jig head, either alone or under a Bomber Paradise Popper

Xtreme float. They also work well along the eroded points.

• **SOUTHWEST PASS:** Deep water offers warm habitat with ample food, while the jetties provide protection from northwest to east winds. Randazzo uses his side imaging sonar to locate fish and targets them with soft plastics on ½-ounce jig heads tipped with bait shrimp. Incoming tide is generally best here.

• **BRETON ISLAND:** When calm, mild conditions prevail, this East Delta barrier island can be an absolute gold mine for trout and redfish. Jigs and soft plastics and topwaters will keep you busy. Keep an eye on the weather, as a west wind will make for a miserable run home.

Randazzo closes with this thought: “Winter in Southeast Louisiana is unpredictable, and so are the fish. We may catch fish in 2 feet of water today and have to drop down to 35 feet the next day. The bottom line is being diversified and mobile. The rest is simply fishing.” ■



A full-time freelance writer specializing in sport fishing, **David A. Brown** splits his time between journalism and marketing communications ([www.tightwords.com](http://www.tightwords.com)).



Dreary, cold days may require more hole-hunting, but when you find the fish, they’re usually stacked. **INSET:** You can use either spinning or baitcasting gear, but keep those presentations slow and methodical.



**Fiberglass Repair**  
If you want the best!

**CALL TODAY (504) 277-7777**



2409 Parish Road • New Orleans, LA 70129



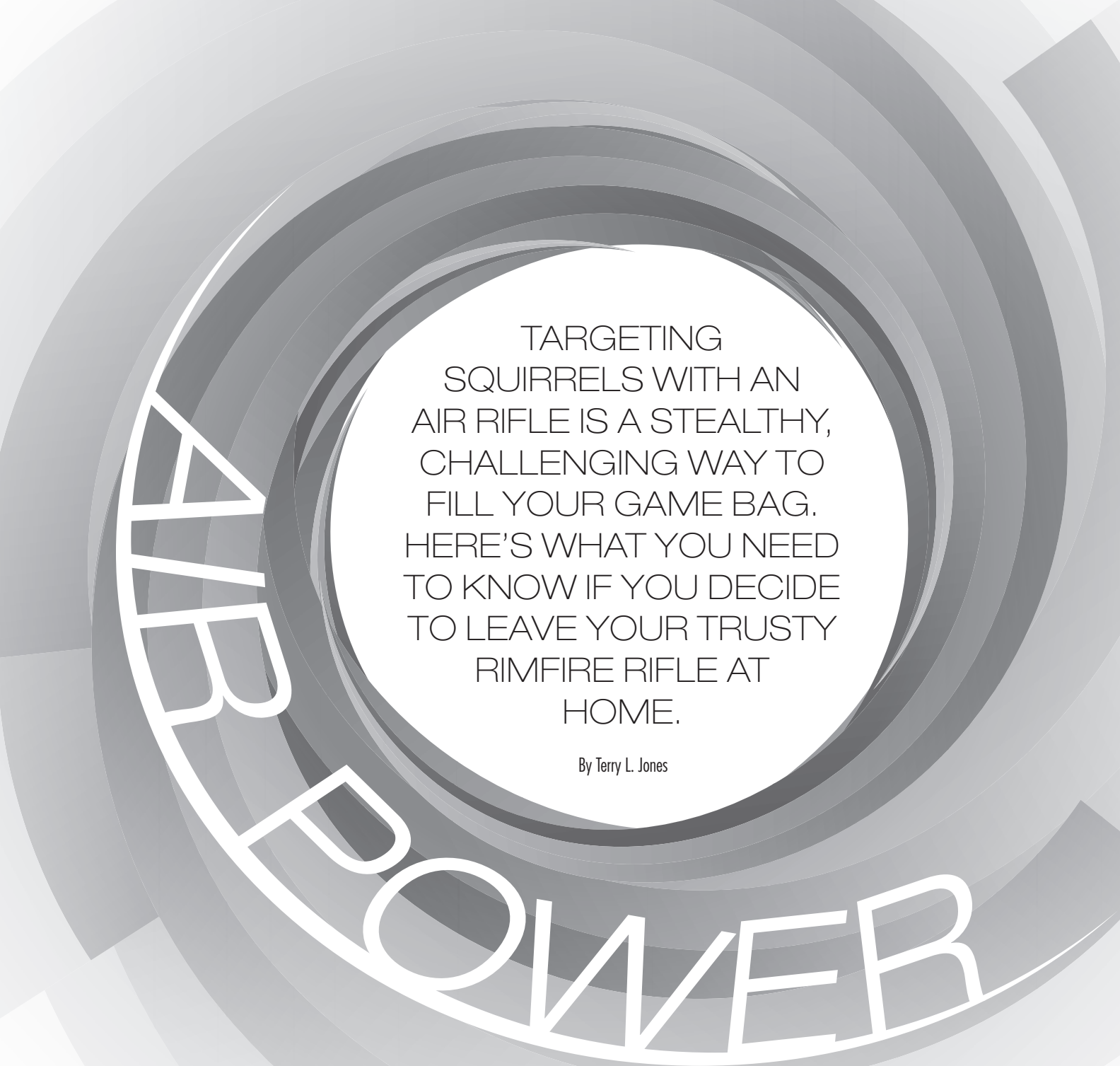
**Before**



**After**



Because an air rifle's softer report doesn't startle squirrels, the hunter is often allowed a second shot.



TARGETING  
SQUIRRELS WITH AN  
AIR RIFLE IS A STEALTHY,  
CHALLENGING WAY TO  
FILL YOUR GAME BAG.  
HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED  
TO KNOW IF YOU DECIDE  
TO LEAVE YOUR TRUSTY  
RIMFIRE RIFLE AT  
HOME.

By Terry L. Jones

I had spent a good 30 minutes creeping up on three particularly vigilant cat squirrels. It was late in the season, and even though I was covered head to toe in a leafy Ghillie suit, it was slow going against the hyper-alert critters.

Finally closing to within 30 yards, I propped my .22 against a sapling and took aim at a squirrel sitting on a limb next to the tree trunk. The crosshairs settled on his shoulder, I squeezed the trigger, and was rewarded with the unmistakable “whop” of a solid hit.

To my surprise the squirrel jumped straight up like a startled cat, bounded to the ground and scurried to a nearby tree. After about 10 feet, however, it stopped and plopped over dead.

It was my first successful stalk with a .22 air rifle, and before the morning was over I added two more squirrels to my game bag. Needless to say, I was hooked on a new, challenging way to hunt.

AIR RIFLE ADVANTAGES **UP NEXT** ➤

## AIR RIFLE ADVANTAGES

Over the last few decades, technology has steadily changed the sport of hunting. Recurve bows gave way to compounds and compounds led to wickedly accurate crossbows. The primitive weapons deer season is no longer even recognizable as such, considering one can now use centerfire rifles.

As bagging game has become easier, many sportsmen have opted to go old school to make it challenging again. There are those who hunt with nothing but long bows or traditional muzzleloaders, and now some are turning to air rifles for small game.

One obvious advantage an air rifle has over a rimfire is that it is much quieter — not entirely silent as some would believe — but quieter. A standard .22 rimfire shot is about 135 decibels and has an audible “crack” as the bullet breaks the sound barrier.

On average, an air rifle’s report is about 90 decibels and is more of a mechanical “boink,” like a crossbow. My experience has also shown that the air rifle report doesn’t seem to alarm squirrels even late in the season.



A PCP air rifle, like this Benjamin Marauder Hunter, requires an external air supply to fill its reservoir.



Courtesy Airgun Depot

Diana RWS 34, and I couldn’t be happier with their service.

When looking for an air rifle, Cory Bach of the Airgun Depot Service Team advises not to become focused on a particular brand name.

“Honestly, the particular air gun itself is more important than the manufacturer,” Bach said.

The most common air rifle calibers are .17 and .22, but size really does matter when squirrel hunting. Bach recommends a .22 caliber because the larger pellet requires less velocity to be lethal.

Ammunition is also much cheaper for an air rifle (especially during times like our not-so-distant ammo shortage). Air rifle pellets generally cost about half as much as .22 rimfire ammunition.

Hunting techniques are the same for an air rifle and .22 rimfire, but there is more involved in putting together a good hunting air rifle and learning how to use it. There are many decisions to make: brand name, type of power mechanism, caliber, high or low velocity, open sights or scope, type of ammunition and so on.

## RESEARCH YOUR OPTIONS

One is well advised to do a little research before plopping down their hard earned money. Airgun Depot ([www.airgundepot.com](http://www.airgundepot.com)) is a good place to start your search because it carries many different brands. It’s where I purchased my German-made

As for power systems, Bach believes a novice should stick with a simple break barrel pneumatic rifle, which compresses air behind a valve when you break the barrel down to insert a pellet. “[It’s] quite a good starting point for a hunting air gun,” he said.

CO<sub>2</sub>-powered air rifles are also available, but according to Bach, “CO<sub>2</sub> is finicky when it gets cold and does not produce enough power in general. PCP is best, but it requires some support for the air gun.”

PCP stands for “pre-charged pneumatic.” Air from a scuba tank or other outside source is pumped into a reservoir that is usually located in the rifle’s buttstock. Since excess air is stored, you can get up to 20 shots before having to recharge. The obvious drawback to a PCP rifle is that you need access to a scuba tank or some type of air pump.

ACCURACY TRUMPS VELOCITY **UP NEXT** ➤



# Tara Wildlife - Halpino

Warren County, Mississippi  
 2160 +/- Acres (\$3,500/acre)  
 \$7,560,000

Mississippi River Historic Hunting Property. HALPINO is now for sale. When you think of Mississippi River hunting you will always think of Tara Wildlife. Halpino is a 2160 acre parcel of Tara that has been strictly bowhunting for many years. Halpino Lake is included totally on this property along with several duck impoundments erected by Ducks Unlimited. The property consist of all hardwoods with a large number of wild pecan trees being scattered throughout the property. This truly is a hunting paradise that will be home to a lucky hunter one day soon.

- ➡ **Estimated Acres:** 2160+/- acres with a 300 acre lake.
- ➡ **Residence:** Single Family, 5,000 +/- sqft, 6BD/6.5BA, Built in 1995.
- ➡ **Legal Description:** +/- 2160 Acres in Warren County, MS between the MS River and the Levee.

## Property Highlights:

- ➡ Once in our lifetime opportunity to own a part of a Historic Hunting Property that is famous Worldwide.
- ➡ Mississippi River Frontage bottomland hardwood hunting paradise.
- ➡ Views of the Duck Pond from the porch are captivating and views of the Mississippi River are always something special.
- ➡ Investment in Recreational Hunting property has been unsurpassed over the past several years and with a property such as this, the values should continue to increase.
- ➡ Sportsman's Paradise right here for sure with Hunting and Fishing opportunities unmatched.
- ➡ Home to the best whitetail deer hunting on planet earth. With a liberal 4 month season, large bag limits and over the counter licenses, this is a place that makes deer hunting seem easy.
- ➡ Hardwood laden property with lots of wild pecan trees and wildlife habitat throughout.
- ➡ Close to Vicksburg with gambling, shopping and historical opportunities available.
- ➡ Halpino Lodge is sitting on the bank of a duck pond where you can sit and watch the wildlife for endless hours.
- ➡ Mississippi River Frontage.
- ➡ Easily accessed off the Levee Road with a gravel road going right up to the lodge. The interior road system has been developed over the years to access all the food plots and stands.

**NATIONAL LAND REALTY™**  
 nationaland.com



**RONNIE RICHARDSON**  
 Broker in Charge, Jackson, MS Office  
 Licensed in MS  
 Cell: **601-668-7231**  
 Office: **601-878-2484**  
 Fax: **601-878-5424**

## ACCURACY TRUMPS VELOCITY

One common mistake beginners make is buying the highest velocity air rifle possible. But Bach says, "Velocity is not as important as being able to make an accurate shot."

For squirrel hunting, the minimum velocity needed for a clean kill is about 600 feet per second. According to Bach, anything much faster than that will pass through the squirrel without expending its energy in the body.

Accuracy is by far the most important attribute of a hunting air rifle. As Bach puts it, "Accuracy is king. No doubt on this."

It is highly recommended that a scope be mounted on your air rifle, but be sure to get the correct one. Break barrel air rifles produce a lot of vibration, so Bach advises purchasing a scope that is air gun-rated because the vibrations can quickly damage a standard scope.

Some people advise using Loc Tite to secure the scope to the mount but Bach doesn't believe that is necessary. "Use the supplied hex key and torque the top rings with the short part of the tool until it is good and tight," he said.

"For the bottom where they meet the receiver, use the long part. This will give you approximately the correct torque on the screws.

"If it is a break barrel rifle and there is a scope stop pin in the ring and a hole for it in the receiver, then you will want to use it."

Experienced shooters know that to achieve optimum accuracy, you have to experiment with different brands of ammunition and bullet weights to find the one that shoots best in a particular rifle. This is particularly true for air rifles.

Bach recommends staying away from lead-free lightweight pellets that claim to produce "maximum velocity" because they



Only use lead pellets for hunting. The Predator Polymag expands on impact and is deadly on squirrels.

will drift in the wind and lose energy too quickly.

"The best performers are always lead pellets," he said. "Two of my current favorites are the H&N Baracuda Hunter Extreme and the Predator Polymag. They both are outstanding performers."

It's recommended that you buy a packet of assorted pellets and try various brands and weights until you find the one that shoots best in your rifle.

Practice until you can hit a squirrel's vitals (preferably the head) four out of five shots. Then, you're ready to hunt. ■



A native of Winn Parish, Terry L. Jones has enjoyed hunting and fishing North Louisiana's woods and water for 50 years. He lives in West Monroe with his wife, Carol.



The author achieved this three-shot group at 25 yards with his Diana RWS .22 and Predator Polymag pellets.

## ARTILLERY HOLD IS KEY FOR DEAD-ON ACCURACY

Achieving the greatest accuracy from an air rifle requires some changes in one's typical shooting habits. Instead of holding the rifle with a firm grip, you have to use the loosest grip possible and allow it to recoil freely.

When fired, the air rifle's spring-loaded piston produces a lot of vibration, and the slow moving pellet remains in the barrel much longer than a rimfire or centerfire bullet. By holding the rifle loosely, you allow it to vibrate in a natural way, and the pellet will consistently hit the same point.

To obtain the best accuracy possible, Bach recommends using what is known as the "artillery hold." In field artillery, the gun carriage simply holds the tube, and the tube is allowed to recoil freely. When using the artillery hold, the shooter is simply acting as the air rifle's carriage.

Bach explains, "It is counter to what we were all trained when kids, but if the gun is hard mounted instead of being allowed to recoil in both directions the accuracy will suffer. The artillery hold is a key to success when shooting an air gun."

### Grip-wise, less is more

Basically, the artillery hold is just a loose hold. Instead of gripping the forestock, simply lay it in your open palm at the point where the rifle is balanced. Grip the buttstock as lightly as possible and lay your thumb along the top of the stock instead of around it. The buttstock should rest against your cheek and shoulder as gently as possible.

Squeeze the trigger and follow through. Do not move until the pellet hits the target. Similar to archery, the follow through is important because it takes a relatively long time for the pellet to leave the barrel.

When shooting off a rest, some people advise placing



The loose artillery hold is the proper way to shoot an air rifle off hand.

the forestock on an open palm while others prefer to put it on the rest itself. Bach explains, "I prefer to use my hand, palm up, but as long as it is a smooth or slick surface the air gun's forearm can move.

"No matter what, you will want to keep

the trigger hand loose and keep the air gun off your shoulder so it can move. The movement is more important than how it is achieved." ■

— Terry L. Jones

## B & B ENTERPRISES OF GONZALES, INC

Trailers for Bass, Flat, Bay, V-Bottom, & Pontoon Boats

We also have utility trailers, flatbed trailers, enclosed trailers, atv trailers, and gooseneck trailers

B & B ENTERPRISES OF GONZALES, INC

Trailer Sales & Rentals  
Repairs, Parts, & Accessories

13485 Airline Hwy. | Gonzales, LA 70737

225-647-2777

bbenterprisesofgonzalesinc.com

 Ameratrail

Aluminum Boats Trailers In Stock

- From 15' to 40'
- Single, Double, or Triple Axles
- Heavy I-Beam Construction
- Galvanized Axles and Hubs
- Torsion Axle W/ Surge Brakes

# WARM UP TO WINT CRAPPIE

WHEN BAITFISH GO DEEP IN COLDER MONTHS, CRAPPIE FOLLOW THEM.

**TRY THESE TIPS TO LOAD UP ON WINTER SLABS.**

By David A. Brown

**W**inter crappie fishermen are deep thinkers; but don't be intimidated if your name doesn't include a PhD, MBA or some other evidence of academic ascension. Truth be told, all you really need to know is this: Where's the deep water?

On his Toledo Bend home waters, crappie guide Jerry Thompson looks for his best winter action in creek channels. On natural lakes without a river, Thompson points anglers to the deepest water they can find. But in reservoirs like Lake D'Arbonne and Toledo, your major creeks are the deal.

>



# P ER



**"T**he crappie go to those creek channels because they're following the shad," Thompson said. "The baitfish go to the deepest water available to them and the crappie follow them. So, if you'll concentrate on the creek channels — not the river channel — that's where the majority of fish are going to be."

As Thompson noted, any hard structures in the channel are definitely worth investigating, but day in and day out, it's all about the food. Same as bass, crappie want to keep the baitfish buffet in front of their noses.

"It's mostly to do with shad, but crappie like cover, so any logs or stumps are good," Thompson said. "Sometimes you can catch them on just an old sand bar. When they're on something open like that, I think it has to do with the shad."

On Toledo, Thompson spends a lot of his winter crappie time at the Chicken Coop — a mile stretch of river running against an east-facing mid-lake bank. The spot holds some of the lake's coolest water, but crappie gather there in massive numbers — again, because of the voluminous shad schools. Such scenes

replicate in varying degrees elsewhere on Toledo and in other lakes; just look for that deep water and big balls of shad hugging a bluff bank.

## LIKELY NEIGHBORHOODS

Bassmaster Elite Series pro Jason Christie's a big fan of winter crappie for a couple of reasons. For one thing, he likes to stay sharp during the off-season so he's not rusty for each new year; but after several months of the bass tournament grind, he finds crappie offer a nice transitional target.

In addition to channel edges, Christie likes fishing vertically around standing timber and brush piles. In any of these scenarios, the straight up-and-down look best fits the winter season.

"I'm fishing for suspended fish and if you were casting a bait, it would be really difficult to keep it in the strike zone," Christie said. "You might make some casts and catch the aggressive ones, but I want to put that bait right in front of them."

"A lot of times, I may drop in the middle of 30 to 40 fish and still, it may take 5 to 10 seconds to get one to bite. I think they're moody this time of year; there are days when they'll bite it as soon as they get down there, and then there are days when you have to hang that bait right there in front of them."

One thing Christie stresses is proper bait positioning. With eyes positioned at the top of their head, crappie were built for looking upward — and feeding likewise.

"I'll drop my bait a foot or two above their head and let them come get it. It seems if I even get an inch below their bellies, it's hard to get a bite. They want to swim up to get that bait."

continues on page 78



Vertical banks like "The Chicken Coop" on Toledo Bend host large gatherings of winter crappie.

# BOAT SHOW SEASON

Come see us at the  
**20TH ANNUAL SOUTHERN LA BOAT, SPORT & RV SHOW**  
 January 5, 6, and 7, 2018 at the Houma Terrebonne Civic Center



2018 265XTS



COME SEE THE  
**ALL NEW 265XTS**



1756 VV Center Console Alweld  
 with F70LA Yamaha



1756 VV Marsh Series Pro Bass Console  
 with F70LA Yamaha



# YAMAHA

2.5HP to 350HP Outboard Engines



FACTORY  
 TRAINED  
 TECHNICIANS TO  
 SERVE YOU!



# YAMAHA



1128 BARROW ST. • HOUMA, LA  
 MON. - FRI. 7:30am - 5pm  
 (985) 872-4181 • (985) 868-7534

[www.dagates.com](http://www.dagates.com)

## CHILLY MEALS

Thompson's fellow Toledo Bend guide Dennis Tietje said that water temperature dictates winter crappie movement. If a mild season keeps the water in the upper 40s and higher, the fish may remain shallower on brush, where floating a light jig tipped with a Berkley Crappie Nibble gets plenty of attention.

For the deeper stuff, Christie likes a small tube with a ¼-ounce jighead on spinning tackle and 6- or 8-pound fluorocarbon. His advice: Keep it simple with minimal colors.

"I carry only one color (black with chartreuse skirt) because I'm looking for schools of fish that have never seen a crappie jig, so it's not about (multiple colors); it's about putting a bait in front of them," he said. "I've had a lot of people in my boat and they see me pull out my one box with one color tube and they have their 15 colors and before long, they're borrowing the colors I have.

"If I see fish on my electronics, I drop and tight line the bait, so I want some-

thing pretty heavy so I can feel that bite. It's actually not a bite; the line will just go slack. Also, I want a bigger hook because a lot of the fish you'll catch this time of year are nice ones and you pull them out of trees or brush, you don't want that hook to flex too much."

Thompson likes feeding the fish live minnows and he uses a simple rig with a size 0 or 00 pinch-on weight about a foot above a No. 2 Aberdeen hook. He may go to a No. 1 hook for hefty minnows or drop to a No. 4 if he can only get small baits.

"You want to give that minnow room to swim around down there," Thompson said. "I use the weight because I want to get the bait down to deep fish and I don't

want to wait all day."

Occasionally, Thompson will mix it up by dropping a Berkley Powerbait Smelt on a 1/16-ounce jighead with a split shot above for extra drop speed.

"They don't necessarily get on the bottom, but sometimes they do," Thompson said. "The best time to catch a crappie on the bottom is in the winter."

continues on page 80



Some days, the fish want a particular jig profile, so keep several options handy.

**PRO-DRIVE**  
SHALLOW WATER OUTBOARDS

ProDriveOutboards.com 337-229-0034

f /prodriveoutboards    i /prodriveoutboards    y /prodrivevids

# BOAT SHOW SPECIALS

Come see us at  
**SOUTHERN LA**  
**BOAT, SPORT & RV SHOW**  
 January 5, 6, & 7, 2018  
 Houma Terrebonne Civic Center



THE EVINRUDE E-TEC  
**PERFECT 10**  
NOV. 1, 2017 APR. 30, 2018  
 SALES EVENT

**10-YEAR  
 COVERAGE**  
 UP TO A \$7,500 RETAIL  
 VALUE PER ENGINE  
 OFFER VALID IN USA ONLY

**EVINRUDE**  
 150 HP

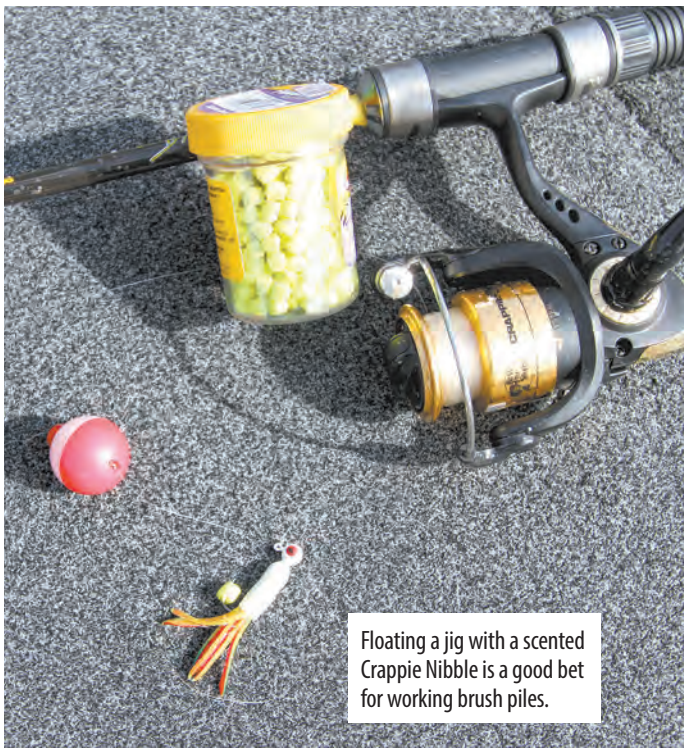


5196 Hwy. 311 • Houma, LA  
**985-876-7821**  
 Mon-Fri 8am-5:30pm • Sat 8am-Noon

## WINTER CRAPPIE

**B**ites can be super subtle, so Thompson advises focused rod attention and a disciplined response. You won't often feel a spirited tug like bluegill gobbling earthworms, so dial in your sensitivity to winter crappie mode.

"Let him eat it and feel for the weight," Thompson said. "Don't feel for the nibbles — just wait for the weight. Those crappie are there to feed up for their spawn and when they're like that, they're eating so they'll get the hook."



Floating a jig with a scented Crappie Nibble is a good bet for working brush piles.

Tietje agrees that the vertical presentations make up the majority of winter work; but if you're having trouble finding crappie, he suggests slow trolling a mix of jig styles (include bladed offerings like Roadrunners) across likely areas. As he explains, you're still using a nearly vertical presentation, but you're creeping along a contour line or an attractive stretch of standing timber.

However you catch your crappies, eat 'em fresh when you can and freeze unused filets for future meals. Tip: Freezing filets in water yields soggy, mushy meat when thawed. Rather, vacuum seal what's freezer bound and you can look forward to many fine meals throughout the winter months.

## LOOKING AND LOCATING

Dennis Tietje, Toledo Bend guide, said that slow trolling baits — actually more of a glacially-paced tight-lining deal — is a simple way to cover water and locate crappie concentrations. However, scanning promising areas proves more time-efficient.

"This time of year, they're bunched up, so going over them won't affect them," said Tietje's fellow Toledo Bend guide Jerry Thompson. "You'll find them in wads. You'll know when you see them; they look like Cheese Puffs."

continues on page 82

# Honda ATV's are available at these LOCAL RETAILERS:

### Bocos Engine Service

208 E. Magnolia St.  
Ville Platte, LA 70586  
337-363-1780

### Honda of Lafayette

1708 N. University Ave.  
Lafayette, LA 70507  
337-234-6632

### Friendly Honda

10939 Airline Hwy.  
Baton Rouge, LA 70816  
225-292-6242

### Loewer Powersports

5909 Coliseum Blvd  
Alexandria, LA 71303  
318-487-9495

### Friendly Powersports

888 Old Spanish Traile  
Slidell, LA 70458  
985-643-4556

### McKinney Honda

715 N. Service Rd. E  
Ruston, LA 71270  
318-255-6777

### G & C Honda

2415 E. 70th St.  
Shreveport, LA 71105  
318-797-1222

### Motion Cyclesports of DeRidder

19189 Lake Charles Hwy.  
DeRidder, LA 70634  
337-463-8110

### G & C Honda of Hammond

15449 W. Club Deluxe Rd.  
Hammond, LA 70403  
985-345-1577

### Southside Cycle Shop, Inc.

6914 Johnston St.  
Lafayette, LA 70503  
337-984-0401

### Honda of Covington Powersports

152 Holiday Square Blvd.  
Covington, LA 70433  
985-892-9730

### Sportsman's Cycle & Marine

708 Brashear Ave.  
Morgan City, LA 70380  
985-385-4080



# 2017 FOURTRAX® RANCHER® | Louisiana's go-to ATV.



Available Today at Your Local Louisiana Honda Dealer!



BEST ON EARTH™

[powersports.honda.com](http://powersports.honda.com) UTILITY ATVs ARE RECOMMENDED ONLY FOR RIDERS 16 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER. ATVs CAN BE HAZARDOUS TO OPERATE. FOR YOUR SAFETY, BE RESPONSIBLE. READ THE OWNER'S MANUAL. ALWAYS WEAR A HELMET, EYE PROTECTION AND PROTECTIVE CLOTHING. BE CAREFUL ON DIFFICULT TERRAIN. ALL ATV RIDERS SHOULD TAKE A TRAINING COURSE (FREE FOR NEW BUYERS. ASK YOUR DEALER OR CALL ASI AT 800-887-2887). NEVER RIDE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF DRUGS OR ALCOHOL, ON PAVED SURFACES, ON PUBLIC ROADS, WITH PASSENGERS, OR AT EXCESSIVE SPEEDS. NO STUNT RIDING. RESPECT THE ENVIRONMENT WHEN RIDING. FourTrax®, Rancher® and Best On Earth® are registered trademarks of Honda Motor Co., Ltd. ©2016 American Honda Motor Co., Inc. (06/16)

# 2017 PIONEER® 1000 | Adventure Without Compromise.



Pioneer 1000 LE model shown



Come see the Pioneer at Your Local Louisiana Honda Dealer!



[powersports.honda.com](http://powersports.honda.com) PIONEER 1000 IS ONLY FOR DRIVERS 16 YEARS AND OLDER. MULTI-PURPOSE UTILITY VEHICLES (SIDE-BY-SIDES) CAN BE HAZARDOUS TO OPERATE. FOR YOUR SAFETY, DRIVE RESPONSIBLY. ALWAYS WEAR A HELMET, EYE PROTECTION AND APPROPRIATE CLOTHING. ALWAYS WEAR YOUR SEAT BELT, AND KEEP THE SIDE NETS AND DOORS CLOSED. AVOID EXCESSIVE SPEEDS AND BE CAREFUL ON DIFFICULT TERRAIN. ALL MUV DRIVERS SHOULD WATCH THE SAFETY VIDEO "MULTIPURPOSE UTILITY VEHICLES: A GUIDE TO SAFE OPERATION" AND READ THE OWNER'S MANUAL BEFORE OPERATING THE VEHICLE. NEVER DRIVE AFTER CONSUMING DRUGS OR ALCOHOL, OR ON PUBLIC ROADS. DRIVER AND PASSENGERS MUST BE TALL ENOUGH FOR SEAT BELT TO FIT PROPERLY AND TO BRACE THEMSELVES WITH BOTH FEET FIRMLY ON THE FLOOR. PASSENGER MUST BE ABLE TO GRASP THE HAND HOLD WITH THE SEAT BELT ON AND BOTH FEET ON THE FLOOR. RESPECT THE ENVIRONMENT WHEN DRIVING. Pioneer® is a registered trademark of Honda Motor Co., Ltd. ©2017 American Honda Motor Co., Inc. (1/17)

**HOT TIP:**

Freezing filets in water yields soggy, mushy meat when thawed. Rather, vacuum seal what's freezer bound and you can look forward to many fine meals throughout the winter.

Also advantageous is the ability to watch the forward-looking sonar and monitor a bait's movement through the water column.

"In the old days, you had to cast your crappie jig and get that perfect count down before you started reeling to bring your bait through the fish," Christie said. "I want that bait about two feet above the fish and the Panoptix takes the guesswork out of it." ■

**“W**hen you find them, there's not much in the way of

adverse conditions that will affect them, except for big winds or heavy rains. They're so deep, not much affects them.”

Bassmaster Elite pro and winter crappie fan Jason Christie depends heavily on his electronics because winter fish tend to move around a lot as they follow wandering bait schools. Using his Garmin Panoptix, which shoots a sonar beam off the trolling motor transducer to show him a bottom-to-surface picture of the water column, Christie expects to have to reacquire schools on every outing.

“These fish don't just move laterally, the ones on timber also move vertically,” he said. “Some days they're going to put their belly on the bottom and some days they're going to get up there and get some of that sunlight and feed aggressively.”

Complicating the search is the often particular preferences that pull crappie to less obvious structure. For example, Christie said he's seen a substantial tree skeleton 20 yards from a nondescript pole — and the latter is haired over with crappie.

“That pole would be hard to find with regular DownVu and SideVu; but with Panoptix, I'll look around while I'm fishing and a lot of times, I'll find a little piece of structure.

“Most days, I don't even have to pick up the trolling motor; I'll just fish around a pocket and I'll find so many little sticks that I may catch five to 10 off of. Then, I'll move up 50 yards and find another piece of structure.”

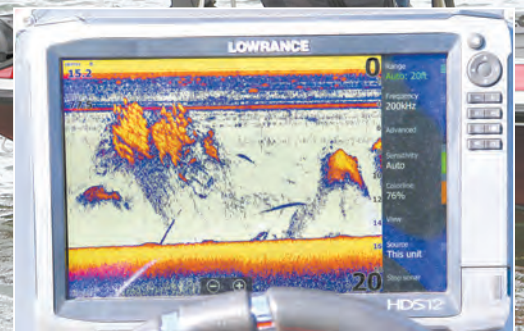
As Christie observes, leveraging modern forward-looking sonar improves time management in two ways: First, you'll locate your targets more quickly. Also, knowing the spot's potential helps you manage expectations.

“The cool thing is, you know how many fish are on the spot,” he said. “You'll find a wad of 15 to 20 fish and after 15 minutes it gets tougher to catch any. You may look at that spot and see that there's only one or two left. You know what's there when you arrive and what's there when you leave.”



A full-time freelance writer specializing in sport fishing, **David A. Brown** splits his time between journalism and marketing communications ([www.tightwords.com](http://www.tightwords.com)).

Slowly creeping along a channel edge is one of your best bets for locating cold-season crappie. INSET: Find the food and you'll find the crappie — it's that simple.



# Avenger

AV-26



For more information, go to [AvengerBayBoats.com](http://AvengerBayBoats.com)  
or call 843-538-6604  
or like us on Facebook at Avenger Bay Boats  
for the latest available information.



222 Sportfish



For more information, go to [PioneerBoats.com](http://PioneerBoats.com)  
or call 843-538-6604  
or like us on Facebook at Pioneer Boats  
for the latest available information.

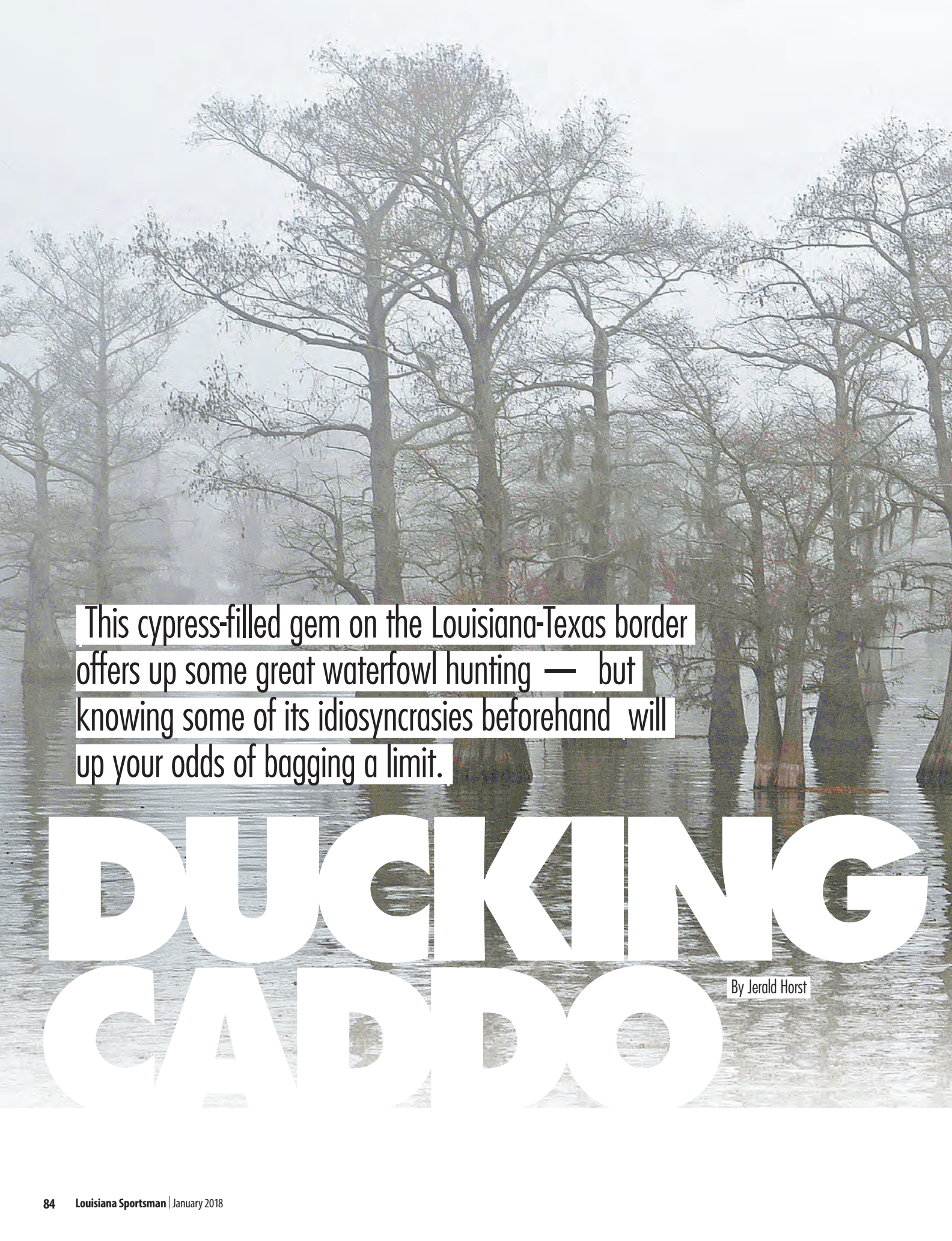
From The  
Back Water  
To The  
Blue Water



230CC



For more information, go to [BullsBayBoats.com](http://BullsBayBoats.com)  
or call 843-538-6604  
or like us on Facebook at Bulls Bay Boats  
for the latest available information.



This cypress-filled gem on the Louisiana-Texas border offers up some great waterfowl hunting — but knowing some of its idiosyncrasies beforehand will up your odds of bagging a limit.

# DUCKING CADDO

By Jerald Horst



## **D**AWN WAS HAUNTINGLY BEAUTIFUL.

No flamboyant sunrise color; rather a suffusion of light through the fog-veiled cypress trees. Todd Hopkins' and Brandon Garner's duck calls echoed off the fog as effectively as off a steel wall.

We were in Big Green Brake, an island of cypress trees sitting in the middle of the lizard-shaped lake on the Louisiana-Texas border northwest of Shreveport.

The big lake is famous for its large-mouth bass fishing — “one of the best lakes in the region,” said Hopkins. “Yup,”

chimed in Garner, “there are lots of 10-pounders here.”

But it wasn't bass we were here for; it was ducks. And I was with experts.

Hopkins, Clerk of the Caddo Parish Commission, the governing body of Caddo Parish, is at age 53, a 35-year duck hunter. He lives on the lakeshore and hunts with friends who have permanent blinds (more on that later), and has a boat-blind himself. He hunts something every weekend of hunting season.

Garner, 33, is also an addicted hunter. “I love it,” he gushed, while admitting that he hunted ducks 40 of last season's 60 days. The firefighter paramedic hunts squirrels from their opening in

early October until gun season for deer. He hunts deer until duck season, then nothing but ducks.

He arranged for today's hunt in a friend's blind in the lake.

The final member of the trio is 42-year-old Kelly Wells, the executive director for the Shreveport-Bossier Sports Commission. Part of his job is to promote awareness of hunting and fishing opportunities in Caddo and Bossier parishes. He's the guy to call (888-458-4748) to arrange for a fishing guide for the area's lakes and rivers.

Wells hunts deer, squirrels, doves, and ducks, with much of his duck hunting taking place on the Red River.



## PERMANENT BLINDS ON A PUBLIC LAKE

The blind we were in was a Cadillac — solid two-by-four framing plated with roofing tin and heavily brushed with willow branches. The backside of the blind had a spacious “boat hide” constructed of brushed hog wire fencing stretched over a two-by-four frame.

The permanent blind on a public lake brought up an interesting point. “We have unique customs here,” explained Hopkins. “When someone gets in someone else’s blind, that’s a potential problem — especially if there are decoys out in front.”



Courtesy Brandon Garner

Garner nodded vigorously in agreement. The lake has many such private blinds. No legal ownership rights exist, but in the Caddo Lake hunting world, de facto ownership of the blinds is recognized.

“Someone getting into someone else’s blind doesn’t happen often in this lake,” said Hopkins.

But that doesn’t mean that newcomers can’t hunt the lake, assured Wells.

“Using a pop-up blind on a boat provides a lot of opportunity. You can set up in more areas and you can move during the hunt if the ducks aren’t using your area.”

“People need to scout before hunting here. It’s key,” nodded Garner in affirmation. “Google Earth is a good place to



The first duck of the morning, a fat drake ringneck, brought smiles from all three men, left to right: Todd Hopkins, Brandon Garner and Kelly Wells. **INSET:** Behind cold fronts, numbers of mallards may be killed, especially by hunters who hold out until late morning.

start; then ride and look.”

“You need to get in a boat,” agreed Hopkins. “Jeem’s Bayou, also known as James Bayou, has the most opportunities for free-lancers. There are not a lot of permanent blinds there.

“I wouldn’t recommend anyone not from here to build a permanent blind to start.”

Options for “free-lancers,” as Hopkins called them, are hunting with the use of pop-up boat blinds, floating blinds or simply wading into the trees fringing the

edge of the lake.

Near the end of the hunt, Garner demonstrated one of the advantages to hunting from a roomy permanent blind. He ducked under the roofed-over section of the blind and lit a propane burner under a frying pan.

In a jiffy, the hunters were happily stuffing their faces with breakfast tacos that he prepared. ■

# BLACKJACK... INSPIRED PERFORMANCE!

The new *BlackJack 256!*



**BlackJack**  
boats

For more information  
or to find a dealer near you, visit  
[www.blackjackboats.com](http://www.blackjackboats.com)





# Cottonmouth BOATS

16553 AIRLINE HWY, PRAIRIEVILLE, LA 70769 • (225) 478-8709



[WWW.COTTONMOUTHBOATS.COM](http://WWW.COTTONMOUTHBOATS.COM)

 LIKE US ON FACEBOOK

 FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM

Caddo Lake has large numbers of permanent “private” blinds. The posts driven in a circle in front of the blind were part of a fence used to attempt to keep floating salvinia from obscuring the hunters’ decoys.



# CADDO AS A DUCK LAKE

Todd Hopkins, who lives on the lake, described it as an average duck hunting lake, one that can produce limit kills as well as one that can produce blanks.

Brandon Garner agreed. “When they are here, they are here. When they are gone, they are gone. Best hunting is the day after a front.

“Those will be bluebird days. Some hunters complain about them, but on this lake they are good.”

“The lake doesn’t hold a lot of ducks on a permanent basis,” interjected Hopkins. “After a front, they stay a week at the most, and then they are gone. Except wood ducks. A lot of wood ducks are resident birds.”

“Another thing about this lake is that people need to stick it out,” added Garner. “Don’t leave early. When I was younger, we would leave by 8:45 a.m. An older guy hunting near us would always kill a limit. We never could figure out why.

“One day, he came to our blind. ‘Fellas,’ he said, ‘I’ve got one piece of advice for you. You’re leaving too early.’ We stayed and we started killing more ducks — mallards.”

He demonstrated his patient technique by rummaging in his hunting bag and whipping out a Honey Bun.

“Y’all watch,” he grinned broadly. “They’ll come now.”

“They smell ‘em. I’ve got all kinds of healthy food in my pack, but I’m sacrificing myself for you,” he said while munching a big bite.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

The duo laid out the typical annual duck hunting cycle in Caddo Lake. The first split of the season opens with wood ducks, teal, spoonbills (shovelers) and some blackjacks (ring-necks).

By the second or third week of the split, gadwalls arrive in significant numbers, providing good kills. Toward

the end of the season, mallards begin to show up, especially associated with cold fronts.

Overall, ducks occur in fairly stable numbers during the first split, with bumps on cold fronts.

During the second split, hunting falls off noticeably. Hunters should concentrate their efforts on cold fronts, which can provide three or four days of good hunting. Occasionally, strong south winds in advance of a cold front will bring birds into the lake.


In the second split more pintails will be seen, and in the last three weeks of the season some canvasbacks will drop in. Strong northwest winds will also at times trigger flights of wigeons. Some scaup are also taken in the second split, while teal are almost absent from kills. ■

— Jerald Horst

# BOAT STUF

DISCOUNT MARINE SUPPLIES

COME SEE US  
FOR YOUR YAMAHA  
RE-POWERING NEEDS



# YAMAHA



- Yamaha Sales and Service
- New and Used Boat Sales
- Trailer Sales and Repairs
- Mobile Service Available



Let Us Sell Your Boat For You!

**WESTBANK**  
2499 Peters Rd  
Harvey, LA  
(504) 340-4991

**NORTHSHORE**  
662 Old Spanish Trail  
Slidell, LA  
(985) 649-9044

sales@boatstuf.com  Like us on

[www.boatstuf.com](http://www.boatstuf.com)



# CADDO LAKE'S CHALLENGES

Every duck hunting spot has its idiosyncrasies and challenges, and Caddo Lake is no different than the others. Brandon Garner and Todd Hopkins mused over a few of them.

- In late season, bass and crappie fishermen often appear to fish near blinds. Both men agree that they have every right to be there on a public lake and hunters can do little but look at them. Most of the time, they will move on if they see hunters in a blind.
- The greatest scourge that Caddo Lake hunters face is giant salvinia, the floating water plant that will swallow whole decoy spreads, leaving no open water in front of a blind and even making it difficult for hunters to get in their blinds. Salvinia mats shift with the wind and may be there one day and elsewhere the next. The weed is a major problem for hunters in permanent blinds. Some of the blinds in the lake's backwater areas have been unusable for years.
- Like many Louisiana reservoirs, Caddo Lake was flooded while its trees were still standing. Over the years they have rotted off near average water level, leaving the lake with thousands of stumps, often just below the surface. Hunters should use marked boat lanes (boat roads) to travel near the areas they wish to hunt, and then idle in.
- Caddo Lake straddles the border between Louisiana and Texas. Much of its backwaters and shallow areas are on the Texas side of the unmarked line that crosses the lake. The two states do not have a reciprocal agreement to honor each other's resident hunting licenses, and it is easy to stray across the line. The area hunted by Garner, Hopkins, and Wells is a gunshot from the invisible, but very real line. ■

— Jerald Horst



When traveling with their boat on plane, hunters must use narrow, but marked, boat roads because of the risk from submerged tree stumps. The marker pilings are placed on the left side of each road as a boat travels upstream. **BOTTOM:** Vast mats of salvinia will engulf a section of the lake overnight — and may disappear just as quickly.



# THE SKINNY ON LAKE CADDO

Public access to Caddo Lake is easy, with multiple boat ramps on the Louisiana part of the lake. The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries' Caddo Lake Waterbody Management Plan lists six boat launches.

The Drift-In Landing and the Mooringsport Ramp are located in the lower, deeper part of the lake, near the dam. Shady Acres, Pelican Lodge and the Earl G. Williamson Park Ramp are in the central part of the lake, and Shady Rest is in Jeem's Bayou in the north.

The Mooringsport and Earl G. Williamson ramps are public. The others are pay ramps.

Todd Hopkins, who lives on the lake, noted that Shady Acres has cabins for rent, and Shady Rest rents out jon boats without motors. The Earl G. Williamson ramp has bathrooms and campsites with RV hook-ups. Drift-In Landing has RV

hook-ups, as well as a bait shop and deli.

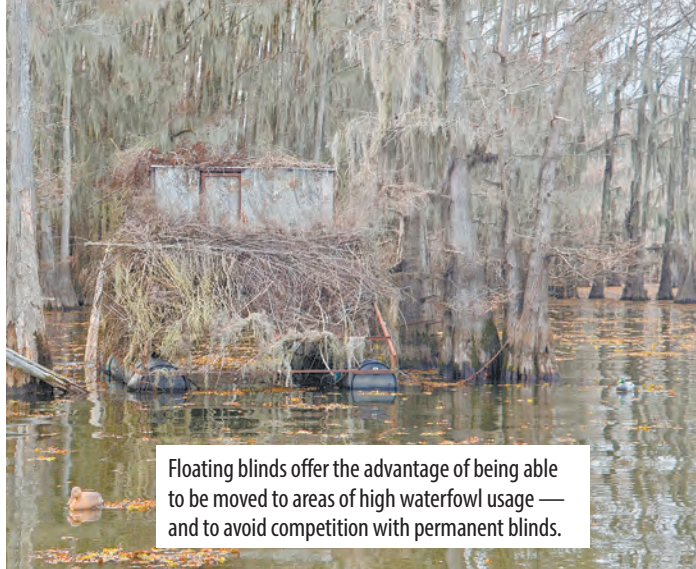
The 26,700-acre lake is also an excellent fishing lake, offering hunters "cast and blast" opportunities. Hopkins and Brandon Garner agree that the lake offers excellent trophy largemouth bass fishing.

But there is more. "It's a good crappie lake, especially because it's so shallow," offered up Hopkins. "Outside of a couple of 12-foot holes and the Mooringsport Bridge at 20 feet, it's only 5 or 6 feet deep in its channels.

"There's a lot of catfish here, too — blues, channels, and ops (flatheads). Trotlines and limb lines are what most people use."

"Lots of white bass are here for the people who want them, too," added Kelly Wells.

Besides the good fish populations, what



Floating blinds offer the advantage of being able to be moved to areas of high waterfowl usage — and to avoid competition with permanent blinds.

makes the lake so attractive to fishermen is that the many stumps limit water sport activity such as water skiing and wakeboarding to the area below Turtle Island and to boat roads. ■

— Jerald Horst



Jerald Horst is a retired Louisiana State University professor of fisheries. He is an active writer, book author and outdoorsman. Jerald may be reached at [jerald@rockinghorst.com](mailto:jerald@rockinghorst.com).

PELEGRINMARINE.COM






PELEGRINMARINE.COM

## PELEGRIN MARINE INC.

10215 E MAIN ST | HOUMA, LA - (985) 872 4841

PELEGRINMARINE.COM






PELEGRINMARINE.COM



By Chris Ginn

# ALWAYS BET ON BLACK

Even in tough wintertime conditions, Black River Lake in central Louisiana can deliver bass — if you crack the code.

Chad Wiley works to land one of the bass that crushed his jig at the edge of the reed beds in Black River Lake.



I've got to admit I wasn't expecting much.

Chad Wiley, a Bassmaster tournament pro from Pineville, asked me to meet him at Joe's Horseshoe Lake Marina in Monterey.

Except for the cold front that had blown through the night before, I wouldn't have been so pessimistic.

The wind was predicted to gust up to 25 miles an hour, and the sun that was forecasted didn't want to peek out from behind the heavy, low-hanging clouds.

When I walked down the ramp to jump into Wiley's boat, I was greeted by water that looked like two Yoo-hoo trucks had just collided on the bridge across Cocodrie Bayou.

To make matters worse, I was dressed more for the forecast high of 58 — rather than the actual temperature of 45.

But I didn't drive 2 ½ hours for nothing, so I bucked up, drew my hood down and rode along with Wiley to wherever the heck he was going.

"Last weekend was my first time to ever fish here," he announced, as he came off plane near a bridge where a guy in a small aluminum boat was trying to jerk up a few white perch.

If the cold front had diminished my expectations, Wiley's revelation just crushed them to smithereens: I had driven halfway across Louisiana to fish a lake with a guy that had only fished it one other time in his entire life.

He attempted to explain as we idled under the bridge.

"I spent most of the day fishing that lake we just came from — Horseshoe — and wasn't doing anything but hauling water," he said. "I figured I had to do something, so I pulled up and ran over to Black River Lake. By the time it was over, I had 15 pounds swimming in my livewell."

But we were only a week removed from his first foray into Black River Lake, so maybe things wouldn't be as bad as I had feared.

Maybe... just maybe... those fish would still be where he had found them the Saturday before.

"Only problem today is the water has fallen out a foot, and it's 5 degrees colder than it was last week," Wiley announced.

Well, so much for that thought.



## GO TO THE GREEN

Wiley started slinging a chartreuse squarebill crankbait before I could even get out of my seat and immediately had a small bass stretching his line. It was a start, but unfortunately it didn't last.

"They didn't eat it last week either," Wiley said. "I was hoping that with the water falling out a foot it would have pulled some of them out from the thick stuff."

"They were up in these green reeds during the tournament," Wiley continued, after he got to the end of another clump. "Bass like vegetation this time of year... got to go to the green. The vegetation is going to hold more algae. The algae attracts plankton. The plankton attract shad. The shad attract bass. Sometimes you've got to go in and get them, though."

After giving up on the crankbait, Wiley picked up a jig. He ran to another patch of reeds on the other side of the lake and started pitching it a foot back into the vegetation.

"That's where they were last week," he said. "It was already starting to fall out a little bit, but they were still in that last zone before they pull out entirely. We had about an hour of sun and that just kept them in there later in the day."

Wiley started swimming his jig away from the grass as he wrapped up the next cast — and it was engulfed by a bass about halfway back to the boat.

"If I would have been paying attention, I would have lost this bass," Wiley said. "He dropped it then came back for it. I'd have yanked on it the first time just out of reaction. I think today we're going to have to feel for them a little bit and let them eat it."

After a second bass ate his jig about a foot in front of the grass, Wiley began to put a pattern together.

Rather than being up in the grass, bass

were suspended a foot down in front of the reeds. With the heavy baits we were fishing, those bass had no time to decide if they wanted to bite or not. It was all reaction.

## CRACKING THE CODE

Pattern in hand, Wiley took off trying to make a milk run of reeds he had marked on his GPS the weekend before. But the pattern didn't hold up at the next two patches he visited.

"Something's missing," he noted. "I thought I had them figured out. We're doing the same thing we did when they started eating this jig. Guess we'll just keep running these reeds until we hit another little group of fish."

But the next stop completely clued him in on what was going on. Trying to put the puzzle together, Wiley realized that the first two patches of reeds where he got bit had a dock close by. This patch had the exact same setup.

"That's it," he announced. "I bet we can run reeds that have docks all over this lake and catch fish."

While proving his point over and over again, Wiley asked me if I noticed anything different about the reeds we were targeting. I had to admit that I had not.

"Every patch with a fish on it has been green," he said. "Look at that patch over

there. See how they're turning yellow. We haven't caught a fish off a yellow patch of reeds yet. The ones that are productive are still bright green and full of life."

As we bounced around among patches of reeds, Wiley continued pitching a combination of a heavy slip-jig and a heavy Texas rig with a electric blue plastic crawfish.

## GO HEAVY FOR REACTION BITES

With the way the fish were acting, he felt like a heavy presentation put the odds more in his favor than a lighter jig or weight would.

"We've been told all our lives to fish the lightest weight the conditions will allow," he said, "but as you can tell there's something about these heavy baits that just works. There's nothing finesse about it."



Although any reeds can hold fish, Wiley discovered that the greener reeds consistently held more bass.

"You don't have to tease them into biting. Heavy baits are a no-holds-barred way of fishing where you put your bait in there with them, knock them on the head and make them react."

He went on to say that heavy baits seem to work particularly well during difficult conditions like we had that day. Instead of hoping a hungry bass finds his slow moving bait, Wiley would rather make more pitches and cover more water.

"The more pitches the more chances I have of getting bit," he added. "Take all these fish we caught today. We might have caught them on a light weight, but we'd still be back there working the second or third patch of reeds instead of working our 12th or 13th patch."

As we were reeling in our lasts casts, Wiley explained that the Horseshoe/Black River Lake complex reminded him a lot of Saline/Larto — the one notable exception being the deeper water of Black River Lake.

## WINTERTIME BASS HOT SPOTS

Both complexes are made up of two larger bodies of water connected by a series of bayous and cuts. And they are both considered exceptional spots for wintertime bass fishing.

"They both get fed by the river," Wiley explained, "but



Since the water was falling, Wiley discovered the best reed patches had wooden docks close by.

Horseshoe and Black River Lake kind of get fed from the back. Both are full of shad... I've seen piles of shad here just like at Saline/Larto. They also both have a lot of shallow targets with conditions that generally keep bass shallow all year long."

Although we stuck primarily with the jig and Texas-rig, Wiley explained how he would have approached Horseshoe/Black River if the conditions had been a little different.

First of all, if the water wasn't as high, he believed a football jig or a Strike King 5XD crankbait would have worked well on the docks.

"If this water wasn't up it wouldn't be in those reeds," he said. "They wouldn't have many other options except for the docks and maybe a few lay-downs. And believe it or not, I would try a jigging spoon under some of these floating docks over deep water. Sounds crazy to fish a jigging spoon in Louisiana, but it works."

Wiley added that a spinnerbait would have worked well fished parallel to the outside edge of the reeds, especially considering

continues on page 96

### We Do More Than Just Repair and Sell Props

- Authorized Mercury Parts and Service Dealer
- Service on all brands of outboard engines
- Sales and installation of Marine and Boat accessories
- Boat and trailer parts and repair
- Dealer for Xtreme boats Powered by Mercury Outboards



The Prop Shop Inc  
337-235-5761

1501 General Mouton • Lafayette, LA 70501  
337-235-5761 • www.thepropshopinla.com

## END OF MODEL YEAR BLOWOUT!



CALL FOR SPECIAL PRICING!



SUZUKI MARINE YAMAHA EVINRUDE

337-893-0642

1915 S. STATE ST. • ABBEVILLE  
MONDAY-FRIDAY 8-5  
& SATURDAY 8-NOON

## MIKE GERALD'S #15 TRAILER DEPOT

OVER 25 ACRES OF TRAILERS IN STOCK!



\$899

Heavy Duty Truck Accessories

Entry - 5x10-15 Utility Trailer



WE RENT TRAILERS!

\$1,399 w/spare

1516-13

TopHat TRAILERS

McClain TRAILERS Inc. "BUILT FOR THE LONG HAUL"

• Boat • Cargo • Utility • GN • Custom Built Trailers •

OPEN!

FULLY OPERATIONAL

6800 Airline Hwy.  
(Across from Don's Seafood)  
Baton Rouge, LA

M-F 7:30 - 4:30

Sunday we go to church, we pray your boats float!

16815 Florida Blvd.  
Baton Rouge, LA

225-275-0000

Mon-Fri 8:00-4:30

Sat 8-2 • Sun-Closed

• Trailer Brake Experts • Galvanized Axles • Truck Hitches • Tool Boxes •

www.mikegeraldtrailerdepot.com

that's where the bass were positioned.

Like the earlier fish that bit his crankbait, though, he thought any spinnerbait fish would have been smaller than the ones that were biting the jig.

As we motored back through Workinger Bayou headed to Horseshoe, Wiley pointed out that this chute connecting the two larger bodies of water was a good place to fish as well.

"I love it when it's right," he said. "It's pure junk fishing... strap 15 rods on your deck and go fishing. When the water falls out these fish have to transition somewhere since we don't have a lot of typical transition structures like ledges and true creeks. They use the lay-downs to move up and down on instead."

## MATCH THE HATCH? NOT THIS TIME.

Most of the time, Wiley says shad are going to be on those lay-downs — so it would make sense to throw a shad bait, right?

"Nope!" he insisted. "I'd rather throw a jig. If we're standing here and it's raining



Punch jigs, along with heavy jigs and Texas-rigged plastics, are great lures to try on the Horseshoe/Black River Lake complex during the winter.

pennies, and I throw a penny up in the air, are you going to catch it? Probably not. But if I throw a dollar bill in those pennies, you're going to fight for it all the way to the ground. That's why I like throwing jigs in lay-downs during the winter. A jig is the dollar bill of the pennies."

Although we didn't fish Horseshoe Lake because of the extremely muddy water,

Wiley told me as we were loading his boat that it was a great place to fish, too — especially if you like fishing cypress trees.

"It's typical Louisiana cypress tree fishing," he said. "The only problem with Horseshoe is it's the first place to get water, so it's the first of the two to get all messed up when river water is coming in. If it's right, you can go out there and

## Cover Any Boat With Our Custom Made Boat Covers!



**STERLING'S**  
UPHOLSTERY  
& FABRICATION, LLC



### CUSTOM BUILT FOR YOUR NEEDS SINCE 1969

- T-Tops
- Boat Interiors
- Custom Enclosures
- Service of Bilge and Livewell Systems
- Towers
- Installation of Marine Electronics
- Leaning Post
- Bowfishing Platforms
- Offshore Bags
- Bimini Tops
- Poling Platforms



sterlingsllc.com • 1002 Hwy 90 East, New Iberia, LA • 337- 364 - 0783 • lance@sterlingsllc.com

catch them on jigs, crankbaits and spinnerbaits around those trees. But when it's so muddy you can't see your bait an inch under water, head to Black River Lake instead."

Black River Lake is the last spot to get water. It's kind of like the back end of a big pocket or the back of a dead-end canal. Add the deeper water and you've got a spot that will fish right all winter long, no matter the conditions.

## IT'S NOT HOW YOU START ....

On a day that I didn't even want to be on the water, Wiley and I landed 16 bass that ranged from 2 to 4 pounds. All came on jigs or Texas rigs fished around reed patches that had docks nearby.

"If we would have looked around those docks with the sonar, I bet we would have seen some brush piles," Wiley concluded. "The fish were probably in those piles before the water jumped up. When it did, they chased the food-chain effect right into those reeds."



Workinger Bayou, that connects Horseshoe Lake with Black River Lake, is a good place to try junk fishing for bass if the other two aren't producing.

Considering I had no expectations, it's easy to say the Horseshoe/Black River Lake complex exceeded them. But that wouldn't be fair.

In fact, if I would have had great expectations, I still wouldn't have left disappointed. ■



Chris Ginn has been covering hunting and fishing in Louisiana since 1998. He lives with his wife Jennifer and children Matthew and Rebecca along the Bogue Chitto River in rural Washington Parish. His blog can be found at [chrisginn.com](http://chrisginn.com).

# Work Boat Specialist



20' to 40'  
Boats Available



**YAMAHA**



**Scully's**

**CUSTOMIZED  
Aluminum Boats**

Louisiana's #1  
Custom Boat Builder

1015 STEPHENSVILLE RD. • MORGAN CITY, LA 70381  
985-385-1323 • TOLL FREE 1-866-238-8353  
FAX 985-384-5146

[www.scullyboats.com](http://www.scullyboats.com) • [info@scullysaluminumboats.com](mailto:info@scullysaluminumboats.com)



**PUGLIA'S**  
**SPORTING GOODS**  
 1925 VETERANS BLVD. METAIRIE, LA

504-837-0291  
 MON. - SAT. 9-6  
 We Ship Anywhere  
 Phone Orders Taken  
 www.puglias-sporting-goods.com

# ALL BERETTA, BENELLI & BROWNING SHOTGUNS ON SALE!



BERETTA



**Benelli**  
 simply perfect



BROWNING®

**CALL FOR SPECIAL PRICES!**

## B&P STEEL SHOT SALE!

Baschieri & Pellagri

12 ga. 3" shot size #4, #3, #2, #BB  
 Reg. \$16.99/box

**SALE \$12.00/box or \$120.00/case!**



## BAYOU CUSTOM PIROGUE



14 ft. - 2-man Reg. \$475.00  
**SALE \$430.00**

12 ft. - 2-man Reg. \$450.00  
**SALE \$400.00**



BROWNING®

Strike Force Camera

18.0 MP - 0.3 sec. trigger speed

Reg. \$149.99 **SALE \$109.00**



## MOJO DECOYS - NOW ON SALE!

Blue & Green Wing Teal  
 Reg. \$64.99

**\$47.99**

Baby Mojo Drake & Hen

Reg. \$77.99

**\$60.99**



Mallard Hen  
 w/remote Reg. \$179.99

**\$162.99**

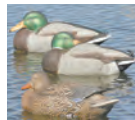
Gadwall

Reg. \$77.99

**\$60.99**

## AVERY DECOYS NOW ON SALE!

- Pro-Grade Green-Wing Teal - 1/2 Doz. Reg. \$39.00... **\$31.99**
- Life-Size Blue-Wing Teal - 1/2 Doz. Reg. \$34.99..... **\$28.99**
- Pro-Grade Blue-Wing Teal - 1/2 Doz. Reg. \$39.00.... **\$31.99**
- Pro-Grade Gadwall - 1/2 Doz. Reg. \$59.99..... **\$51.99**
- Life-Size Wood Ducks - 1/2 Doz. Reg. \$49.99..... **\$41.99**
- Pro-Grade Wigeons - 1/2 Doz. Reg. \$59.00..... **\$51.99**
- Over-Size Coots - 1/2 Doz. Reg. \$49.99..... **\$41.99**
- Blue Bill - Dogriere - 1/2 Doz. Reg. \$39.99..... **\$31.99**
- Red Head - 1/2 Doz. Reg. \$49.99..... **\$41.99**
- Life-Size Gadwall - 1/2 Doz. Reg. \$49.99..... **\$41.99**
- Pro-Grade Pintails - 1/2 Doz. Reg. \$69.99..... **\$61.99**
- Life-Size Mallards - 1/2 Doz. Reg. \$49.99..... **\$41.99**



## ALL SOFT & HARD GUN CASES BY:



**NOW 35% OFF!**



## FAST STEEL NOW ON SALE



- 12 ga, 3" 1-3/8, #2, 3, 4, 1300 FPS.....Box **\$16.99** Case **\$164.99**
- 12 ga, 3" 1-1/4, #2, 3, 4, 1425 FPS .....Box **\$15.79** Case **\$152.99**
- 12 ga, 3" 1-1/8, #2, 3, 4, 1560 FPS .....Box **\$15.39** Case **\$148.99**
- 12 ga, 2-3/4" 1-1/4, #3, 4, 1300 FPS ....Box **\$10.00** Case **\$100.00**
- 12 ga, 2-3/4" 1-1/16, #3, 4, 1550 FPS. Box **\$12.99** Case **\$124.99**
- 12 ga, 3-1/2" 1-3/8, BB, BBB, #1, 2, 3, 1550 FPS .....Box **\$22.39**  
 Case **\$219.00**
- 20 ga, 3" 7/8, #3, 4, 1550 FPS .....Box **\$14.29** Case **\$137.00**



## MOULTRIE CAMERAS

- **#M-888i**, 14.0 MP, 0.7 Second Trigger Speed, 70 ft Range, Nighttime Infrared, HD Video ..... Reg. \$139.99 **SALE \$98.00**
- **#M-40**, 16.0 MP, 0.3 Second Trigger Speed, 100 ft Range, Nighttime Infrared..... Reg. \$119.99 **SALE \$88.00**



## MOULTRIE FEEDERS

- **Elite #M-13062**, HD Video - Digital Timer Up To 6 Feed Times Per Day - Height Adjustable to 5.5', 7' or 8' - Varmint Guard - Battery Indicator - 6 Volt Battery Required ..... Reg. \$129.99 **SALE \$94.00**
- **Standard #13220**, 5.5' Height - Programs Up to 4 Feed Times Daily - 30 Gallon - Runs On 4 AA Batteries ..... Reg. \$79.99 **SALE \$59.00**

## DEER STANDS NOW ON SALE!



**Jay Hawk**  
2-Man Ladder  
20 ft.  
Reg. \$319.99  
**\$249.00**

**The General**  
1-Man Ladder, 22 ft.  
Reg. \$269.99  
**\$189.00**

**The Onyx**  
1-Man Ladder  
17 ft.  
Reg. \$179.99  
**\$144.00**

**The Comrade**  
2-Man Ladder,  
18 ft.  
Reg. \$349.99  
**\$265.00** NEW FOR 2017

**The Apache**  
Climber,  
18.5 lbs.  
Reg. \$179.99  
**\$147.00**

**The Duke**  
1-Man  
20 ft.  
Reg. \$199.99  
**\$149.00**

## DEER STAND CLOSEOUT!



**Mini Viper**  
18 lbs.  
Reg. \$259.99  
**\$192.00**

**Viper Classic**  
30 lbs.  
Reg. \$179.99  
**\$134.00**

**Sentry SD**  
23 lbs.  
Reg. \$259.99  
**\$194.00**

**Watch Tower**  
Tripod, 12 ft.  
Reg. \$239.99  
**SALE \$175.00**



## NOW ON SALE!

**L110** - 1-Man Ladder, 80 lbs., 21 ft.  
Reg. \$329.99 **SALE \$285.00**



## LACROSSE NOW ON SALE!

**18" Alphaburly Pro 1000G**  
Mossy Oak  
Break-up Country  
#376029.  
Reg. \$139.99  
**\$117.99**

**18" Alphaburly Pro 3.5**  
Mossy Oak  
Break-up Country  
#376027  
Reg. \$126.99  
**\$104.99**

**18" Alphaburly Pro 800G**  
Realtree MAX-5  
#376021  
Reg. \$136.99  
**\$114.99**

**NEW 18" Alphaburly Pro 3.5**  
Gore Optifade Elevated II  
#376033  
Reg. \$129.99  
**\$107.99**

**NEW 18" Alphaburly Pro 800G**  
Gore Optifade Elevated II  
#376035  
Reg. \$139.99  
**\$117.99**

**NEW 18" Alphaburly Pro 1600G**  
Gore Optifade Waterfowl  
Marsh - #376037  
Reg. \$159.99  
**\$137.99**

## NOW ON SALE!

**Women Woody**  
Reg. \$109.99  
**\$87.99**

**Muckster II Ankle**  
Moss/Green  
Reg. \$79.99  
**\$57.99**

**Muckster II Ankle**  
Realtree Camo  
Reg. \$96.99  
**\$74.99**

**Pursuit Shadow**  
Reg. \$169.99  
**\$147.99**

**Woody Plus**  
Reg. \$169.99  
**\$147.99**

**Pursuit Supreme**  
Reg. \$169.99  
**\$147.99**

**Woody Grit**  
Reg. \$112.99  
**\$90.99**

**Woody Max**  
Reg. \$149.99  
**\$127.99**

**Woody Elite**  
Reg. \$164.99  
**\$142.99**

## HUNTING SEASON SALE 40% - 50% OFF REG. PRICES

- PARKAS & BIBS
- RAINGEAR
- JACKETS
- PANTS
- SHIRTS
- COVERALLS
- HATS
- SOCKS
- GLOVES



**FILSON**  
Since 1897

**DRAKE**  
waterfowl systems  
Innovation in waterfowl hunting.

**BROYNING**  
**Columbia**  
Trying stuff since 1938





# Berryland

Campers

**HOLDEN**



**4 GREAT BUNKHOUSE FLOORPLANS**

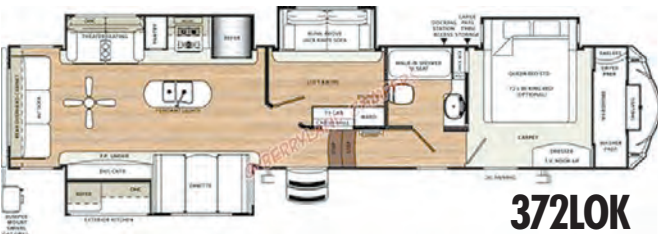
**STARTING AT \$44,990**



**365SAQ**



**371REBH**



**372LOK**



**383RBLOK**

MesaRidge SALEM

ROCKWOOD


SALEM HEMISPHERE LIFE

WORK and PLAY

**HOLDEN, LA • Exit 29**

**TOLL FREE 1-877-567-7079**

[www.berrylandcampers.com/holden](http://www.berrylandcampers.com/holden)



Geese are famous for being finicky. For staying just out of range, chuckling as hunters grind their teeth in frustration.

But these guides know small adjustments can result in birds on the ground. By John Flores

# Little things count

There are plenty of specklebelly and snow geese to make things interesting in Southwest Louisiana.

# Shot-wise things were slow. **Way too slow.**

The specklebellies were down in good numbers, but for some reason acting real finicky — just plain uppity at times.

First it appeared the birds wanted to work, but then seemingly they became uninterested and wouldn't finish.

With only one white-fronted goose and several sunrise ducks to show for our efforts as the clock ticked past 8 a.m., our guide Benjamin Page called it.

"Hold up — hold up — don't shoot," Page called out in a loud voice, as he climbed out of the blind next to ours.

Both blinds were buried deep, end to end, along the rice field levee we hunted just east of Hayes below Highway 14.

There wasn't any doubt we were where the birds wanted to be. After all, this part of the state is known for being the epicenter of the speckle-belly goose migration into Louisiana.

"Something's wrong," Page said, as he and a couple guys slogged out into the wet, mucky mud. "We're pulling the Mojos and the snow goose decoys on the outside."

Page and his partner Chip Martin of Martin Automotive Group in Lake Charles are co-owners of Barred Up Outfitters, which specialize in speckle-belly goose hunts.

The 28-year-old Page acts as head guide, for the most part. He and Martin are adept at getting their hunters on geese.

As the season progresses, white fronts

become warier by the day. Knowing when something isn't right, paying attention to little details and making the subtle changes that can turn a subpar day in the blind into a good hunt is what Page and Martin happen to excel at.

With the snow goose and Mojo decoys picked up, Page settled back into his pit blind.

It wasn't long before our next opportunity came.

Page and one of his blind mates began calling, working a small group of specks. Unlike the birds that played games with us an hour earlier, these geese were looking to finish right over the top of the blind



Chip Martin with a barred up white-fronted goose.



The small adjustment worked, and guns went to blazing. The rest of the morning, our group of Delta Waterfowl Lake Charles Gulf Coast Chapter and Louisiana/Mississippi regional directors had the specklebelly action most hunters hope for and expect when hunting Southwestern Louisiana.

The point is, whether you have the opportunity to hunt with a private land outfitter, lease a field or hunt public land, there are must dos and innovative techniques that can help you end your day with a heavy strap.

And Page and Martin shared their expertise to shorten the learning curve.

Concealment, page 104 >



## Riceland Custom Calls

Calling white-fronted geese can be a challenge, but quite often a quality call can make all of the difference.

Riceland Custom Calls have large bores and are easier to blow than other commercial models.

For information, call Bill Daniels at 337-884-6890 or log onto [www.ricelandcustomcalls.com](http://www.ricelandcustomcalls.com). ■

— John Flores

Riceland Custom Calls helped these hunters get the job done on their hunt.

## Concealment

Page said when birds aren't responding it's important to make sure there are no holes above the blind. Show him a guide who is a little bit OCD when it comes to blind concealment and he'll show you a successful guide.

Our particular blinds incorporated flip-open tops. When closed, it would have taken a goose with a spotting scope and several low-altitude flybys to find anything out of place.

As a result, specks Page called in finished right over the top us.

Martin and Page had to adjust between the first and second splits last season because the farmer they lease from began working the rice-field levees, leaving them devoid of any grass whatsoever.

That meant their early season camouflage wouldn't cut it any longer.

"People always ask, 'Do birds see colors?' and the answer is, probably not," Page said. "But they do see shades. So, if something is out of line along that levee, to them that's not natural. And, more than likely, it's hunters.

"So matching camouflage is important. In other words matching what's on the levee and incorporating it into the blind is a must."

With nothing on the levee, Page planted rye grass. Afterwards he had to come up with something green that matched the grass to cover the blind.

What many goose hunters use in similar situations are cedar tree limbs. However, Page said it doesn't take long for them to turn brown, and then you're back to square one — not matching again.

So Page came up with the innovative idea of using artificial Christmas tree limbs. They are flexible, cover well, match the color of rye grass and would last through the entire season.

His idea actually worked. The holiday blind decorations fooled specklebellies much of the second split.

However, concealment isn't all camouflage, according to the two outfitters.

Page mentioned how the farmer rolled and shaped the levee but avoided the area around the pit blinds themselves.

That meant some short, yellow grass remained around the pits.

Page and Martin came up with the idea of using artificial Christmas tree limbs to blend in with a freshly groomed levee. By planting rye grass for cover, it fooled wary geese.

Another problem that frequently occurs is hunters walking to and from blinds leave the ground muddy and full of boot prints, the outfitters said.

"When you get six to eight guys walking in there two, three or four times a week, it gets to be a little bit of a challenge," Martin explained. "You also have to drive equipment to and from the levee. What we do is drive one single trail, stop at the blind and continue on all the way to the next levee.

"We don't make circles or drive on top of the levee. We want the four-wheeler vehicle roads to look like the natural transition of a piece of farm machinery the birds see from the air."

To cover up the yellow grass and boot tracks around the blind, Page actually rolled out the carpet: green outdoor turf carpet, to be exact.

Sound strange? Where the traditional waterfowl hunter might consider such an idea foolish, Page is willing to try things that appear unconventional.

Was it successful? Because it wasn't quite natural, Martin said the jury is still out.

## The ideal field setup

Having had the opportunity to hunt twice with Page and Martin last season, I was able to experience two conditions: wet and dry.

The early hunt happened to follow heavy rains that swept through the area. One side of the outfitter's levee happened to hold water. The other side, though wet, didn't have standing water.

As a result, we were able to shoot ducks as an added bonus.

However, white-fronted geese have adapted negatively over the years to the traditional combo duck/goose fields, Martin said.

"For specks, dry on one side with water on the other side is a no-no," he explained.

"A lot of guys in the past did that. They'd hunt ducks on one side and geese on the other. But now the birds have imprinted so much on that, so it's a tip off for a goose.

"Ducks don't seem to imprint as much as geese do. Now you pretty much have to have water on both sides or dry on both sides."

Decoy placement is extremely impor-



tant when setting up the ideal speck field.

Every goose guide worth his salt is aware of the effect wind direction has on decoy placement. They're also aware of how far to set decoys away from the blind in order to get birds to fly over it.

Both factors are keys to successful hunts.

However, it's also paying close attention

From well-hidden to the decisive moment can happen in a flash.



to the little details, when things aren't going well. Page pulling the Mojo and snow goose decoys became a game changer for us.

Page said minute changes can really turn a hunt around. "On one particular hunt, I set my decoys out and I placed all but one of them facing away from the blind. It was a sentry," he said. "It was looking back at the blind. Well, the birds weren't working, so I went out and turned it facing away from the blind looking in the same direction as the others."

"The next three groups of birds came in perfect. In my way of thinking, when I have them all facing one direction, I don't want any of them looking at the blind. But, honestly, there are other days I'll set them out looking in all sorts of directions."

## The importance of calling

Page places a lot of emphasis on calling specklebellies. In fact, he said the relative importance of camouflage, decoys and calling to in terms of killing white-fronts equates to 20 percent concealment, 20 percent decoy set up and 60 percent calling.

But callers have to be able to adjust. Page noted that what worked last year might not work as well this year.

Regardless of what the year brings, however, his initial approach remains the same with each flock passing near his blind.

"When I first see geese, I like to hit them with a two- or three-note call to see how they react," Page said. "If they kind of rock a little bit, acting like they want to come my way, I'll hit them with a few clucks and two notes, and read them again."

"Whatever they react to, I'm going to keep doing it."

Burst-type calling is one of the biggest mistakes Page and Martin see hunters make. Page said this is when hunters blow calls more with their cheeks than with their diaphragm.

"Hunters need to learn how to run their call first," Page said. "Some just get out there in the field and have a brand-new speck call and say, 'Let me try it; it looks like fun.'"

"I blew a lot of birds away learning, so what I'm saying

continues on page 106

15+ Years Experience

Driven Naturally to Accomodate.....  
It's in their DNA.

- Located 1 hour from New Orleans
- The best in British/Irish Labradors available
- The best customer service
- Excellent pedigrees, Spectacular Health Clearances, Second-to-none Health Guarantees
- True full service kennel: Puppies, Started Puppies, Started Dogs, Imported Finished Dogs, Started Blood Trailing Labradors, Monthly Training, Boarding (large dogs)
- Well rounded, obedient dogs who make excellent companions and hunting partners
- Trained without the aid of e-collars
- Started dog payment program available

**WWW.ACESRETRIEVERS.COM**  
Call (228) 493-7474  
email us @ [acesretrievers@gmail.com](mailto:acesretrievers@gmail.com)  
Facebook - Team Ace's Retrievers

Shipping Available

HUNT ARGENTINA

Kids Dove Hunt FREE\*

All inclusive packages for dove and duck hunting in Argentina. Limit of 50 ducks/person/day

No Limit Doves

DOWN EAST GUIDE SERVICE

1907 Paulette Rd.  
Morehead City, NC 28557

info@downeastguideservice.com  
www.downeastguideservice.com

252-671-3474

\*With 4 adult full fare hunts

# Koola Eze

- COOLER OR FREEZER, set to your desired temperature.
- 115 Volts, Standard household plug.
- This cooler is designed with no fans, the walls and ceiling have cold plates to keep from drying out your deer meat.
- Only weighs 1050 lbs
- Only three working components: Compressor, Condenser fan motor, and thermostat.
- Plastic feet for easy moving over concrete.
- 3 year warranty or extended 5 year warranty for \$250.
- 6 stainless steel meat hooks.
- Outside dimensions 6' x 6' x 8' 8 1/2" tall
- Inside dimensions 5'4" x 5'4" x 7" tall
- Made with 4" polyurethane foam
- Can be mounted on a trailer.

Rental Trailers Available

Contact: Kevin Helton (662) 571-5115  
Located in Yazoo City, MS



Calling is very important when it comes to outsmarting specklebelly geese.

is, it takes practice — a lot of practice.”

Martin pointed out how, over the years, calling has changed, and now clucks and murmurs are the norm.

“Geese in the air are communicating with each other and know specifically where they’re going,” Martin said. “So, honestly, you’re competing with birds talking to one another. But, once they respond to initial calling, where they appear to be committed, they’re in the final-approach category.

“That’s where you go to the clucks and murmurs. When they’re cupped and committed, dropping lower and lower, that’s when you shut up.”



Page also mentioned clucks should start out slow and low, and then increase in volume, rising to a sort of crescendo, before falling down scale again.

The technique takes some getting used to, but with practice it can be a game changer for even novice speck callers.

It was Page and Martin’s attention to detail that changed what started out to be a slow hunt into an above-average outing. We shot six more speckle-belly geese and a dozen ducks after the change, making for an outstanding rice field hunt.

One thing I learned hunting with these guys on our hunt, it’s all in the details if you want to be successful. ■

*Editor’s note: Barred Up Outfitters can be reached at 337-802-2149.*

**John Flores** was enticed in 1984 to leave his western digs in New Mexico for the Sportsman’s Paradise. Never looking back, the author spends much of his free time writing about and photographing the state’s natural resources.

		<p><b>CALL TODAY! 985-857-8000</b>  <a href="http://www.mlengine.com">www.mlengine.com</a> • <a href="mailto:sales@mlengine.com">sales@mlengine.com</a>                  1212 St. Charles St., Houma, LA 70360</p>	
<p><b>MUD BOAT POWERTRAIN</b></p>		<p><b>CAMP GENERATORS</b></p>	
<p><b>Kohler 44HP EFI Marine</b></p>  <p><b>ON SALE NOW!!</b>                  44 Horsepower!                  Electronic Fuel Injection                  ZF Transmission                  Air Cooled</p> 		<p>6kW-60kW In Stock!</p> <p>Heavy Duty Design                  Marine Grade Components                  Aluminum Enclosures                  Custom Built to your needs</p> <p><b>Value Series SALE!!</b>                  6kW Diesel- \$3,349                  9kW Diesel- \$4,999                  14kW Diesel- \$5,800</p> 	
<p><b>ENGINES</b></p>	<p><b>GENERATORS</b></p>	<p><b>PUMPS</b></p>	<p><b>POWERTRAIN PACKAGES</b></p>

# Come Experience South Louisiana’s Finest Duck & Goose Hunting




Hunting Packages Include:

Lodging  
Meals & Guide  
Prime Marsh Hunting

Doug’s Hunting Lodge located in the heart of duck and goose country has been helping hunters enjoy themselves for over 40 years.

Call or email us today to book your hunt of a lifetime!

800-888-0960

[dougsldg@bellsouth.net](mailto:dougsldg@bellsouth.net)

[www.doughuntinglodge.com](http://www.doughuntinglodge.com)



DOUG’S HUNTING LODGE



Chris Jones with the prize at the end of the hunt — a whopper raccoon.

OR AT LEAST BARKING DOGS, SPOTLIGHTS, GUNFIRE — AND AN ANGRY RACCOON — MAKE IT SEEM THAT WAY.

# TREED'S A CROWD

By Kinny Haddox

**T**he late Jerry Clower may be the only person that coon hunting ever made famous — or vice versa.

The “Mouth of Mississippi” won a bushel of country comedy awards and never recorded an album or put on a performance without telling a good coon hunting story.

Today in Louisiana, we definitely have more glamorous outdoor opportunities than Clower did in his youth. But there are still some people who would just as soon be in the winter woods, tromping through hardwood bottoms with a flashlight, waiting for dogs to bay at a treed raccoon.

That, in a nutshell, is what coon hunting is.

One of those people is Chris Jones of West Monroe. Jones is a former coach, a school administrator and family man who stays busy day and night going from one activity to another. And that’s

one reason he likes to coon hunt. It’s his “pause button.”

“There’s no pressure in coon hunting,” Jones said. “It’s a chance to get away from everything and it’s at night, so all your senses are in play out there. And it’s a sport where you can enjoy the people you are with, and even more importantly, a sport where you can take your kids or other kids and have a good time.”

## THE THRILL OF THE HUNT

Jones described a typical hunt with coon-hunting friends Blaine Armstrong and Phil Flurry.

“We meet up right at dark, have our Ranger ATVs ready if we are going to cover a lot of ground, put on our tall boots and head for the woods,” Jones said. “I’m blessed to know a bunch of people who have land where we can

coon hunt. There are public areas like the D’Arbonne National Wildlife Refuge and Tenses National Wildlife Refuge that have lots of great places to hunt raccoons.

“We go out at a leisurely pace, let the dogs loose and then just tell jokes and stories and listen to the dogs bark. When they get on a coon trail or get one treed, you can hear it in the way they are barking. That’s when we head for where they are. They can be 100 yards away or a mile away.”

Jones says once the dogs get a coon treed, they get there as fast as they can because the coons will climb out on a limb and get in another tree if they take too long. The hunters don’t like that — and neither do the dogs.

Jones grinned when he explained why coon hunting these days can be so laid back. It’s actually much easier than ever before.



When I got started about 10 years ago, you kept up with the dogs a lot better because you didn't want to lose them," he said. "Today we have collars on the dogs and handheld GPS locators that pinpoint not only exactly where the dog is, but which direction he's heading and if he's running, sitting or starting to circle. When he starts to tighten up that circle, you know he's about to tree."

Jones and his hunting partners watch all that action and information on the small GPS screen in the dark of night. Hunters can also see roads, levees, bayous and creeks, fields and other landmarks on the GPS, so that makes it easier to get in and out of areas where the dogs are working.

## A GOOD DOG IS A HUNTER'S BEST FRIEND

There's another reason the GPS units are handy: The cost of a modern-day coon dog can range from \$3,000 to \$25,000 or more. "When you turn them loose, that's a big investment you are putting out there in the woods in the dark," Jones said. "You want to know where he is."

Jones explained how to get a good dog, like his Original Mountain Cur, Tiger.

"You need to get a dog that has come from a good line of treeing dogs," Jones said. "There's two ways to do that. You can get one as a puppy and take him to the woods as a puppy and grow him into a dog. Or you can get a mature dog, and as one of my friends says, that is kind of like buying a lottery ticket — you take him to the woods, scratch it off and see what you've got."

"Either way, most of being a good tree dog is bred into them naturally. When I started Tiger off as a pup, I showed him a couple of raccoons in a cage and let him get the smell. The first couple of times we went, he didn't do much. But then one night he was treeing coons left and right. It was like a light bulb had gone off. Once they learn what they are supposed to do and that you are going to come and shoot, they just get better and better."

There is no set pattern for locating good coon hunting woods, but Jones said most good territory is bottomland hardwood with a water source not too far away.

If you are hunting in deer club woods right after the season, areas near feeders also attract raccoons. Jones doesn't hunt coons during the active deer hunting seasons to avoid conflicts with the hunters.



Blaine Armstrong (left), Tiger and Phil Flurry with another coon on the ground.

## WAR STORIES

Just like Clower, Jones and his coon hunting companions have lots of stories. Some are harrowing, like when the dogs bayed a big feral hog and the hunters came up on it 20 yards away armed with nothing but headlamps and one little .22 rifle.

On occasion, they'll hear strange noises in the night that are unexplainable. When that happens, they just brush it off and move on.

One Clower-like story that Jones likes to tell involved Tiger and Phillip's dog, Blue Duck. They are used to hunting together, but one night when they shot a coon out of the tree, it wasn't dead.

So Blue Duck ran up and grabbed the coon on its chest. The coon proceeded to bite down on Blue Duck's big coon dog ear. About the time Blue Duck let go, Tiger grabbed hold of the coon's backside — so the coon didn't let go.

The three of them ran around in a circle for several minutes before the frantic hunters got them separated. The sounds from that ruckus in the middle of the night likely would have scared off the bravest person within hearing distance. By the time they ended the battle, old Blue Duck's ear was in such bad shape they had to pack it in and go home.

But all ended well — and they were back in the woods in a week. As Jones would say, borrowing a popular fishing saying, "A bad night coon hunting is still better than a good day at work." ■

**COON CANS AND  
CANT'S UP NEXT**



Chris gives Tiger a brief rest before kenneling up after a hard night's hunt.

# PROWLER™ EV

**NEW!**



**TEXTRON**  
OFF ROAD

**DEEP SOUTH GOLF CARS** LLC

— PARTS • SALES • SERVICE —

Ask about our  
Free Customer  
Appreciation  
Lifetime  
Service Plan

**504-737-0646**

**2508 Hickory Ave., Metairie, LA**

**www.deepsouthgolfcars.com**

LIKE US



## COON CANS AND CANT'S

In Louisiana, there are only three animals you can hunt all year round: coyotes, feral hogs and raccoons. For that reason, hunting raccoons isn't very heavily regulated. That's because, even though they appear cute on animal shows, in the wild they are a major nuisance and a destructive force to both landowners and homeowners.

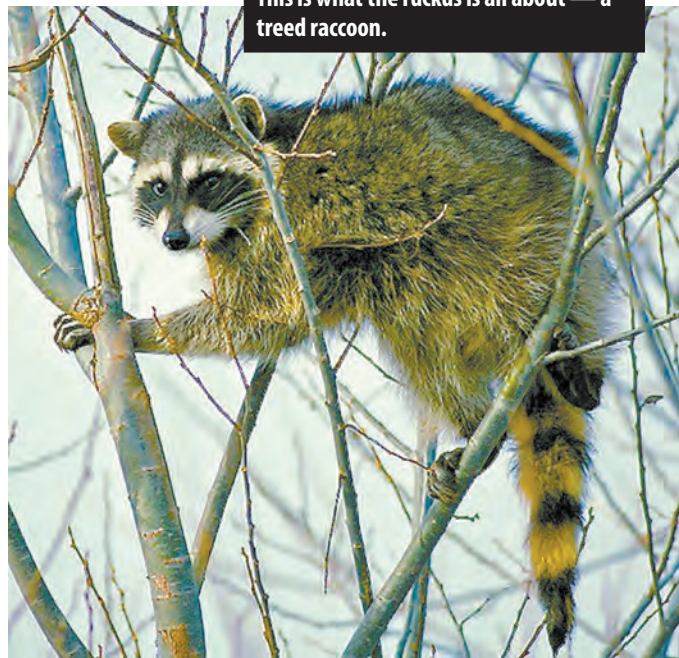
Raccoons may be hunted at night throughout the year, but only with a .22 rifle. The hunting of raccoons with dogs is allowed year-round, but the hunter must have the dogs under control and be in possession of a .22 rifle. One rifle per group is allowed.

During trapping season, which runs from mid-November to the end of March, there isn't any bag limit for hunters of raccoon. Outside of the trapping season, there is a bag limit of two per person — regardless of daytime or nighttime hunting. Hunting of raccoons from boats is prohibited.

Raccoons rarely live more than two years. They will eat almost anything — from birds, eggs, fish and fruit to nuts, insects, snakes and frogs. But given a choice, they apparently would just eat human garbage if there was enough of it. That's one reason that so many landowners want raccoons hunted or trapped on their property. They consistently turn over trash cans or drag trash out of dumpsters. They also raid any bird feeders or hummingbird feeders they can find, and pilfer gardens and crop fields, leaving major damage.

When trying to access structures, they often uncap chimneys, tear off shingles and can even chew holes through the sides of buildings, including houses.

This is what the ruckus is all about — a treed raccoon.

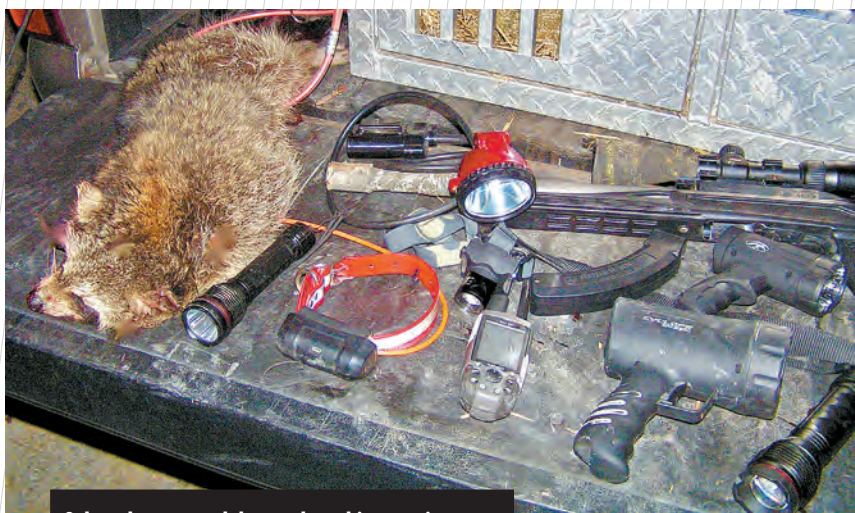


Courtesy LDWF

When prepared correctly, raccoons can be tasty. Jones and his hunting companions don't eat the raccoons, but they always try and find someone who will put them to good use for supper. ■

— Kinny Haddox

## WHAT YOU'LL NEED



Other than a good dog and tracking equipment, coon-hunting gear is pretty simple.

The gear for a basic coon hunt isn't that complex, Chris Jones said. You need plenty of well-charged lights — including a headlamp, a flashlight and a spotlight. (Running out of light on a coon hunt would be akin to leaving the plug out of your boat when fishing.)

A good coon dog or two is an absolute must, and while that sounds simple, the cost can range from reasonable to exorbitant, based on the hunter's desires and financial situation. And unless you want to spend all night in the woods, a good handheld GPS tracking system like Jones' Garmin Astro 220 unit and collar are a must. Jones also uses short leashes to tie the dogs up once they've treed for the dog's safety.

The rest is pretty simple gear. A single .22 rifle with an extra clip is standard. Jones prefers a Magnum Research rifle with a Nikon 3-9x40 scope, and shoots copper-plated hollow point CCI mini-mag ammunition.

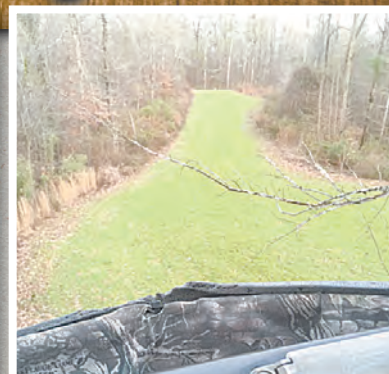
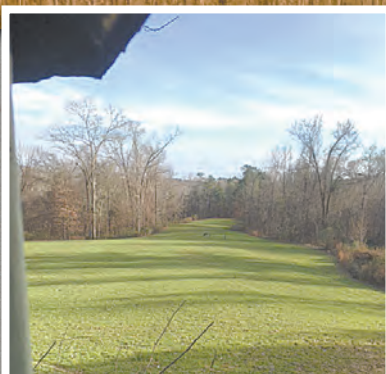
Other gear can include a good pair of high waterproof boots, and some sturdy brush-proof long-sleeved clothing in case the dogs take you into rough territory. The only thing else you might need are some good friends with a desire to enjoy a quiet night in the great outdoors — and a steady aim with the rifle and spotlight. ■

— Kinny Haddox

MY FIRST COON HUNT UP NEXT >

# GREAT INVESTMENT / HUNTING PROPERTY

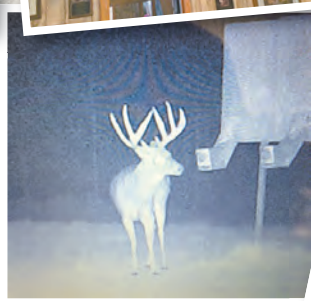
## 95% Hardwood Timber Heart of Big Deer Country Jefferson County



- Churchill, MS
- 18 Mi. North of Natchez
- .05 Mi. off Natchez Trace
- 15 minute to local airport
- 1,308 surveyed acres
- Black top frontage
- One owner last 20+ years
- Large camp w/porches, patio
- County and well water
- Emergency 50kw generator
- 80' x 30' enclosed barn

- 30' x 60' pole barn
- 8' x 8' walkin cooler
- Stocked ponds w/creeks
- Great Road system
- 36 food plots w/stands
- 6-1,350lb feeders
- Established bedding areas
- Complete GPS map of property
- Managed for 130 plus class bucks
- Timber will impress you
- \$3,600 per Acre

**Simply a managed,  
walk in, ready to hunt  
property with great  
timber value that separates  
it from just recreational  
valued property with little  
or no timber value.**



**Call Sonny Freeman at (337) 654-3719 for more information.**



# MY FIRST COON HUNT

By his count, Chris Jones and his friends have introduced more than 30 young hunters to the fine art of coon hunting. Now, he can add one 65-year-old to the list.

After nearly a decade, I finally ran out of excuses and joined him and hunting partners Phil Flurry and Blaine Armstrong on a hunt in northern Ouachita Parish. As we wandered off the road into the dark hardwood bottom, I had to ask, "Just what are we going to do?"

"We just go down to an area we know has coons, turn the dogs loose and wait," Jones said. "They do the rest. It's easy."

Well, at least it sounded easy. It was a calm, peaceful evening with the stars shining brightly. It was a bit cool, which I liked. But it didn't take long for things to heat up: Casual barking turned to howling to an awful desperate dog sound. If the dogs could climb trees, we probably wouldn't even need a gun.

My learning experiences started right away.

First, I learned that a non-coon hunter walks at a much slower pace than a real coon hunter, especially in the dark when a dog has treed a coon.

Second, I learned what Jones had described as "easy walking" actually included briskly stepping over fallen tree-sized limbs through terrain similar to an English bog — by flashlight.

I learned that a coon can find a hole in a tree faster than a mosquito can find an exposed elbow.

After 10 minutes of searching the tree and not finding the coon, I learned you don't want a coon dog looking at you. They aren't exactly happy their efforts went in vain. They give you an evil eye,



**GPS tracking units provide a wealth of important real-time information to today's coon hunters.**

displaying doggie disgust.

But seriously, it was fun. I see why folks like it so much, even though most of the actual hunt took place well after my bedtime.

I also learned how high-tech raccoon hunting has gotten. Each dog had a GPS collar, and the handler carried a GPS unit that tracked the dog wherever it went. You can also keep up with landmarks, like the road where the truck is parked (which

was a huge relief to me since I had no idea where we were). You could even tell how far away the dog was and which direction it was running. When they got on a coon, Chris would say, "Oh, he's running in a circle. He's about to tree."

Sure enough, within a minute the baying would begin.

One time the GPS indicated the dogs treed 612 yards away, across a creek. I sat that one out, leaning on an old fallen log and feeling confident (well, at least hopeful) that Chris, Phil and Blaine would come back to get me before something else did.

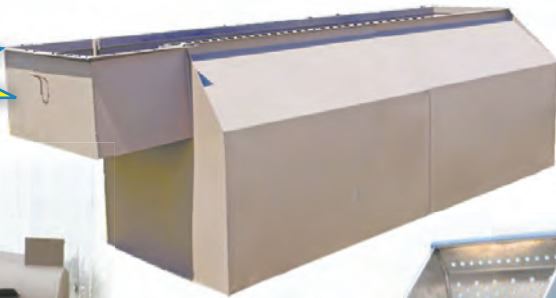
Soon I heard the pop-pop-pop report of the .22 — and the barking stopped. A few minutes later I caught a glimpse of flashlight beams heading back my way. I wasn't too worried, because before I let them get out of my sight, I made sure I had a good strong cell phone signal ... just in case. ■

— Kinny Haddox

## TOP QUALITY *STILL AFFORDABLE*



**STUBBLE ROLLER**



**PIT BLIND**

**CRAWFISH BOILER**



[www.hugheswelding.com](http://www.hugheswelding.com)

**HUGHES MANUFACTURING**

1300 AIRPORT RD. • JENNINGS, LA 70546

**337.824.2176**



Find us on Facebook

# NOW OPEN!!



# BROUSSARD

SERVING ACADIANA AND THE SURROUNDING AREA  
EQUIPPED TO HANDLE ALL YOUR TRAILER NEEDS

**3605 US HWY 90 EAST  
BROUSSARD, LA 70518**

**337-347-9995**

## NOW OPEN!



## CREATURE FEATURE

Jerald Horst

Crappie specialist Murphy Royer holds a black crappie, left, and a white crappie. Although they are completely different species, both show booms and busts in their population numbers in any one lake or river.



# CRAPPIE CAN BE HARD TO FIGURE OUT

CYCLICAL SPAWNING SUCCESS MAKES MANAGEMENT TOUGH

**W**inston Churchill coined the term “a riddle, wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma.” He was referring to Russia, but he could just as likely have been talking about crappie management.

Called white perch in North Louisiana, sac-a-lait in South Louisiana and by a whole host of names elsewhere, white and black crappie populations — wherever they occur in the U. S. — are notorious for boom and bust population cycles. This is especially true for reservoirs compared to overflow swamp areas.

Research indicates that crappie will produce a highly successful spawn (year class) once every three to five years. The year classes in between are weak and contribute few fish to the harvestable population.

## MIXED MANAGEMENT RESULTS

Unstable fish populations make for unhappy fishermen, who often push their fish and game management agencies to put more restrictive regulations in place. While reductions in limits are sometimes asked for, most requested is

the imposition of a minimum size. Ten inches seems to be popular.

It makes sense to the average angler that if you have to put fish back in the water, they will just hang around, eat and grow bigger until you can catch them later. In theory, the harvest of crappie from good spawn years will be spread over a longer time.

But research shows that the results are not always what anglers expect. Natural mortality — the death of fish due to things other than fishermen — is the culprit. In most water bodies far more fish die of natural causes than are harvested

by man. Minimum sizes work best on fish populations that have a very high harvest by fishermen and low natural mortality.

Some things do change when a minimum size is put in place, however. Survival of fish from age 1 to age 2, age 2 to age 3 and age 3 to age 4 does increase by at least a small amount. And obviously, the average size of fish harvested increases, mainly because the smaller fish, which would have pulled down the average, are not kept by fishermen.

But the number of fish harvested by anglers from most water bodies with 10-inch minimum size regulations decreases sharply, simply because too many fish die of natural causes during the time that harvest is pushed back. Most of the time (but it is important to note, not all the time) the larger size of fish harvested is offset enough by the reduced harvest in numbers that the total weight of fish taken from the lake is also reduced.

## IOWA PROJECT REVELATIONS

Not a lot of research has been done to

explain why crappie populations are so cyclic. One of the most interesting projects was done in Rathbun Lake in Iowa, where biologists sampled the numbers of larval crappie for several years and at the same time recorded environmental data.

Like many fish, tiny larval crappie are nearly free-floating and helpless in the water for a period of time after hatching. The biologists towed very small mesh nets with boats to make their samples.

The biggest correlation between high larval crappie numbers was with water levels. When they were high, numbers of larval crappie were also high. The only exceptions to this relationship were in years of low water clarity. Larval crappies were never found when waters were very muddy during spawning season.

The biologists felt that based on previous research, adult crappie abandoned their nests when muddy water created low light conditions on the bottom. They noted that actual suffocation of the eggs may also have occurred.

Temperature also was an important, but not overriding factor. Crappie began spawning when water temperatures reach 61 degrees. A gradual and steady

## BOOM OR BUST:

Research indicates that crappie will produce a highly successful spawn only once every three to five years. But year classes in between are weak and contribute few fish to the harvestable population.

temperature rise, with few ups and downs during spawning season, seemed to produce the most spawning success. The rate of temperature rise did not seem to influence the length of the spawning season. Spawning lasted 27 to 47 days during the study years.

Wind played a small role in catches of larval crappie, as well. Larger catches always occurred under low wind conditions, but many poor catches were also made under low wind conditions. But high catches never occurred under high wind conditions. This may have been due to nest destruction in shallow spawning areas by wind-produced waves.

In Rathbun Lake, high catches of adult crappie were made by fishermen two to four years after a year of high larval crappie numbers.

continues on page 116



# CARGO LIFTS

THREE MODELS ★ THREE CHOICES ★ SAME QUALITY

Cargo Lift Distributors, LLC located in Port Bolivar, Texas

DO-IT-YOURSELF KITS NOW AVAILABLE!



EasyLift™

Lifts 1000 lbs



EconomyLift™

Lifts 1000 lbs



MiniLift™

Lifts 500 lbs

Equipped with "Cage-Arrest™" Brake System & Safety Screen to protect cargo from falling out.

This cage features balusters to better match deck hand railing.

This unit is for the small needs & take less space. Gates optional.

Marine Grade Aluminum . Stainless Hardware . Dual SS Cables . Remote Controls

Call today 888.684.6110 or visit [www.beachouselifts.com](http://www.beachouselifts.com)

## CREATURE FEATURE

continued

### BAYOU STATE NUMBERS

A glance at the Louisiana Fish Records indicates that crappie may be more cyclic in Louisiana than many people think. Five of the Top 10 black crappie were caught in one year — 2003. Of the Top 10 white crappie, four were caught in 2016 and two in 2015.

Research indicates, at least with adult crappies, that white crappie are more effective than black crappie at capturing food items in water with poor visibility. Large white crappie are strong fish predators. Black crappie also eat fish, but gut checks during summer months will often show their stomachs — even those of large fish — jammed full of ¼-inch long, almost transparent midges (flying insects that resemble mosquitoes.) ■



**Jerald Horst** is a retired Louisiana State University professor of fisheries. He is an active writer, book author and outdoorsman. Jerald may be reached at [jerald@rockinghorst.com](mailto:jerald@rockinghorst.com).



Crappie are very popular fish with young and old, and many enthusiasts take their sport seriously.

# Non-Current Sales Event!!!

215 XTS



**NauticStar**  
BOATS

2140 Sport



Huge Indoor  
Showroom!!!

Save  
BIG!!!

Skeeter SX 210



**SKEETER**  
PERFORMANCE FISHING BOATS

SX 230



NEW  
Location

**dockside  
marine**

**YAMAHA**

63116 Hwy 10 Bogalusa, LA 70427  
Phone: (985) 732-7600

**dockside-marine.com**



SEA//TOW®

IDE WATER BOATS

presents

# THE BOAT SHOW

## In The Mercedes-Benz SUPERDOME

Covered • Safe • Parking  
Easy Access on and off I-10

**March 2 - 4, 2018**

**Friday, Mar. 2nd • 3 - 9 pm**

**Saturday, Mar. 3rd • 10 am - 10 pm**

**Sunday, Mar. 4th • 11 am - 6 pm**

**Admission: Adults \$10.00**

Children 5 - 12 \$5 under 5 FREE  
when accompanied by an adult

Major Boat Brands &  
Outboard Motors will be represented.

The Boat Show Is Brought To You By Your Local Dealers

For More Information, call  
Lionel Dowling • 504-376-3679

[www.boatshowneworleans.com](http://www.boatshowneworleans.com)



## ASK CAPT. PAUL

Capt. Paul Titus

# Myrtle Grove Edge Waypoints

**GOT A QUESTION FOR THE CAPTAIN?**  
EMAIL IT TO  
CAPT@LASMAG.COM

## SPOTLIGHT ON MYRTLE GROVE

### DYNAMITE WINTERTIME FISHING

The Myrtle Grove area provides one of the most diverse spots for fishing in the Louisiana coastal marshes. Wintertime fishing is great, but it also offers good fishing year round.

The consistently low winter tides also offer you a bonus of seeing some areas that have deeper holes, as well as recording locations of normally water-covered shallow reefs, islands and peninsulas that dot the landscape.

Myrtle Grove is usually defined by Bayou DuPont on the west and Wilkerson Bayou (not canal) by Lake Hermitage (Perez) on the east. Also, by Myrtle Grove Marina (at or about 29°37.921'N ~ 89°57.1069'W, 161 Marina Road, Port Sulphur, La, 70083, (504) 656-2267) on the north, and upper Barataria Bay on the south. Most of the fishing in this area is located near the main access points around Wilkerson Canal.

There is a “fish from the bank” location that charges a small fee to enjoy the privilege. However, main boating access is via Myrtle Grove Marina.

The marina is located on Marina Road off of La. Highway 23 just past Ironton. (It's about 36 miles on La. 23 south of the Belle Chasse bridge in Belle Chasse.)

The nearly straight run south from the launch on the canal to the upper reaches of Barataria Bay is only about 14 miles, a

### EDITOR'S NOTE:

Capt. Paul Titus' Fishing Edge program is available for 21 areas statewide, and features GPS waypoints for some of the most popular fishing destinations in Louisiana — including spots like Delacroix, Barataria Bay, Lake Pontchartrain, Calcasieu Lake, Vermilion Bay and many more.

To order a specific Edge file, go to Louisiana Sportsman's Sportsman Store ([www.sportsmangear.com](http://www.sportsmangear.com)) and select the location you're interested in. Remember, your order must include the brand of your GPS unit, your e-mail address and the selected area. (Edge files are NOT interchangeable, so make sure you enter your correct GPS brand.)

In Capt. Paul's columns for 2018, he'll be highlighting one of his Fishing Edge locations each month, along with some of his favorite spots at each site — and he's getting things started in January with Myrtle Grove.

short run for today's boating rigs.

Most of the fishing in the wintertime is in the canals and bayous using a slow jighead on the bottom.

The area also has been known to produce fish under birds in Lake Round, Laurier, Raquette Bay, and on the bottom in the many passes in and around these bays.

Naturally, wintertime fishing almost requires you to fish deeper holes in the area.

The Myrtle Grove Edge covers an area from the Wilkinson canal by Highway 23 to Barataria Bay, and from Bayou Dupont by the Lafitte Pen to West Pointe a la Hache.

It features more than 100 waypoints in and around Baptiste Bay, Lake Hermitage (Perez) along Bayou Du Pont, Wilkinson Bayou with its 15-foot deep hole and Wilkinson Bay, Wilkerson

Canal, Bay Chene Fleur and Raquette Bay.

It also has the location where the Four Pilings were located in the upper Barataria Bay area.

Some of my favorite fishing spots included in actual Edge waypoints for the Myrtle Grove area include:

### BOB'S REDFISH SPOT:

A small shallow water pond south-east of Bayou Dupont @ 29° 34.896' N ~ 89°58.2650'W. Approach quietly and fish the mouth of the pond.

### WILK 1:

A government reef at the northern part of Barataria Bay @ 29°27.3200'N ~ 89°58.2710'W. Look for the four pilings.

### WILK HOLE N:

There is a 15-foot hole here (Wilkerson Bayou - Wilkerson Bay) @ 29°27.7080'N ~ 86°54.3163'W.

### WELL SITE 5:

A small cut at West End Canal @ 29°31.7196'N ~ 89°59.1064'W. Fish the small cut at the west end of canal.

### LAKE LAURIER E:

A small island in the east side of lake @ 29°33.9840'N ~ 89°55.8852'W. Fish the windward side first, then the leeward side. (The western part of the island was once where Deer Range Bayou passed.)

Many spots on the Edge are locations that were once land points or islands that are now submerged — in addition to other visible and key navigation locations. As always, I suggest that you have a reliable compass and a map whenever you venture outdoors, especially if you're in an area that you're not familiar with.

And please remember the coastal marshes are a living estuary that is constantly changing. Some points, islands and bayous may have changed. Use caution whenever you navigate in any of the



www.SPORTSMANGear.com

marsh areas.

Also, do not trespass on any private land and please show other anglers respect while fishing.

All positions noted were determined using WGS84 Datum and stated as degrees and ten thousandths of a minute. (DDD.MM.mmmm)

Captain Paul's Fishing Edge will definitely give you an edge in navigating and fishing the Myrtle Grove area. ■



Capt. Paul Titus has been responding to GPS questions on LouisianaSportsman.com since 2000. He has been fishing and hunting in Louisiana since 1957. Titus holds a USCG license and conducts instruction courses in the use of GPS for private individuals and government agencies.

**DOWN EAST GUIDE SERVICE**  
 1907 Paulette Rd.  
 Morehead City, NC 28557  
 E-Mail: info@downeastguideservice.com  
 www.downeastguideservice.com



Costa Rica



42' Maverick, the Dragon Fly Not just fishing trips, also honeymoons, family and surf trips available. Packages include a variety of hotels and condo options, all ground transportation, guides, tours and fishing.

Also Costa Rica Tarpon Argentina Duck and Dove Hunting North Carolina Inshore/Offshore

Special discounts May-September

252-671-3474

*The Fishing*  
**EDGE**  
 by Captain Paul  
**MRGO - WAYPOINTS & ROUTES**  
 Around the new Hopedale Dam

**Only \$24.95**

- Contains over 170 W/P locations
- Gives the fisherman an advantage in getting to & finding fishing spots, moving around, and getting back from some of the more favorite fishing areas in the state
- Downloads directly into various GPS units
- Saves countless hours of manually entering waypoint values into the GPS receiver
- Are files are transmitted as an attachment to an email
- Attachment is IMPORTED into your mapping program and electronically downloaded into your GPS unit via GPS/Computer connection
- You must have an email address that will accept attachments on your incoming email

Some of the "EDGE" positions are underwater reef's, shoals, structures, and honey holes

**NEW LOCATIONS CONSTANTLY BEING ADDED**

All of the CAPTAIN PAUL'S FISHING EDGE of GPS WAYPOINTS are NOW available at the LOUISIANA SPORTSMAN'S OUTDOOR STORE which is located on the Louisiana Sportsman website

Capt. Paul Titus is Louisiana Sportsman's GPS expert

- to ask him a question go to [www.louisianasportsman.com](http://www.louisianasportsman.com)

**Click on the Louisiana Sportsman Outdoor Store on the Louisiana Sportsman home page at [www.lasmag.com](http://www.lasmag.com)**

**Captain Paul's Fishing Edge Files**

- Cocodrie-Dulac-Dularge
- Leeville East
- Leeville West - Terrebonne & Timbalier Bays
- Barataria Bay
- Lake Borgne
- Hopedale to the Mississippi Sound
- Hopedale MRGO to Bayou Terre aux Boeufs
- Delacroix to Point a la Hache
- Bayou Bienvenu
- Port Sulphur
- Lakes Ponchartrain & Maurepas
- Calcasieu Lake
- Myrtle Grove-Lake Hermitage
- Empire to Buras
- Pearl River WMA
- Lafitte
- The Rigolets
- Vermillion Bay
- Bayou Sauvage NWR
- Big Brans NWR
- MRGO WPS & Dam Routes

## FLY LINES

Catch Cormier

David Karcher, 9, won the New Orleans Fly Fishers summer tournament with this hefty Rio.

# AND THE FLOCKY GOES TO ....

THE BEST OF 2017  
— PLUS COMING  
ATTRACTIONS

## UPCOMING EVENTS

• **Jan. 20 (Sat) - Cenla Fly Fishing & Light Tackle Fest**, Kees Park, Pineville. 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Free admission. Seminars, fly tying, casting, exhibits, raffles and more. Hosted by the Kisatchie Fly Fishers, website [www.kisatchiefly.org](http://www.kisatchiefly.org).

• **Jan. 23 (Tue) - Fly Tying Clinic**, Bass Pro Shops, Denham Springs. 6:30 p.m. - 8 p.m. No cost. Bring your tools if you have some, materials provided. For those without tools, sets available for use during the session. For more info, call Ron at 225-271-3100.

• **Jan. 27 (Sat) - Orvis Travel Day**, 7601 Bluebonnet, Baton Rouge. 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. No cost. Seminars on various fly fishing destinations by resident guides. For more info, call 225-757-7286.

• **Feb. 10 (Sat) - Dr. Ed Rizzolo Fly Tying Festival**. Bethany Christian Church, 3223 Westheimer, Houston, TX. 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. \$10 adults, \$5 seniors, free under 12. For more info, go to [www.texasflyfishers.org](http://www.texasflyfishers.org).

**A**s we do every year at this time, we recognize fly fishing achievements in Louisiana with our FLC (Fly Lines column) awards.

We call them the "Flockys." (It's kind of like the Emmys, but for folks with real talent.)

## ANGLER OF THE YEAR

Some fly anglers love to post glory shots with fish. But good luck getting them to share information. Not so with Dr. Charles Miller. The Tulane University professor — who made some terrific catches this year — loves to share all the details with his fellow anglers. He also loves to help those new to our sport.

## FLY TIER OF THE YEAR

Ron Braud of Prairieville is recognized nationally for his detailed balsa pop-

ping bugs, known as "Stippled Poppers." He's active on several forums and on Facebook, helping fellow warm water tiers with his sage advice. Ron is also a frequent demo tier at various events across the South.

## EVENT OF THE YEAR

Mathew Roberts, Eric Ditch and other members of the Mission 6 organization held the first-ever "Fly Fishin For The Mission" saltwater fly fishing tournament in June. Held at Eddie's Kayak Rentals in Pointe-aux-Chenes, it was a huge success. We wrote all about it in the August column — check it out online at [louisianasportsman.com](http://louisianasportsman.com).

## CLUB OF THE YEAR

The Red Stick Fly Fishers had another great year of activities, including several group fishing trips covering fresh and saltwater. The club's philosophy of "more

>

time fishing” has great appeal to its 80-plus members, and they have a terrific website ([www.rsff.org](http://www.rsff.org)).

## VIDEO OF THE YEAR

Drew Ross, a.k.a. “LooknFishy,” spent a few days fishing the marsh with friends Scott Myers and Kevin Andry. His documentary of that trip, “Here Comes Fun - Fly Fishing Southeast Louisiana” is one of the best fly fishing videos I’ve ever seen. Thirty seconds into it and I was ready to head to the coast. Check it out at [looknfishy.blogspot.com](http://looknfishy.blogspot.com).

## BLOG OF THE YEAR

If you want another version of Drew’s trip, check out Scott Myers’ blog at [www.bayouchronicles.com](http://www.bayouchronicles.com). Myers, a professional photographer out of New Orleans, has perhaps the best photos you’ll ever see in any blog. It’s not always fly fishing, but it’s always a fascinating read.

## FISH OF THE YEAR

We have co-winners. Different species, but both prodigious — and caught by youngsters.

Nine-year-old David Karcher is the youngest member of the New Orleans Fly Fishers. At their summer tournament in City Park, he took first place with a 9 ¾-inch Rio Grande perch, which ate a red zebra midge.

Also this summer, 10-year-old Mathew Swank of Bozeman, Mont. landed a 30-pound redfish while fishing with Capt. Ron Ratliff south of Houma. The bull hit a purple and yellow Executioner fly.

## UPCOMING CONCLAVES

Conclave. Festival. Fair. Whatever you call them, these day-long events feature seminars, fly-tying demos, casting clinics and more.

continues on page 122

## TIPPETS

It’s rainbeaux trout time. In December, Baton Rouge Recreation (BREC) stocked several of their ponds with rainbow trout. By now, they’ve discovered that aquatic bugs and minnows have more food value than marshmallows.

Make sure your fly box has woolybuggers, mop flies, and beadhead nymphs. And even a few dry flies for mild afternoons. On slow days, suspend the nymphs under a small strike indicator.

Fly anglers in North Louisiana can enjoy this leaping species in its natural environment. Just three hours north of Shreveport, the Little Missouri River in Arkansas is year-round trout water. Winter is the prime stocking period. Try woolybuggers in the pools, and mop flies and beadhead nymphs in riffles.

Speaking of trout, this is the best month to catch the big coastal variety. On mild days, specks will emerge from deeper holes to feed on flats. Poppers and divers will get their attention. Other good patterns include Whitlock Baitfish, Seaducers and Coma Cocahos.

Water in the marsh ponds is low and clear. The *poisson rouge* will be cruising mud flats. A well-placed Borski Slider or Sandbar Mullet will entice strikes.

January is a great month for crappie in ponds and backwater areas. On overcast days, the fish will move to the shallows where a Fluff Butt a few feet under a strike indicator can bring home a good dinner. ■



**SOUTHERN  
OUTDOORS**  
& MARINE LLC

VISIT US AT THE  
20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
**SOUTHERN LA  
BOAT, SPORT & RV SHOW**  
JAN 5, 6 & 7  
AT THE  
HOUMA TERREBONNE CIVIC CENTER



**SKEETER**  
PERFORMANCE FISHING BOATS  
Eat. Sleep. Fish.

**BAY  
BOATS**  
SIZES FROM 20' TO 24'

SX200



**SPORTSMAN  
267**

SIZES AVAILABLE 18' TO 26'



**2000  
PURE BAY**

**BLUE WAVE**

**RULE THE BAY!**  
SIZES 19' - 26'

**2018 INCENTIVES  
AND  
SPECIAL PRICING  
ON ALL  
BOATS AND MOTORS!**



**G3 Boats**

**SPORTSMAN**  
NOW AVAILABLE IN  
16-19 LENGTHS

**G3 18CC**



**SOUTHERN  
OUTDOORS**  
& MARINE LLC

NOW WITH 2 LOCATIONS TO BETTER SERVE YOU  
1308 Canal Blvd., Thibodaux 985-447-4156  
2268 Grand Caillou Rd., Houma 985-873-7731  
[southernoutdoor@bellsouth.net](mailto:southernoutdoor@bellsouth.net)

Find us on  
Facebook  

Reliability Starts Here. 

**YAMAHA**

[www.LouisianaSportsman.com](http://www.LouisianaSportsman.com)

January 2018 | Louisiana Sportsman 121

# FLY LINES

continued



Ron Braud's Stippled Poppers are as much artwork as they are functional lures.

They're open to the public, and often free of charge.

The list of in-state events includes: The "Cenla Fly Fishing & Light Tackle Expo" in Pineville on Jan. 20, "Red Stick Day" in Baton Rouge on March 3 and the "Contraband Fly Fishing Expo" in Lake Charles July 13-14.

Regionally, there's the "Dr. Ed Rizzolo Fly Tying Festival" in Houston on Feb. 10, the "Little Mo Fly Fishing Festival" in Murfreesboro, Ark. on Feb. 18, and the "Gulf Coast Fly Fishing Fair" in Ocean Springs on Sept. 14-15.

In March, the Orvis store in Baton Rouge will again host the "Fly Fishing Film Tour." And on July 28, the North

Louisiana Fly Fishers will again hold their "Masters Series" in Bossier City.

## TOURNAMENTS

The "Fly Fishin' For The Mission" salt-water tournament returns to Pointe-aux-Chenes on April 28.

The 10th annual "Bass on the Fly" CPR (catch-photo-release) tournament will be held May 5 on Lake Fork in Texas. Last year, Louisiana anglers took the top two spots in the bream division, and two of the top four in the bass division.

On Oct. 8, the New Orleans Fly Fishers will again host their "Rio Grande Rodeo," a fly fishing tournament for the largest Rio cichlid.

These are just a few of the many activities slated for 2018. We list the upcoming ones in this monthly column, and a complete list can be found on the calendar page at [laflyfish.com](http://laflyfish.com). ■



**Glen 'Catch' Cormier**  
has pursued fish on the fly for 30 years. A certified casting instructor and renowned fly tier, he and his family live in Cotite.

# HANK'S

Satisfaction Guaranteed  
Since 1985

[www.hankos.com](http://www.hankos.com)



30120VB



247VWT



226VCC



2696VCC

985-385-3310

HONDA  
MARINE

MERCURY

SUZUKI  
MARINE

LIKE  
US ON



995 Utah Street  
Berwick, LA 70342

Monday - Thursday 8-5  
Friday 8-3

# SPORTSMAN<sup>®</sup>

## YEAR ROUND PERFORMANCE



- UPF 25+ Sun protection
- Quick-Dry Moisture Support
- Mid- and Lightweight
- Odor Control

**AVAILABLE NOW**  
in the sportsman store

[www.LouisianaSportsman.com](http://www.LouisianaSportsman.com)



# SPORTSMAN<sup>®</sup>

[www.SPORTSMANGear.com](http://www.SPORTSMANGear.com)

## GRUNTS & GOBBLES

David Moreland

This flock of turkeys the author saw in Bossier Parish included a bearded hen.

# ANOMALIES AND APPARITIONS

GOATS IN THE WOODS, BEARDED HENS ... AND THAT ELUSIVE NEW STATE RECORD TYPICAL BUCK

**B**&C bucks are an anomaly, and often are apparitions. One could say a buck that makes the Boone and Crockett Record Book is a rarity — a deviation from what is normal — that some might call a freak.

What is normal in Louisiana is for a quality or trophy buck to score about 130 B&C. Bucks that score above this mark are not too common, especially those

that hit the 160-plus mark.

It seems my column in the October Sportsman caused a stir in the deer community. I mentioned the fact that our state typical record of 184 6/8 killed by Don Broadway in 1943 has not been broken.

When I retired in 2007, I fully expected it to be replaced by a 185-or-better buck because of all the intense management that many private landowners were

undertaking. However, it has not happened — and perhaps it may never happen. My reasoning for this was that the changes in our deer habitat across the state has reduced the quality nutrition deer need. To compensate for this, many managers are intensely planting quality forage, and some have begun supplemental feeding year-round. And despite these efforts, the Broadway buck remains our No. 1 typical. But records are made

## IS A RECORD TYPICAL OUT THERE?

Despite hunters' best efforts, Don Broadway's 184 6/8-inch buck shot 74 years ago remains the state's No. 1-ranked typical deer. Do you think that record will ever be broken, or have changes in quality habitat statewide made it unbeatable?

to be broken, and there have been some very nice bucks killed this season so far. So who knows? The new state record may not be just an apparition, after all.

## WHO TURNED THE GOAT LOOSE?

Years ago, about the time compound bows were invented, I was bowhunting in one of my favorite spots in East Feliciana. The location was on the high bank of an intermittent creek in a mature stand of mixed pine/hardwoods. My old Amacker lite stand was attached to a big sassafras tree. I liked the idea that the stand would dig into the bark, and the aroma of the tree would help mask my scent.

It was a nice cold morning, but deer were not moving yet. As the sun rose higher in the sky and began to shine on the hillside above me, I noticed something white and brown running down the hill. My first thought about this critter heading in my direction was that somebody had turned a goat loose in the woods. But as the animal got closer I saw that it was not a goat, but a fawn — a piebald fawn. This is a genetic condition in deer that causes an abnormal brown and white coloration, and it's often referred to as a chromatic aberration.

A friend of mine in Clinton, John Chase, went hunting in November with his sons and some other Louisiana hunters in North Carolina. Bao Tang of Morgan City killed a fine piebald specimen there. A few years after my sighting of the piebald fawn, a hunter killed a piebald buck on property not too far from where I had seen that "goat." It was a 3 1/2-year-old and had survived for several seasons.

Another anomaly that hunters sometimes encounter is a turkey hen with a beard. I was hunting with my friend Ken on his lease in Bossier Parish back in November. The weather had gone from warm to hot, and deer movement was zero — but I had a nice flock of turkeys come out on the right of way that I was hunting. I grabbed my binoculars and began separating the boys from the girls.

Warm weather during November kept the native browse succulent, as evidenced by deer browsing on these stems of poke salad.



I had just glassed two jakes when I saw a beard hanging from another turkey. However, as I studied the turkey, I realized something was wrong; The bird with the 7-inch beard was a hen, not a tom.

Bearded hens are more common than piebald deer, but they are still an anomaly. My friend Jimmy Stafford writes in his book about wild turkeys that 1 in 25 turkey hens in Louisiana have beards. The bearded hen that I was looking at was obviously the boss hen of the group. The flock consisted of five jakes and eight hens, and it may have been her brood that she produced last spring. A bearded hen is still a hen, and only gobblers are fair game during the turkey season.

## NATIVE BROWSE REMAINS GOOD

Winter continues to be an apparition in the Bayou State. A nice cold front swept in at the end of November, but it did not bring freezing temperatures. October was a hot month, and November was warm, so the native browse just kept growing. I clipped the dove field in September and it regenerated a new crop of millet and sunflowers in November. In fact, the sunflowers were so large we were able to cut them and use them for decorations. Now this is not normal, even in our Gulf Coast environment.

While the food plots are green and lush, the native forage has also remained succulent. A large clump of poke salad popped up in the dove field, flowered

and produced fruit. The week before Thanksgiving I was walking around looking at the vegetation and saw that a deer had feasted on the poke salad one night — in fact, it just about ate it up. If this warm weather trend continues through deer season, those good bucks that seem to be abundant this year may turn into apparitions — especially that new state typical record. ■



Dave Moreland is the author of the new book *Louisiana Whitetails*, which explains how to grow big deer and where to hunt them. The book is available at [www.SportsmanGear.com](http://www.SportsmanGear.com) and at Amazon.com.

**PICK UP YOUR COPY TODAY**



[www.SportsmanGear.com](http://www.SportsmanGear.com)

## LURE REVIEW

Don Shoopman

Steve Porter, who created the Super Sally, holds a hawg he caught with one recently on Florida's Lake Okeechobee.



# THE SUPER SALLY

ONE OF BASS FISHING'S BEST KEPT SECRETS

**F**or many anglers, especially in the South, there have been epic trips with lots of unforgettable “Sally Time.”

They casted, retrieved and set the hook time and time again, catching largemouth bass, smallmouth bass and more on an in-line spinnerbait made by Hildebrandt — the Snagless Sally. While that lure still has its days, a newer, larger model with a specific appeal to bass anglers was designed by Steve Porter, who lives near the shore of Lake Okeechobee in Florida.

Hildebrandt's Super Sally now ushers in “Super Sally Time.” No one knows that better than Porter's good friend and Bassmaster Elite angler Bernie Schultz,

63, of Gainesville, Fla.

“It's not something you use every day,” Schultz said, “but when the situation's right, there's no better tool.”

After fishing with the Snagless Sally (the Super Sally's historic predecessor) in Taylor Bayou during the Bassmaster Elite tournament at Orange, Texas, in 2013, the time was right for him to use the Super Sally on the Calcasieu River in a Bassmaster Elite tournament out of Orange in 2015.

The move paid off.

“I caught the fish critical to making the cut” on a Super Sally adorned with a 3 ½-inch Yamamoto swimbait, he said about the bass he weighed in from the Calcasieu River.

“It was the perfect scenario for it, especially when the water started moving. They'd come out and kill that thing.”

## WHERE TO FISH IT

“Any time I fish tidal waters, I've got one tied on. You can throw it just about anywhere and get bit because of the flash and vibration,” Schultz said, noting his favorite of the eight colors available is chartreuse sexy shad. “Then it's only a matter of choosing the right color.”

At the Calcasieu River, Schultz targeted wood exclusively with the Super Sally, and at Taylor Bayou he fished hyacinth mats, some flooded trees and grass beds. Super Sallys are deadly when worked over vegetation with water over it, which



Perfect for targeting bigger fish and heavier cover, the Super Sally can be fished throughout the water column.

means it “works really well at high tide.”

They are made in ¼-, ⅜- and ½-ounce sizes with No. 3 ½, No. 4 and No. 4 ½ Colorado blades, respectively. Schultz said he uses the smaller size until he gets a limit, then switches to a larger one to target bigger bass.

Other Bassmaster Elite anglers use the Super Sally but for sponsorship reasons, they don’t always talk about it, Schultz said.

“There are a number of them that do, especially the ones who have been around a long time. They know and the guys around the Gulf Coast region, they know,” he said. “(But) they don’t talk about what a great weapon it is. It’s like one of the best kept secrets.”

One established Bassmaster Elite angler, Steve Kennedy of Auburn, Ala., used the Super Sally’s famous predecessor, the Snagless Sally, to catch some hefty bass in a WalMart FLW tournament on Sam Rayburn in April 2014. (To watch the video go to [www.youtube.com/watch?v=QwNVUjIouDs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QwNVUjIouDs).) He put an Uncle Josh Pork Rind on the Snagless Sally.

Porter, 78, had a better idea when he made a pitch to beef up the Snagless Sally.

“I thought if I could come up with a bigger Snagless Sally, it could be a sure thing,” Porter said, adding he started working on it about four years ago and after a couple years, the finished product was in the catalog.

“It’s a great looking bait and it works as good as it looks,” he said, noting he insisted it have a silicone skirt.

## SUPER SALLY’S DESIGNER

If anyone could build a bigger, better Snagless Sally, Porter could, according to Schultz.

“He’s got a wealth of knowledge. He’s a very innovative guy. He is the pioneer of the “Okeechobee big blade,” he said.

Porter has impressive credentials as an inventor and designer. He was a partner in the launch several decades ago of the WeedMaster Trolling Motor Weed Guard, a cone that fits around the lower unit of a trolling motor. When Porter showed it at outdoors shows he always wound up, as fate would have it, next to the Hildebrandt Company booth — and in 1972 befriended Alan Hildebrandt and his wife, Edie, from Indiana.

Porter told Hildebrandt he wanted to make spinnerbaits with oversized blades in an effort to match the golden shiners — which grow as big as 12 inches — that were so prevalent in Florida lakes. Hildebrandt always responded by saying he was in the spinnerbait business — not the blade business.

To Porter’s surprise, though, a box of big blades was delivered a year or two later, and that started the wheels in motion.

Porter’s initial claim to fame, although a more recognizable name stole his thunder, was coming up with the first big-bladed spinnerbait that evolved into the “Okeechobee Special.” Hildebrandt blades were the first applied to the new concept for a big-bladed spinnerbait, first with an Indiana blade, then with a willowleaf blade.

Porter began trying his creation out in 1974 and eventually settled on a No. 3 ½ Colorado blade in the front and a No. 7 willowleaf in the back. While he prefers that combination, he also recommends a No. 3 or 3 ½ Colorado in front of a No. 6 willowleaf.

That was Porter’s beginning with Hildebrandt. Both Porter and Schultz have been associated for many years with Hildebrandt, which was purchased in 2006 by Yakima Bait Co.

## ELITE ANGLER BERNIE SCHULTZ ON THE SUPER SALLY:

**TACKLE:** My preferred rod choices range from 6’-6” to 6’-10” medium-heavy graphite baitcasting ... usually the Shimano Expride series. I pair them with Shimano Curado-K or Chronarch reels in high-speed ratios (7:1 or 8:1).

I spool them with mono or braid, depending on the water clarity and/or thickness of the cover I’m fishing. For loose or thin cover and clear water, I’ll go with 15- to 17-pound Sufix Superior copolymer line. For heavier cover or dirty water, I use Sufix 832 braid, 30- to 40-pound test.

**FAVORITE COLORS:** Chartreuse sexy shad, smokey shad, pearl and black-red.

Color selection will depend on what type of baitfish the bass are feeding on, or the current weather conditions. Dark colors on dark days, brighter colors on bright days, or when certain baitfish are on the menu.

**COVER OPTIONS:** Lily pads, flooded grass, cypress trees and along mats of floating vegetation.

**KEY SITUATIONS:** Great tidal river tool in grass or around wood. Excellent in current, too.

**BEST CHARACTERISTICS:** Easy to fish, weedless and will come through just about any type of cover.

## NO. 5 BLADE WOULD BE GREAT

So many years later, Porter’s Super Sally has taken center stage. It is marketed with No. 3 ½, No. 4 and No. 4 ½ blades — but Porter likes a No. 5.

“If Hildebrandt would bring a No. 5 out, that’d please me greatly. A No. 4 works, but a No. 5 really gets their attention,” he said.

He’s very protective of the few Super Sallys he has with a No. 5 blade.

“Every time I go out I have one tied on. I’m kind of real careful with it. I cut and retie,” he said. “I don’t want to lose any with 5s.”

For more information on the Super Sally, Snagless Sally and other Yakima Bait Co. products, go to [yakimabait.com](http://yakimabait.com), call (509) 854-1311 or send an email to [ybcinc@yakimabait.com](mailto:ybcinc@yakimabait.com). ■



Don Shoopman fishes for freshwater and saltwater species mostly in and around the Atchafalaya Basin and Vermilion Bay. He moved to the Sportsman’s Paradise in 1976, and he and his wife June live in New Iberia. They have two grown sons.

## GAME WARDEN

Keith LaCaze

A compass is still the most basic and reliable navigation tool. **INSET:** Wildlife agents frequently rescue lost boaters — good boating skills and intimate knowledge of area waterways are keys to success.

**GOT A QUESTION FOR THE KEITH?**  
EMAIL IT TO  
KLACAZE15@ATT.NET

## LOST & FOUND

A COMPASS OR HANDHELD GPS ARE VITAL IF YOU GET "TURNED AROUND"



I don't recall exactly who said it, but a famous outdoorsman once quipped that he had never actually been lost — but there had been times when he hadn't known where he was for a few days.

That statement has been around quite a while, and has something to do with the fact that no outdoorsman will ever admit to being flat out, hopelessly lost.

In the movie "The Big Country," Gregory Peck and Charlton Heston's characters didn't like each other very much. In one scene, Heston accused Peck of being lost on the Montana prairie, which Peck denied.

I am a huge Gregory Peck fan, so I'm sure he wasn't lost. Anyway, that and a few other things led to a late-night fist fight out behind the bunkhouse.

An accusation of being lost is still the highest form of insult one might fling at any outdoorsman worth his compass. Turned around a little? Maybe. But lost? Never.

By my own definition, lost is when one has been missing so long that a search party is required to go out and find the victim and lead him or her out of the woods.

"Turned around a little" is when it takes longer than anticipated to find the truck, but the feat is eventually accomplished without assistance. So, um, yes, I have been turned around a few times. But never lost ....

### SEARCH AND RESCUE

Seriously though, people do get lost and search and rescue (SAR) operations are the responsibility of wildlife enforcement agents as stated in Louisiana's Emergency Response Plan. Aside from massive responses to hurricanes or floods, day-to-day SAR typically involves

lost or overdue boaters or hunters.

In Louisiana, getting lost while hunting is not very common. During my time in the field, there were very few occasions requiring a search for anyone missing in the woods. On one occasion, confusion about who would pick up a young hunter at his deer stand at dark led to a search response. We searched the woods for an hour or so until the father, who had found the stand empty when he returned for the boy, learned other family members had already retrieved him. In a few other cases, the missing hunter was not actually lost but was unable to move due

to an injury, or dead as a result of sudden illness like a heart attack.

I think the reason we don't have more lost hunters today is due to how we hunt here. Most hunts require only a short walk to and from a deer stand, and stalking-type hunts don't typically cover a lot of ground. The days of long walks in remote areas before daylight or after dark are pretty much gone due to the use of ATVs and the trails created for them.

Far more common are missing or overdue boaters. Anyone who has ever motored through a maze of cypress- and tupelo-lined bayous, bays and lakes typical to all of Louisiana will understand how easy it is to get lost.

It all looks the same, so exactly which one of those bayous did we emerge from, and was that last turn a right or a left? Wildlife agents are at their best when finding a lost boater. This is due in large part to being very familiar with the patrol area. That knowledge and knowing the mistakes others have made in the past have led to many timely rescues.

I once received a late-night call from a worried father. His son and a friend had gone on an afternoon fishing trip to the Saline/Larto Lakes area. It is a large and confusing collection of lakes and connecting bayous, and the boys had not returned. I asked the father to meet another agent and me at the boat landing. His son's truck and boat trailer were not at this landing, and the father said he suspected they had launched at a different location.

I had a pretty good idea where to look and headed that way. Several miles in we spotted a searchlight which belonged to our missing boys. They were lost and out of fuel. One of their first questions was how we found them so quickly. The other agent and I smiled at each other and explained. While returning to their landing they had approached a hard-to-recognize fork on the bayou. The

left fork leading to the landing is small and hard to see. They, like many others, had missed the turn.

## A COMPASS IS CRUCIAL

So how do we avoid getting "a little turned around." First, get a compass and learn to use it. My trusty old Lensatic compass is always with me, whether on familiar ground or not. Next, if possible, become familiar with the area where you hunt or fish. In new territory use a map and recognizable landmarks. Finally, consider a handheld GPS navigation unit. Prices are reasonable, and I've seen them on sale for \$200 dollars. My New Year's resolution is to get one — and then

### HOT TIP:

If you're not familiar with the area where you're hunting or fishing, consider getting an affordable handheld GPS unit. If it gets you back to your landing or camp before you have to spend the night outdoors, it'll be the best money you ever spent.

learn to use it.

After all, who wants someone like Charlton Heston sneering at them saying, "You were lost!" ■



Retired Wildlife Enforcement Lieutenant Colonel **Keith LaCaze** spent 34 years with the LDWF beginning in 1977. LaCaze is happily married to wife Mitzi and the father of two children.

# SOUTHERN POWER & EQUIPMENT, LLC

802 Hwy 182, Houma  
985-851-1242  
sales@spehouma.com

Meet the Pack.

Authorized Kioti dealer/  
large selection from 22-110HP

KIOTI  
Kioti.com

Excel in your field™ **LS** Tractor  
BECAUSE PEACE OF MIND  
**SHOULDN'T**  
BE AN OPTION

Authorized LS Tractor Dealer

UP TO 6 YEAR WARRANTY

Now Offering Marine And Industrial Engines By **SCANIA**

NORTHERN LIGHTS MAGNUM ZE JOHN DEERE BRIGGS & STRATTON TWIN DISC VISA

## STICKS AND STRINGS

Sammy Romano



# A CROSSBOW BUILT FOR SUPREME ACCURACY

MISSION'S SUB-1 IS THE LATEST DESIGN FROM AN INDUSTRY LEADER

Mission's SUB-1 crossbow promises minute-of-angle accuracy thanks to a number of design improvements, including the Sync X Cam System (inset).

**A** little over a year ago, I heard rumblings that Matt McPherson and his engineers at Mission Crossbows were working on a revolutionary new crossbow design that would raise the bar for the entire industry.

As CEO and chief engineer of Mathews and Mission Archery, McPherson has been responsible for a lot of the innovations in bow design over the last 25-plus years, so I was anxiously awaiting the results. In October, my wait ended when Mission Crossbows unveiled the SUB-1, and I was not disappointed.

This crossbow does what its name implies, delivering sub-1-inch groups at 100 yards, and with less noise and recoil than any crossbow I've ever shot. The Mission SUB-1 shoots an arrow using what their engineers call "controlled acceleration." There is literally no thump or recoil at the shot. Also, the arrow leaves the flight deck in a smooth, controlled manner, with less flexing and loss of energy leading to better consistency. Everything about the Mission SUB-

1's design revolves around delivering supreme accuracy.

## TOTAL ACCURACY BEGINS WITH A PERFECT FOUNDATION

The SUB-1's foundation is a CNC-machined aluminum I-beam. This is extremely rigid and durable, providing a precision flight deck to launch arrows from, thereby eliminating any vertical nock travel. It is joined to a CNC machined aluminum stock which insures a tight fit, reducing noise while further enhancing accuracy. The stock's fore grip and AR style pistol grip are both over molded for an ergonomic/sure grip. The rear stock is fully adjustable with a wide range of length of pull, and also features an adjustable cheek comb with 1.25 inches of height adjustment.

The Mission SUB-1 utilizes short, wide limbs borrowed from Mathews' proven vertical bow technology. These shorter, wider limbs are very rigid, distributing stress better and providing more torsional stability for greater consistency.

These are attached to the riser with Mission's adjustable limb retention system, allowing the shooter to customize the draw weight of their SUB-1 to fit their individual needs. The SUB-1 does not require the use of a foot stirrup, using the back of the riser as a foot rest. This serves to reduce noise, while at the same time increasing power stroke and therefore arrow speed. For those who want a more traditional design, foot stirrups are



## A ONE-OF-A-KIND FEATURE:

Anyone who has ever hunted with a crossbow knows how annoying it is to have to unload their crossbow by shooting it after the hunt. Over my many years in the archery industry, I've seen countless arrows destroyed during this process, and several injuries caused by unwise attempts to bypass the trigger to avoid having to shoot the crossbow. The SUB-1 has a button that allows the user to SAFELY unload the crossbow without firing it, using only the cocking aid. There are many things I love about my new SUB-1, but this is my favorite feature of all.

available as an accessory.

The SUB-1 is powered by the Sync X Cam System, which eliminates any possibility of horizontal nock travel while providing 80 percent let off for easy cocking. This cam system delivers up to 350 fps of arrow speed, yet is as quiet as, or quieter than, many vertical compound bows. The Zebra string and cables are served for a majority of their length, requiring a minimum amount of maintenance. The cams have sealed bearings, eliminating the need to oil or lubricate them. The SUB-1 comes with a standard rope cocking aid, and because of its high let off, cocks very easily — but it will also accept Mission Crossbow's RSD crank cocking device.

## A NEW BENCHMARK IN TRIGGER DESIGN

At the heart of the Mission Crossbows SUB-1 lies the revolutionary Benchmark Fire Control System that was over two years in development. This system features a two-stage, match-grade trigger that utilizes a fully contained rolling sear set at only 3.4 pounds. This is honestly the best trigger I've ever felt on any crossbow. It also features the Easy-Load bolt retention arm, which allows for easy loading while applying optimal downward pressure on the arrow. It is topped with a rigid 7075 aluminum scope rail to eliminate flex and further enhance accuracy.

Perhaps the best feature

of both the Benchmark Fire Control System and the entire SUB-1 is its one of a kind de-cocking button. This allows the shooter to safely and almost effortlessly de-cock the crossbow.

The Mission SUB-1 is a totally new crossbow design, and is the most accurate crossbow I've ever shot. It is compact at only 30.25 inches long, 13.8 inches wide uncocked, and 10.7 inches wide when cocked. It weighs 7.5 pounds, has a 200-pound draw weight and a 13.75-inch power stroke, sending arrows downrange at a respectable 350 fps. Its 80 percent let off makes it a pleasure to both cock and de-cock, as well. The SUB-1 is available in both black and Under Armour Ridge Reaper forest camo. Like all Mathews/Mission products, it features their unparalleled lifetime warranty with some of the best customer service in the entire industry. As soon as I shot one I ordered my own, and I recommend you stop into your local Mission Crossbows retailer and shoot one when you have time. I guarantee you'll be glad you did. ■



Sammy Romano is a lifelong hunter who has worked in the archery industry for more than 24 years. His expertise includes compounds and crossbows. He can be reached at samboka31@aol.com.

# Land. Homes. Getaways.

Licensed in  
Mississippi and  
Louisiana

DOUG  
**RUSHING**  
REALTY INC.

Buy With Confidence Sell With Success

**McCOMB**  
311 Apache Dr.  
McComb, MS 39648  
601-249-3400

**TYLERTOWN**  
301 Franklinton St.  
Tylertown, MS 39667  
601-876-3409

**DougRushingRealty.com**

**Double Side Pit Blind**

**Pit Blinds**

- Aluminum & Steel
- Available in 3, 4, 5, 7, & 8 man blinds

**Crawfish Track Boat**

**Track Boat**

Check Out our Video on Youtube "Quirk Track Boat"

Quirk's Welding

3712 Hwy. 10 • Washington, LA 70589  
337-826-WELD (9353) • 337-945-0226  
[www.quirkswelding.com](http://www.quirkswelding.com)

We Also Offer Single Sided Pit Blinds

Dugout Pit Blind

## HAPPY TRAILS

Bill Garbo

This buck has the classic body build of a mature deer 5½ years or older, in spite of its paltry antlers.



# RATE THAT BUCK

IF A "BIG OL' MATURE BUCK" IS YOUR GOAL, LEARN HOW TO RECOGNIZE ONE

TEALTHCAM®

08:44PM 10/18/17 62E

STEALTH CAM

**W**ell, we once again find ourselves at the close of another year and headed straight into the clutches of what passes for winter here in the Deep South.

As the new year begins, if a line drawn on a map of Mississippi represented the current geographical boundary of peak breeding and rutting activity, much like a blue, saw-toothed line represents a cold front on a television weather map, it would depict a diagonal line running roughly from southwest generally to northeast at about mid-state, with the line slowly moving and transitioning toward the southeast. This means that deer hunters across Mississippi, depending on exactly where they hunt, experience a wide variation of rut timing and peak breeding dates.

Moving from north to south, the conditions and challenges relative to seeing and bagging rutting bucks is directly

dependent on the calendar and a hunter's location.

One common theme, though, can be found from one end of the state to the other: if bagging a fully mature buck is on your annual bucket list, a you must have a good understanding of your quarry. You can travel the state and ask different hunters what they're after, and get what sounds like the exact same answer. "Oh, I'm after a big ol' mature buck." As far as a buck's age, our imaginary hunter could mean anything from an adult 3½-year-old, to a mature 4½-year-old, or even a 5½- to 7½-year-old buck — the latter being truly old.

A lot of it has to do with a given hunter's level of experience in the woods and overall knowledge of buck behavior, and exactly what visual characteristics are indicative of buck age.

It is not particularly hard to peg a buck's age — as viewed on-the-hoof — up to 3½ years of age. Beyond 3½, it becomes defi-

nately harder, and age estimates made by hunters on bucks older than 3½, by eyeball or trail-camera photos, tend to be surprisingly inaccurate. Over the years, my experience and observations have been that pre-harvest age estimates of bucks made by a lot of hunters tend to fall a year or two older than what ground-check reality reveals. I think the situation though has been getting progressively better over the past few years as hunters have become more educated and experienced regarding aging deer on-the-hoof.

Let's look at what visual clues are indicative of buck age from the age of 3½ on. A 3½-year-old buck is considered an adult, and as such, its has become heavily muscled, particularly in the neck and shoulders. This is the first time a buck's front shoulders and neck appear to be swollen, but you can still discern a break where the neck meets the shoulders.

The buck will have a racehorse look



This buck in mid-September velvet just screams "fully mature." Look at how the heavily muscled neck blends seamlessly into the shoulder.

**TELLTALE SIGNS:**

As a whitetail buck matures, its body undergoes changes that allow hunters to more accurately estimate its age: the size and stain of its tarsal glands, the sag of its heavy belly, the comparative size of its neck and front shoulders. Hunters who truly want to target an older, trophy deer need to know how to recognize those changes.

If a buck reaches the ripe old age of 5½ to 7½, the body will be heavily muscled, but signs of aging will have appeared. Its stomach will sag, and the back will have a sway-back look. The legs will appear to be noticeably short for the body. At this stage, the antlers are typically expressing 90 to 100 percent of their ultimate genetic potential, and past the age of 5½ the antlers can even begin to regress. The leg tarsals will be large heavily stained, even all the way to the hoof. ■

with a relatively straight back and stomach line. Having a thin waist, the chest is noticeably deeper than the hindquarters. The buck's legs will finally appear to fit its body and not appear too long. At this age, a buck's antlers will begin to have decent mass and will be carrying overall somewhere between 50 to 75 percent of the buck's genetic potential. A buck's tarsal glands are still relatively small but will become darkened during the rut.

At 4½, a mature buck will still have

some growth potential left. A buck's heavily muscled neck will blend right into its chest and shoulders. The waistline will be even with the bottom of the belly, and the legs will begin to appear to be a little short for the body. The belly line will be relatively straight, showing no apparent sag. The buck's antlers will be expressing between 75 and 90 percent of their ultimate genetic potential, and the deer will have large, darkly stained tarsal glands.



Bill Garbo is a petroleum engineer and avid whitetail hunter from Madison, Miss. He has lived and hunted out west and taken numerous big game species, but hunting big old mature southern whitetail bucks is his favorite pursuit by a country mile.

# HELP WANTED

We are looking for drivers to deliver the Louisiana **SPORTSMAN** Magazine.

*If You Love to Fish, Hunt and Meet People You Qualify!*

Circulation experience helpful but not necessary  
dependable vehicle & a valid LA drivers license a must. If you have 3-5 days a month to help spread the word I would like to hear from you!

Please Contact: **Ricky Naquin**,  
Circulation Director @ 985-859-7744 -or- rickyn@lasmag.com



## Marine Construction Supplies



**Complete Line of**  
 ■ TIMBERS ■ LUMBER ■ HARDWARE  
 ■ POLES ■ PILINGS

(All Materials for Raising Houses & Camps)

Vinyl Sheetpiling  
 Manufactured  
 by Tidewall

**MCM Lumber Co.**  
 4546 Hwy. 357  
 Opelousas, LA 70570  
 (800) 880-1448  
 or  
 (337) 948-3601  
 Charlie Hebert  
 Jamey Kelly  
 Mike Higginbotham

## PADDLES 'N PUDDLES

Chris Holmes

# BAYOU CATFISHING

CATCHING REALLY BIG FISH — IN A REALLY SMALL BOAT



**Chris Holmes** has kayak fished in the Gulf of Mexico, the Atlantic and Pacific oceans and many places in between. He can be reached at [cholmes@att.net](mailto:cholmes@att.net).

**C**atfish are available in almost all freshwater areas of the state. Regularly caught in lakes, bayous and rivers, these fish provide great food and sport. However, they also provide an opportunity for kayak anglers to catch some true giants. The three species available in Louisiana are blue, channel and flathead catfish. The current No. 1 state record blue cat is 114 pounds, while the top channel cat is 30.31 pounds and the best flathead went 95 pounds. (The top three blue cats all weighed more than 100 pounds.)

While officially classified as freshwater fish, changes in hydrology across coastal Louisiana have many areas much more brackish — and these big cats are regularly being caught in areas that now support a mixed variety of species. While many of these catches are coming accidentally while fishing for speckled trout and redfish, some kayak anglers are catching on to the opportunity and honing their skills to specifically target these delicious brutes.





Catfish lurk in the shadows of large structures like boats, docks and bridges where they hide and ambush prey. Kayak anglers tucked into these areas and used a sliding cork to get the bait near the hull of this anchored boat.

Joshua Bourg lives in Larose, and is an avid kayak fisherman. On the water every chance he gets, it's not uncommon to see weekly social media posts of the fish he catches while on his lunch break: big reds, big drum and big catfish. I recently took a trip with Bourg down the bayou to get a glimpse into his catfishing routine. After throwing a cast net to get some fresh mullet for bait, we launched at a private launch and headed into the Intracoastal Canal.

### HOW TO CATCH 'EM

"We use various techniques like trolling, sliding corks and straight bottom rigs depending on the conditions and what the fish want on a particular day," Bourg said.

On this day, the wind and current were moving pretty hard so Bourg suggested tucking into the bank and fishing near rock piles, a bridge and anchored vessels. The first stop was a little

slow with only a couple of missed fish. We then moved down current about a half-mile and posted up out of the wind near some large vessels that appear to have been anchored for quite a while. Casting right up to the bow, Bourg set the hook on a giant blue that put up a great fight before being wrestled into the 'yak. Several more were caught, including a big flathead. Different cut baits were tried as well as live minnows, but the fresh cut mullet proved to be what they wanted.

### RIGGING UP FOR CATS

Make no mistake that these fish can be heavy and are tough fighters. You definitely don't want to be tangling with them on your trout rod. Bourg's recommendation for gear is a stout rod and reel with minimum line size of 30 pounds for blues, or at least 40 pounds if you're looking for flatheads.

**CONTINUES >**

## PADDLES 'N PUDDLES

continued

V

"The blues will usually run straight out, but the flatheads nearly always head for rocks and cover," he said. "You need strong line to handle them and keep them from breaking you off."

Circle hooks in the 8/0 to 10/0 size work well on these big fish. Just be sure to not to fill the hook with bait, or it won't be able to turn and anchor as it is designed to do. When using a large chunk of cut bait, put the hook through near the top and just under the fin root to hold it on the hook, but leave the inner circle of the hook clear.

Bourg fishes big cats year-round, but prefers the cooler months because it's always a fight to keep the crabs from eating your bait in the summertime.

"That's where the balloons or sliding corks work well," Bourg said. "They keep the bait suspended off the bottom and make it more difficult for the crabs to feed on it."

Catfish are true predators and not simply scavenger fish as many people think.

"I've seen blue cats that were probably 100 pounds schooling up bait and aggressively feeding," he said. "There's nothing like seeing those big fish roll and slap the water with their tails."

Bourg is hooked on catching big fish — and there's no better way than doing it in a kayak.

"Every time you put your line out, you never know how big the fish will be," he said.

Bourg's personal best is a blue about 65 pounds, but he says he knows he's lost a 100-pounder. ■



## DRYARMOR GUN CASE BY KOLPIN

Kayaks are for hunting too, but carrying a valuable firearm in a kayak demands special protection. The new Kolpin DryArmor gun cases offer exactly what the name implies — it keeps your gun dry with armor-tough protection. Offered in both shotgun and rifle models, duck and big game hunters can now safely kayak their valuable guns to their hunting area. The cases have fully welded seams and waterproof zippers. They are submersible, and float up to 30 pounds. A waterproof interior pocket offers additional protection for keys, wallets and other valuables. With two types of closed-cell foam for flotation and shock protection, the cases boast a soft fabric liner that keeps your gun scratch-free. The tough outer fabric boasts strategically placed polycarbonate panels that protect the action and optics. Featuring a padded shoulder strap and carry handle, the DryArmor case has Hypalon reinforcements at all high-wear locations. These are the toughest cases you will find. MSRP: \$229.99.

**More information: [www.kolpin.com](http://www.kolpin.com)**

## NEW GEAR REVIEWS

### YAK GEAR AMBUSH KAYAK DUCK BLIND

Kayaks are increasingly seeing double duty as great waterfowl hunting boats. While some kayaks are available in camouflage, the vast majority come in solid, often bright, colors. But Yak Gear has solved the problem of hiding you and the 'yak from a duck's great vision. The RealTree Max5 camo pattern blends well with a wide variety of marsh and wetland terrain, and numerous vegetation loops allow for adding additional concealment with local grass and brush on location. The universal size and shape fits a wide variety of kayaks, canoes and small boats from 12- to 14 feet long and up to 38 inches wide. The blind is made of rip-stop nylon material to prevent tears, and it cinches down around the kayak with rope drawstrings. There are two concealment flaps that cover the hunter in a lay-out type position and easily flip open when it's time to shoot. A large Velcro flap provides easy access to the real tank well. The Yak Gear Ambush kayak cover virtually turns your 'yak into a large layout blind. It's easy to put on and take off, and you can be set up and ready to hunt in just a few minutes. MSRP: \$199.99.

**More information: [www.yakgear.com](http://www.yakgear.com)**

**BEST BETS UP NEXT >**

\*Due the lag time from information to print, weather conditions can change the bite so check in regularly with [LouisianaSportsman.com](http://LouisianaSportsman.com) for the latest updates.

## JANUARY'S BEST BETS

### FRESHWATER

**Where:** Valentine Lake

**What:** Bass (Catfish and panfish also available)

**How:** This little lake in the Kisatchie National Forest near Alexandria is a hidden gem for kayak anglers. Motorized boating isn't allowed, so the 46-acre lake doesn't get much attention from bass anglers that fish in power boats. The lake was fully under the radar until May of 2010, when Regina Womak caught the No. 2 Louisiana state record bass from her kayak on Valentine. The beast weighed in at 15.87 pounds, but reports are that if it had been weighed in sooner it would be the top bass ever caught in the state. The lake underwent a drawdown and habitat improvements several years ago, and is perfect for kayakers to catch some great bass. Although small, a depth/fish finder is a great tool to locate winter fish that are holding deep to ledges and drop-offs. Bait presentation should be precise and slow. Jigs, drop-shot worms and jigging spoons make targeting lethargic winter bass a strategic operation. Find where the fish are holding and slowly send the baits down to them. Use of slow-jigging strokes and subtle presentation helps trigger bites from inactive fish.

**Launch:** There is no specific boat launch since there are no motor boats allowed. Launching is by drag or carrying from designated day-use parking areas. There are also several inexpensive rustic camping sites that have launch access to the nearby lake. A few of the campsites are situated lakeside.

**Insider tip:** Day use is from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m. and there is no cost. This is not an issue for winter fishing as later starts are better to give time for the temperature to warm up a bit.

[www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/kisatchie/recreation/recarea?recid=34643&actid=70](http://www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/kisatchie/recreation/recarea?recid=34643&actid=70)

### SALTWATER

**Where:** Hopedale

**What:** Speckled trout, redfish

**How:** January can be a slow month, but with a warm winter so far, fishing has been fantastic. Hopedale offers close paddles and an endless choice of lagoons, bays and canals to fish under a variety of winter conditions. The best bet is for speckled trout in Hopedale Lagoon and Lake Ameda. The easiest method is to slow troll or drift soft plastics. Color selection is a matter of choice, but the general rule of clear water/lighter colors holds true. The key is using light jigheads to minimize snags as the lure is slowly pulled

behind the kayak. Use a 1/8- to 1/16-ounce quality head and let out enough line to keep the lure bouncing on the bottom. Fish can be found from near the bank out to the middle, so drift or troll in straight lines. If you catch fish on a particular run, paddle wide around the area, back to the starting point and repeat. If no fish are caught, move over about 20 yards and try again. The reason this presentation is successful is because it brings the bait to the fish since they are generally less aggressive in the cold water. Try dead shrimp under a cork for redfish around drains and points along the shoreline.

**Launch:** There is a backdown concrete launch at the old Pip's Place just past Hopedale Bayou. There's a \$5 honor box to pay launch fees. Access Hopedale Lagoon via a short paddle up Bayou La Loutre and through Hopedale Bayou.

**Insider Tip:** Launch a little later to avoid early morning duck hunters. Fish the mouth of Hopedale Bayou as it enters Hopedale Lagoon — it can often be a one-stop shop.

**BELOW:** Robyn Bordelon drifted a chunk of mullet just above the bottom to catch this nice cat. Balloons or sliding corks work great to keep the bait off the bottom and free from snags as it moves with the current.



**BIG BLUE UP NEXT >**

# NEW ORLEANS GIRL CRAFTS CREATIVE CRAB CUISINE

Two things quickly become obvious about Dana Ranna Venezia. She is a focused, highly organized person, and of all the things that she cooks, she loves crabmeat the most.

Dana is an associate director for Verizon Wireless Outside Business Sales, essentially running the whole state of Louisiana, supervising 26 employees out of three offices.

Twelve to 14-hour days are routine for her. She wears a headset and earpiece all day.

It's stressful — so she cooks.

"Cooking is my love and my passion. I de-stress when I cook," she said.

She approaches cooking like she approaches

her job, with meticulousness and attention to detail. Even though the recipes she cooks are her originals, she measures every ingredient — every time.

Strangely, she didn't eat seafood until she was an adult. Her first experience was marinated crab claws at Mandina's Restaurant in New Orleans.

Growing up in the Gentilly neighborhood of the city (she's a Lakeview resident now), she identified most strongly with the Italian side of her heritage.

"Italian families are very close," she explained. "You are expected to be at the family matriarch's home for Sunday dinners. We had one of three things: spaghetti and meatballs, daube or meat sauce."

As for seafood, let her explain it.

"I am very picky about seafood. Crawfish look like roaches to me. I will eat shrimp, but not if they are not de-veined — forget it! And no raw oysters — ugh.

"I do eat white fish like catfish and tilapia — I like mild fish.

"Crabmeat is my favorite seafood. But I don't eat boiled crabs; I don't eat soft-shells either. I love crabmeat and I love crab cakes," she said, rolling her steel blue eyes. ■



The exotic vegetal taste of artichoke bottoms pairs perfectly with crab cakes. **INSET:** Dana Ranna Venezia works hard and cooks to relax. Crabmeat is her favorite seafood.

# CRAB CAKE-STUFFED ARTICHOKE BOTTOMS

"This dish is my invention, based on a twist from an Iron Chef party at my house," Venezia said. "The winning dish was an artichoke bottom. I loved it and it tasted good, but I wanted to incorporate crabmeat in it.

"I tried it on my father and he liked it, but I toyed with the sauce. I married two sauces, lemon/butter/garlic with elements of a remoulade sauce." ■

## PREPARATION: Serves 4.

Inspect the crabmeat for shells, rinse in a colander, and set aside to drain. Sauté the onions, celery and bell peppers in 3 tbsp. olive oil in a pan until soft. Add three cloves minced garlic, Italian Seasoning, 1/2 tsp. salt and 1/2 tsp. black pepper. Sauté for one to two more minutes. Add 1/2 tbsp. lemon juice, bread crumbs, 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese, egg and mayonnaise. Mix well, then gently fold in the crabmeat. Form the mixture into crab

cakes about the size of the artichoke bottoms. Refrigerate until ready to stuff the artichokes. Fry both sides of the artichoke bottoms in 1/2 cup olive oil over medium heat until lightly browned. Once the artichokes have cooled stuff them with the crab cakes. In another pan, sauté eight cloves garlic in two sticks of melted butter for 30 seconds to cook off the rawness and allow the aroma to hit its peak. Add 4 tbsp. olive oil, the juice of two lemons, capers, and Dijon mustard. Sauté an additional 1-2 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside. Break the fettuccine in half

and cook according to the directions on the package. Make a sauce for the fettuccine by melting two sticks of butter in a large skillet. Add garlic powder, 1 tsp. salt, 1 tsp. black pepper, Italian cheese, 1 cup shredded Parmesan cheese, milk and whipping cream. Stir continuously until the cheeses have melted. Stir the fettuccine into the sauce and mix well. Place a serving of fettuccine on a plate. Top it with two stuffed artichoke



Using sweet red and yellow peppers, in addition to green peppers, adds a sweeter taste to the crab cakes — as well as a lot of color.

bottoms. Generously drizzle the garlic butter sauce over the crab cakes and serve. ■

## INGREDIENTS:

- 1lb. lump crabmeat
- 1 cup diced onions
- 1 stalk celery, diced
- 1/3 cup red bell pepper
- 1/3 cup yellow bell pepper
- 1/3 cup green bell pepper
- 7 tbsp. + 1/2 cup olive oil, divided
- 11 cloves minced garlic, divided
- 1 tbsp. Italian seasoning mix
- 1 1/2 tsp. salt, divided
- 1 1/2 tsp. black pepper, divided
- Juice of 2 large lemons + 1/2 tbsp. lemon juice
- 1/2 cup Italian bread crumbs
- 1 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese, divided
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1/3 cup Blue Plate mayonnaise
- 2 14-oz. cans artichoke bottoms, drained (8 bottoms)
- 1 tbsp. capers with the juice
- 4 sticks blocks butter, divided
- 2 heaping tbsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 16-oz. box fettuccine
- 2 tbsp. garlic powder
- 1 8-oz. bag shredded Italian Five Cheese Blend
- 2 cups whole milk
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream

## VENEZIA CAJUN CRABMEAT RAVIOLI

UP NEXT >



Jerald and Glenda Horst are the authors of six excellent books on Louisiana seafood — *The Seafood Bible: Shrimp*, *The Seafood Bible: Crawfish*, *The Seafood Bible: Crabs*, *The Seafood Bible: Oysters*, *The Seafood Bible: Fish: Volume 1* and *The Seafood Bible: Fish: Volume 2*. Jerald and Glenda may be contacted at [jerald@rockinghorst.com](mailto:jerald@rockinghorst.com).



# VENEZIA CAJUN CRABMEAT RAVIOLI

"I'm a pasta girl," announced Dana. "I use wonton wrappers here because making homemade pasta is time consuming. The word 'Cajun' is added to the name because I think with crabmeat you need a little spice in the dish.

"If I used cheese instead of crabmeat, I would just do a marinara sauce. I wouldn't add cream. The longer you cook a red sauce, the better it is. You can't cook one too long.

"This is a special occasion dish, although it is very easy." ■

**TIP!**

Don't overcrowd the pot while boiling the stuffed wonton wraps, because they might stick together.

Adding cream to the marinara sauce for the crabmeat ravioli gives it a delightful finish that works with seafood.

**INGREDIENTS:**

- 1/2 lb. crabmeat
- 1/2 onion, diced
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 6 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp. Italian Seasoning
- 1 tbsp. Tony Chachere's Creole Seasoning
- 1 28-oz. crushed tomatoes
- 1 28-oz. can water
- 1 cup ricotta cheese
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan & Romano cheese
- Juice of 1/2 lemon
- 1/2 tsp. basil
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. black pepper
- 1 pkg. refrigerated wonton wraps
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 1 tsp. chopped parsley

**HOW TO MAKE IT!**



**PREPARATION:** Serves 4.

Inspect the crabmeat for shells, rinse in a colander, and set aside to drain. Sauté the diced onion in the olive oil until soft. Add the garlic and sauté an additional 1-2 minutes. Stir in the Italian Seasoning and Creole Seasoning. Add the tomatoes and water. Stir, cover and simmer for 1 hour and 45 minutes. Stir frequently. While the sauce is simmering, make the ravioli. Mix together crabmeat, ricotta cheese, Parmesan and Romano cheese, lemon juice, basil, salt and pepper. Place 1 tbsp. crabmeat mixture in the center of a wonton wrap. Brush the edges of the wraps with egg, then, fold into a triangle over the crabmeat mixture. Seal the edges with the tines of a fork. Continue until all of the crabmeat mixture has been used. In batches, place the stuffed wontons in a pot of boiling



The stuffed wonton wraps for the ravioli are briefly boiled to finish them.

water and cook until they are soft and plump, about 2 minutes. Do not overcrowd the pot while boiling as the ravioli may stick together. Remove from the water. Repeat until all the ravioli have been cooked. Stir in the heavy whipping cream to the reduced red sauce. Add the ravioli to the sauce and simmer 1-2 minutes. Garnish with parsley and serve. ■

“The Best Fryer Ever Made...”  
... See For Yourself!



THE ORIGINAL  
PITMAN  
FRYER



Original Pitman Fryers are designed to enhance the cooking experience and improve cleanup. The burner design keeps heat above the breading, crumbs and other debris to avoid burning. It also helps to prolong the life of the oil and produces golden brown foods every time. The unique “V-bottom” design allows for easy draining. These high-performance, low maintenance, portable fryers are constructed with 10 gauge steel and come in four standard sizes to make frying in your backyard, at a tailgate party, or on your campsite a pleasurable experience. The Original Pitman Fryer is your best cooking solution!

For a FREE BROCHURE, call 318-377-4776



PITMAN'S METAL WORKS

13003 Hwy 371 Dixie Inn, LA • 318-377-4776

REVOLUTIONARY  
CRAWFISH BOILER  
IN CROWLEY, LA



BRAMMER  
CAJUN PRODUCTS

337.783.0474

UNIQUE DESIGN WITH NO  
OPEN FLAME

QUIETER & PUTS OFF LESS  
HEAT THAN COMPETITORS'

CHOOSE PROPANE OR  
HP NATURAL GAS

BURNS 50% LESS FUEL

EXTRA STURDY WITH LOW  
PROFILE

TILT OUT BASKET TO DUMP  
CONTENTS WITHOUT  
STRAINING

WWW.BRAMMERCAJUNPRODUCTS.COM



@BRAMMERMACHINE

## BOOMERANG BRAID SNIPS

By Andy Crawford

I'm a die-hard braid fisherman, using the tough line on everything but crankbaits and spinnerbaits. The problem with braid, however, is it's so dang hard to cut.

That's not an issue, however, with the Boomerang snips.

This little beauty, which comes with short or long scissors, is razor sharp and makes quick, clean work of any fishing line: Braid, mono or fluorocarbon cut smoothly every time.

The snips features 420 stainless steel, corrosion-resistant cutters in a compact package that clips to your tackle box, console or belt loop.

And the tough retractable cord returns the snip right back to its original position — every time.

The blades close and lock into place when not in use, and the newest version even includes a jig-eye cleaner to ensure painted heads don't cause problems.

Oh, and you can even order a version with a built-in LED light to help in low-light situations.

Retails for \$12.99 without the light, \$15.99 with an LED light.

**More Info:** [www.boomerangtool.com](http://www.boomerangtool.com)



**Follow Us — In the woods and on Facebook**

[www.facebook.com/lasmag](http://www.facebook.com/lasmag)

## GAMAKATSU G-BOX UTILITY CASE

By Andy Crawford

The new Gamakatsu G-Box utility case provides heavy-duty lure storage in a flexible format that allows you to customize the box for your specific needs.

And you don't have to fight to break the partition tabs free. In fact, they snap off cleanly, so you don't even have to trim leftover plastic.

The G-Box features a flexible micro rib system with micro-adjustable dividers, making them perfect for soft-plastic and hard baits. And instead of a few set divider slots, there are numerous slots with almost infinite configurations.

And the boxes can easily be opened with one hand, so you can quickly access your favorite

lure — but they won't open if dropped.

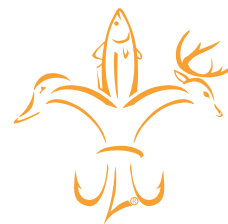
Rounded corners make the box easy to remove from tackle bags or boat compartments. The partitions are very sturdy, so your lures stay in place.

See-through construction makes it easy to spot the lure you need, but each box also comes with a label that can be affixed to the latch.

The 3200 case measures 8.1 by 5.7 by 1.6 inches, the 3600 measures 10.8 by 7.4 by 1.7 inches and the 3700 measures 14 by 9 by 2 inches.

The boxes retail from \$6.53 to \$12.95.

**More Info:** [www.gamakatsu.com](http://www.gamakatsu.com)



New product submissions can be emailed to **Mark Hilz** at [markh@lasmag.com](mailto:markh@lasmag.com).

## CROSSPOINT WATERPROOF CREW SOCKS

The idea of waterproof, yet breathable, socks sounds like an oxymoron — but thanks to the people at Showers Pass, they're actually a reality.

The company's Crosspoint Waterproof Socks feature three-layer construction that sandwiches a waterproof layer between a knit outer layer and a breathable, moisture-wicking inner layer of Coolmax lining.

Designed for cyclists, the socks also have great possibilities for hiking, hunting and fishing, along with many other outdoor activities.

The socks are machine washable and are priced at \$35 per pair.

**More Info:** [www.showerspass.com](http://www.showerspass.com)



## ONE-TIE REUSABLE TIE STRAPS

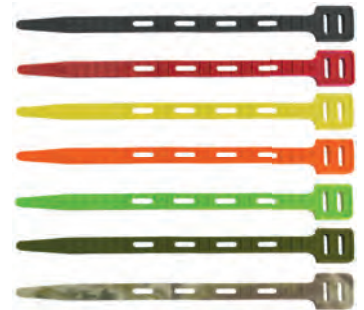
One-Tie reusable tie straps take the traditional plastic zip-tie strip to a new level, and that's great news for outdoorsmen who need a way to tie down gear when a zip-tie or bungee cord just doesn't get the job done.

Manufactured by Wisconsin-based Taylor Made Products, One-Ties are strong tie straps made from an automotive grade polymer in sizes from 8 to 32 inches that retail between \$1.99 and \$69.99 — depending on size and the number of straps in a pack.

The One-Tie straps have outdoors uses including wrapping up bundles of fishing rods, tying down tackle boxes or other items that aren't stationary in

the bottom of a boat — or even hanging items from a backpack that are too big to fit inside. They're perfect for tasks like strapping together sections of deer stand ladder for transport in and out of the woods, or for hanging items from your stand if there's no room for them around your seat.

They're available at Walmart, Menards, Lowe's and TrueValue retailers, or online through Amazon.



## SHIMANO CURADO 200 K SERIES

Shimano made some waves in the fishing industry last summer when it debuted its new Curado 200 K series baitcasting reels at the annual ICAST show, and promptly took home honors for the best new freshwater reel.

The series includes three models, each coming in left-hand and right-hand retrieve, with six anti-rust ball bearings, micro-machined gears and Shimano's SVS Infinity braking system. The reel features adjustable internal and external brakes, and it weighs only between 7.6 and 7.8 ounces — thanks to side plates of graphite and CI4.

The 200 model (and 201 left-handed retrieve) has a 6.2-to-1 retrieve ratio, allowing the angler to take in 26 inches of line per turn of the handle. The 200KHG (and 201KHG left-handed retrieve) has a 7.4-to-1 ratio, getting back 31 inches per crank, and the high-speed 200KXG (and 201 KXG left-handed) has an 8.5-to-1 retrieve ratio, getting back 36 inches per crank.

The spool capacity on all six reels is 190 yards of

30-pound PowerPro braid or 155 yards of 10-pound monofilament.

The retail price on all six reels is \$179. They are available at a number of retail outlets, including Academy Sports+Outdoors ([Academy.com](http://Academy.com)).

**More Info:** [www.fish.shimano.com](http://www.fish.shimano.com)



BELOW: Nathaniel Price with a 21-inch redfish he caught Nov. 21 in Pointe-Aux-Chenes on live minnows.



**Nathaniel Price**

## GOT PHOTOS? WE WANT 'EM

Send us your photos, and you may appear on the pages of the most widely read outdoor magazine in the Bayou State. Send clean, sharp shots of you with your fish, deer, ducks, rabbits, squirrels, etc. to [alicial@lasmag.com](mailto:alicial@lasmag.com). Digital images must be at least 200KB and in jpeg format.



**Ryan Strong**

Ryan Strong, 17, of Prairieville, caught and released this catfish in a tributary of the Mississippi River. It weighed 43 pounds and inhaled a piece of garfish.

LEFT: John Gaiennie Jr. killed this 13-point on Nov. 12, 2017 in Tensas Parish with a bow and arrow.



**Charles Lagarde**

This drum was landed by 9-year-old Charles Lagarde on Lake Borgne.



**John Gaiennie Jr.**



**Gracie Davis**

Gracie Davis 10, of Baton Rouge, killed her first hog while hunting with her father Keith and sisters Madeleine and Audrey.



**Maddox Champagne**

Maddox Champagne, 6, shot his first two ducks, blue-winged teal, during a September 2017 hunt with his dad Shawn.



**Lucy Jacob**

Lucy Jacob is pictured with her uncle Ryan Jacob after reeling in her first speckled trout at Grand Isle.



**Porter Magee**

Porter Magee, 6, of Folsom, downed his first buck while hunting with dad Shayne Magee in Port Gibson, Miss., on Nov. 18, 2017.



**Chad Connella**

Chad Connella proudly displays his 10-point buck killed in Richland Parish.



**Dixie-Belle Dupas**

Dixie-Belle Dupas, 7, kisses every fish she catches. She caught this one on a bass fishing trip with her daddy in Greensburg.



**Ehren Gros**

Ehren Gros of Houma was on a fishing trip with his grandpa, Randy Donaldson, in Pointe-Aux-Chenes when he reeled in this big one. Both he and the 24-pound, 40-inch fish were super tired afterwards.



**Hayden & Hayli**

Hayden, 13, and Hayli Oliveaux, 15, both scored big bucks at their cabin in the Ozark Mountains. Each year at Thanksgiving they go to the cabins to enjoy family time and hunting. Hayden's buck scored 119.75, and Hayli's measured 118.50.



Kevin Tippett (left) and Charles Davenport with two 29-pound bull reds caught out of kayaks in Caminada Pass.



**Shermar Pierre**

Shermar Pierre, 13, of Edgard, killed this 200-pound buck in Port Gibson, Miss., while hunting with his father.



**Jimmy Keller**

Jimmy Keller caught this 12 1/2-pound, 29-inch redfish on a dark green Redfish Magic bait while fishing in Delacroix's Grand Lake.

Not an official document. Refer to LDWF's official hunting regulations pamphlet or www.wlf.louisiana.gov

**HUNTING SEASONS**

SPECIES	SEASON DATES	BAG LIMIT	POSSESSION LIMIT
<b>DOVES+</b>	(South Zone) Sept. 2 - 10 Oct. 7 - Nov. 26 Dec. 17 - Jan. 15	(North Zone) Sept. 2 - 24 Oct. 7 - Nov. 12 Dec. 17 - Jan. 15	15 45
	Dec. 18 - Jan. 31	3	9
<b>WOODCOCK^</b>	Dec. 18 - Jan. 31	3	9
<b>TEAL</b> (blue-winged, green-winged, cinnamon)	Sept. 15 - Sept. 30	6	18
<b>RAILS*</b> King & Clapper Sora & Virginia	Sept. 15 - 30 Sept. 15 - 30	Nov. 11 - Jan. 3 Nov. 11 - Jan. 3	15 25
	Sept. 15 - 30	Nov. 11 - Jan. 3	15
<b>GALLINULES*</b>	Sept. 15 - 30	Nov. 11 - Jan. 3	15
<b>SNIPE</b>	Nov. 2 - Dec. 3 Dec. 16 - Feb. 28	8	24
<b>QUAIL</b>	Nov. 18 - Feb. 28	10	30
<b>RABBIT</b>	Oct. 7 - Feb. 28	8	24
<b>SQUIRREL</b>	Oct. 7 - Feb. 28 May 5 - 27**	8 3	24 9

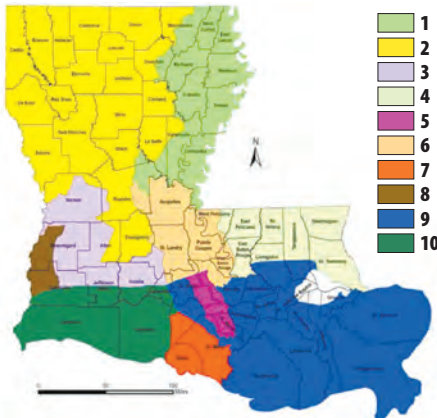
\*An extended falconry season for ducks, rails and gallinules will take place from Nov. 3 - Jan. 31. ^An extended falconry season for woodcock will be Nov. 2 - Jan. 31. +An extended falconry season for mourning doves will be Sept. 15 - Oct. 1. \*\*Spring squirrel season is CLOSED on the Kisatchie National Forest, National Wildlife Refuges, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers property and some Wildlife Management Areas.

**WATERFOWL SEASONS**

	EAST ZONE	WEST ZONE	COASTAL ZONE
<b>DUCKS*, COOTS &amp; MERGANSERS</b>	Nov. 18 - Dec. 3 Dec. 16 - Jan. 28	Nov. 11 - Dec. 3 Dec. 16 - Jan. 21	Nov. 11 - Dec. 3 Dec. 16 - Jan. 21
The daily bag limit for ducks is six and may include no more than four mallards (no more than two of which may be females), one pintail, two canvasback, one mottled duck, one black duck, three wood ducks, three scaups and two redheads. Daily bag limit for coots is 15. Daily bag limit for mergansers is five, only two of which may be a hooded mergansers. The merganser limits are in addition to the daily bag limit for ducks. Possession limits for ducks, coots and mergansers is three times the daily bag limit. Youth waterfowl hunts will be held Nov. 4 and Jan. 27 in the West Zone, Nov. 11 and Feb. 3 in the East Zone, and Nov. 4-5 in the Coastal Zone.			
<b>GEESE</b> (snow, blue, Ross & white-fronted [specklebelly])	(Statewide) Nov. 4 - Dec. 3 Dec. 16 - Feb. 11	Daily bag limit for light geese (snow, blue, Ross') is 20, with no possession limit. The daily bag limit for white-fronted geese is two, with a possession limit of six.	
<b>CANADA GOOSE SEASON</b>	(Statewide) Nov. 4 - Dec. 3 Dec. 16 - Jan. 31	The daily limit for Canada geese is one per day, with a possession limit of three.	
<b>CONSERVATION ORDER FOR LIGHT GEESE</b>	(Statewide) Dec. 4 - 15 Feb. 12 - March 11	Only snow, blue and Ross geese may be taken under the terms of the conservation order, which allows the use of electronic calls and unplugged shotguns, and eliminates the daily bag and possession limits. Shooting hours begin one-half hour before sunrise and extends until one-half hour after sunset.	

**DEER SEASONS**

**2017 - 2018 Deer Hunting Areas**



AREA	ARCHERY (Either-sex)	PRIMITIVE FIREARMS (All either-sex, except as noted)	STILL HUNT (No dogs allowed) (All either-sex, except as noted)	WITH/WITHOUT DOGS (All either-sex, except as noted)
1	Oct. 1 - Jan. 31	Nov. 11-17 Jan. 22 - 31	Nov. 18 - Dec. 8 Jan. 8 - 21	Dec. 9 - Jan. 7
2	Oct. 1 - Jan. 31	Oct. 21 - 27 Jan. 15 - 21	Oct. 28 - Dec. 5	Dec. 6 - Jan. 14
3	Sept. 16 - Jan. 15	Oct. 14 - 20, Nov. 27 - Dec. 1	Oct. 21 - Nov. 26	Dec. 2 - Jan. 7 (certain areas)
4	Oct. 1 - Jan. 31	Nov. 11 - 17 Jan. 22 - 31	Nov. 18 - Dec. 8 Jan. 8 - 21	Dec. 9 - Jan. 7
5	Oct. 1 - 15 (bucks only) Oct. 16 - Feb. 15 (either-sex)	Nov. 11-17, Jan. 29-31 (bucks only) Jan. 22 - 28	Nov. 18-23, Nov. 27 - Dec. 8 (bucks only) Nov. 24-26	Dec. 9-10, Dec. 30-31 Jan. 13-14 Dec. 11-29, Jan. 1-12 (bucks only) Jan. 15-21 (bucks only)
6	Oct. 1 - 15 (bucks only) Oct. 16 - Feb. 15 (either-sex)	Nov. 11 - 17 Jan. 22 - 31	Nov. 18 - Dec. 8	Dec. 9 - Jan. 21
7	Oct. 1 - Jan. 31	Oct. 14 - 20 Nov. 4 - 10	Oct. 21 - Nov. 3 Nov. 11 - 26	Nov. 27 - Dec. 31
8	Sept. 16 - Jan. 15	Oct. 14 - 20, Nov. 27 - Dec. 1	Oct. 21 - Nov. 26	Dec. 2 - Jan. 7
9	Oct. 1 - 15 (bucks only) Oct. 16 - Feb. 15 (either-sex)	Nov. 11-17, Jan. 29-31 (bucks only) Jan. 22 - 28	Nov. 18-23, Nov. 27 - Dec. 8 (bucks only) Nov. 24-26	Dec. 9-10, Dec. 30-31 Jan. 13 - 14 Dec. 11-29, Jan. 1-12 (bucks only) Jan. 15-21 (bucks only)
10	Sept. 16 - Jan. 15	Oct. 14 - 20 Nov. 27 - Dec. 1	Oct. 21 - Nov. 26 Dec. 2 - Jan. 7	

# DIDN'T GET YOUR HOLIDAY WISH...

## SUBSCRIBE TODAY TO LOUISIANA SPORTSMAN MAGAZINE TO FULFILL ALL OF YOUR FISHING AND HUNTING WISHES!



Subscribe today for the best:

- FISHING HOTSPOTS
- HUNTING TACTICS
- LATEST MUST-HAVE GEAR
- EXPERT ADVICE

**\$24.99**  
12 issues

Toll-free  
**1-855-223-3599**  
or for faster service visit

**LouisianaSportsman.com/subscribe**



*Louisiana*  
**SPORTSMAN**<sup>®</sup>

Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery of first issue

# January 2018

Date	Sunrise	Sunset
1st	6:56 a.m.	5:12 p.m.
2nd	6:56 a.m.	5:13 p.m.
3rd	6:57 a.m.	5:13 p.m.
4th	6:57 a.m.	5:14 p.m.
5th	6:57 a.m.	5:15 p.m.
6th	6:57 a.m.	5:16 p.m.
7th	6:57 a.m.	5:16 p.m.
8th	6:57 a.m.	5:17 p.m.
9th	6:57 a.m.	5:18 p.m.
10th	6:57 a.m.	5:19 p.m.
11th	6:57 a.m.	5:20 p.m.

Date	Sunrise	Sunset
12th	6:57 a.m.	5:20 p.m.
13th	6:57 a.m.	5:21 p.m.
14th	6:57 a.m.	5:22 p.m.
15th	6:57 a.m.	5:23 p.m.
16th	6:57 a.m.	5:24 p.m.
17th	6:57 a.m.	5:25 p.m.
18th	6:56 a.m.	5:26 p.m.
19th	6:56 a.m.	5:26 p.m.
20th	6:56 a.m.	5:27 p.m.
21st	6:55 a.m.	5:28 p.m.
22nd	6:55 a.m.	5:29 p.m.

Date	Sunrise	Sunset
23rd	6:55 a.m.	5:30 p.m.
24th	6:54 a.m.	5:31 p.m.
25th	6:54 a.m.	5:32 p.m.
26th	6:54 a.m.	5:33 p.m.
27th	6:53 a.m.	5:33 p.m.
28th	6:53 a.m.	5:34 p.m.
29th	6:52 a.m.	5:35 p.m.
30th	6:52 a.m.	5:36 p.m.
31st	6:51 a.m.	5:37 p.m.

\*Time based on New Orleans, sunrise/sunset; source U.S. Naval Observatory. Corrections (in minutes)

**Alexandria**  
Rise/Set  
+12/+8

**Baton Rouge**  
Rise/Set  
+5/+4

**Lafayette**  
Rise/Set  
+8/+7

**Lake Charles**  
Rise/Set  
+13/+12

**Monroe**  
Rise/Set  
+10/+5

**Shreveport**  
Rise/Set  
+17/+13

The sun is always shining at:  
[www.LouisianaSportsman.com](http://www.LouisianaSportsman.com)

**DUCK HUNTING!** Think **DUVIC'S !!**

**GO-DEVIL®**

**Go-Devil Surface Drive**

**TOHATSU OUTBOARDS**  
powered by **SUZUKI MARINE**

**SOUTHFORK Aluminum Boats**  
**Ron Chapman Pirogues**

**Pirogue's ...**

**Trailers ...**

**18' x 36" GO-DEVIL® BOAT**

**18' x 48" GO-DEVIL® SURFACE DRIVE BOAT**

**SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE WITH A SURFACE DRIVE**

**DUVIC'S, INC.**

3650 Westbank Expwy. • Harvey, La  
Oldest Marine Dealer in the USA • 124 Years Strong

**127 Years STRONG**

**504-341-1654**

Mon. - Fri.  
8am-5pm

the Service team



# RE-GRAND OPENING



**#1**  **BassCat**  
**Dealer in Louisiana\***

\*As per BassCat dealer meeting 2017

**TOWN & COUNTRY**

12893 Highway 84 West  
 Trout, LA 71371  
 (318) 992-4774  
[www.tandmarine.com](http://www.tandmarine.com)

**STORE HOURS**  
 Mon-Fri **8:00am-5:30pm**  
 Sat **8:00am-2:00pm**  
 Sun **Closed**



## ASTRO TABLES

**Astro Tables** is far more effective than "moon tables," because it takes into account critical solar energies as well as lunar.

The "Best Days" column is based on the ever-changing positions of the sun and the moon, rating each day on a scale of 0 to 100. The higher the number, the more solar/lunar influence that day is experiencing (see "Value" column or corresponding black bars).

The two Primary periods (Moon Overhead and Moon Underfoot) vary in length from one hour to three-and-one-half hours, depending on a number of important lunar cycles, such as how close the moon is to the earth that day and how high its orbit is. The solar symbols alert you to when a Primary period overlaps a major solar period (eg: Dawn, High-Noon, and Dusk). The secondary periods of Moonrise and Moonset last about one hour each... 30 minutes before and after the listed time. (See key at bottom of each month for more detail.)

**Astro Tables** is a quick-reference version of its parent publication, the **PrimeTimes Wall Calendar**, which is recommended for those wishing more complete data on the best days and times to go fishing and hunting for the entire year (see "Available Products" below).

**PrimeTimes** forecasts are based on solar/lunar research at a leading college of astrophysics and our own research pond/wildlife area. Annual data is supplied by the U.S. Naval Observatory. All times are adjusted to the center of your time zone and for Daylight Saving Time.

### AVAILABLE PRODUCTS:

**The 2018 PrimeTimes Wall Calendar.** \$12.95 (plus \$4 s&h). Know the best days, best times, and their relative strengths for all of 2018 with this information-packed, full-color, 11-inch by 17-inch, graphic peaks

-and-valleys forecaster. Includes rise and set times for the sun and moon, space to log your catches, "Timely Tips," plus fish and game symbols showing you each month's don't-miss periods. Also includes exclusive summary charts revealing the best and worst days of 2018, the year's best periods, a look ahead at 2019, and more. Comes with FREE 2018 Astro Tables pocket calendar, which sells separately for \$7.95, plus \$3 s&h.

**Book: "How to Know When to Go" by Rick Taylor.** \$14.95 (plus \$4 s&h). 100 pages, 43 illustrations. A comprehensive look at the main factors influencing fish and game activity periods, plus how to devise an effective when-to-go game plan using any year's PrimeTimes calendars. Individual assessments of bass, panfish, deer, turkey, and more.

**2018 Ultimate PrimeTimes software for PCs.** \$29.95 (plus \$3 s&h, or no s&h if downloaded from web). The world's best forecaster allows you to fine-tune the peak times to your exact location, quarry, and even weather. Too many features to list here, including making your own App. For more details, please call us or visit our web site (see below).

### SPECIAL PACKAGE OFFERS:

- #1: **Wall Calendar, Astro Tables and "How to Know..." book...** \$19.95 (plus \$5 s&h).
- #2: **Same as #1, plus Software...** \$46.95 (plus \$6 s&h).
- #3: **Same as #2, minus book...** \$37.95 (plus \$5 s&h).

Send to: PrimeTimes 2018 - Dept. LS - 2487 NW 75th Ave., Ste. 100 - Ankeny, IA 50023

For credit/debit card orders, call toll-free **866-809-5063**.

2018 JAN	BEST DAYS			
	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCL
Mon 1	██	██	██	██
Tue 2	██	██	██	██
Wed 3	██	██	██	██
Thu 4	██	██	██	██
Fri 5	██	██	██	██
Sat 6	██	██	██	██

2018 JAN	BEST DAYS			
	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCL
Sun 7	██	██	██	██
Mon 8	██	██	██	██
Tue 9	██	██	██	██
Wed 10	██	██	██	██
Thu 11	██	██	██	██
Fri 12	██	██	██	██
Sat 13	██	██	██	██

2018 JAN	BEST DAYS			
	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCL
Sun 14	██	██	██	██
Mon 15	██	██	██	██
Tue 16	██	██	██	██
Wed 17	██	██	██	██
Thu 18	██	██	██	██
Fri 19	██	██	██	██
Sat 20	██	██	██	██

2018 JAN	BEST DAYS			
	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCL
Sun 21	██	██	██	██
Mon 22	██	██	██	██
Tue 23	██	██	██	██
Wed 24	██	██	██	██
Thu 25	██	██	██	██
Fri 26	██	██	██	██
Sat 27	██	██	██	██

2018 JAN	BEST DAYS			
	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCL
Sun 28	██	██	██	██
Mon 29	██	██	██	██
Tue 30	██	██	██	██
Wed 31	██	██	██	██

25 50 75  
AVERAGE

For more, visit [primetimes2.com](http://primetimes2.com)

LUNAR PERIODS						TIMES OCCURRING AT NIGHT ARE SHADED	
MOON RISE	PRIMARY MOON OVERHEAD		MOON SET	PRIMARY MOON UNDERFOOT		MOON PHASE	
	MOON RISE	MOON OVERHEAD		MOON SET	MOON UNDERFOOT	MOON PHASE	MOON PHASE
5:08 pm	10:45 pm - 2:05 am		6:37 am	10:06 am - 1:26 pm	☀	☾	○ FULL & PERIGEE
6:14 pm	11:50 pm - Midnight		7:41 am	11:10 am - 2:30 pm		☾	○ HIGH
7:23 pm	Midnight - 3:06 am		8:38 am	12:15 pm - 3:31 pm		☾	○
8:32 pm	12:54 am - 4:04 am		9:28 am	1:19 pm - 4:29 pm		☾	○
9:39 pm	1:57 am - 4:53 am		10:12 am	2:22 pm - 5:18 pm		☾	○
10:42 pm	2:58 am - 5:38 am		10:51 am	3:23 pm - 6:03 pm	☀	☾	○
11:43 pm	3:55 am - 6:21 am		11:26 am	4:20 pm - 6:46 pm		☾	○
12:42 am	4:51 am - 6:59 am		11:59 am	5:16 pm - 7:24 pm		☾	○ HALF
1:39 am	5:42 am - 7:38 am		12:32 pm	6:07 pm - 8:03 pm		☾	○
2:35 am	6:34 am - 8:16 am	☀	1:05 pm	6:59 pm - 8:41 pm		☾	○
3:30 am	7:26 am - 8:54 am	☀	1:40 pm	7:51 pm - 9:19 pm		☾	○
4:24 am	8:16 am - 9:34 am		2:17 pm	8:41 pm - 9:59 pm		☾	○
5:16 am	9:06 am - 10:18 am		2:57 pm	9:31 pm - 10:43 pm		☾	○
6:06 am	9:56 am - 11:02 am		3:40 pm	10:21 pm - 11:27 pm		☾	○ Apogee
6:53 am	10:44 am - 11:50 am		4:27 pm	11:09 pm - 12:15 am		☾	○ LOW
7:37 am	11:32 am - 12:38 pm	☀	5:18 pm	11:57 pm - Midnight		☾	○ NEW
8:17 am	12:16 pm - 1:28 pm	☀	6:10 pm	Midnight - 1:03 am		☾	○
8:55 am	1:00 pm - 2:18 pm		7:05 pm	12:41 am - 1:53 am		☾	○
9:29 am	1:42 pm - 3:10 pm		8:01 pm	1:25 am - 2:43 am		☾	○
10:03 am	2:28 pm - 4:54 pm		9:56 pm	2:45 am - 4:27 am		☾	○
10:35 am	3:36 pm - 5:48 pm	☀	10:54 pm	3:23 am - 5:19 am		☾	○
11:09 am	4:15 pm - 6:41 pm	☀	11:55 pm	4:01 am - 6:13 am		☾	○
11:43 am	4:56 pm - 7:38 pm			4:40 am - 7:06 am		☾	○ HALF
12:21 pm	5:40 pm - 8:36 pm		12:57 am	5:21 am - 8:03 am		☾	○
1:04 pm	6:28 pm - 9:38 pm		2:02 am	6:05 am - 9:01 am	☀	☾	○
1:52 pm	7:23 pm - 10:39 pm		3:08 am	6:53 am - 10:03 am	☀	☾	○
2:47 pm	8:23 pm - 11:43 pm		4:14 am	7:48 am - 11:04 am		☾	○
3:49 pm	9:25 pm - 12:45 am		5:19 am	8:48 am - 12:08 pm		☾	○ HIGH
4:57 pm	10:31 pm - 1:43 am		6:19 am	9:50 am - 1:10 pm		☾	○ Perigee
6:06 pm	11:36 pm - Midnight		7:13 am	10:56 am - 2:08 pm	☀	☾	○ FULL

ANY LUNAR PERIOD IS ENHANCED WHEN IT OVERLAPS A KEY SOLAR PERIOD. THE BEST OF THESE OVERLAPS ARE DESIGNATED BY THE SUN SYMBOLS: ☀ = DAWN ☀ = HIGH NOON ☀ = DUSK

WHILE THE LESSER MOONRISE AND -SET OVERLAPS (ABOUT 30 MIN. BEFORE AND AFTER THE LISTED TIME) ARE DESIGNATED BY BOLD BLACK TYPE.

# SCULLY'S

# CUSTOMIZED Aluminum Boats

## ALL NEW 2072 DUAL CONSOLE

### Fishing/Hunting boat

- Hydraulic Jack Plate
- Hydraulic Steering
- Dry Storage on both Forward and Stern decks
- Two Fold Down Seats
- Wrap around windshield
- 36 gallon fuel tank
- Yamaha F 225 Engine
- Tandem Aluminum Trailer with Brakes



## 24' CUSTOM ALUMINUM BAY BOAT

### Scully 24' Bay Boat specs: Length - 24' - Beam - 9'

### Features:

- Live Well
- Built in Ice Chest Seat
- Fuel Tank
- Anchor Locker
- Bow and Stern DRY Storage
- Rod Holders under gunnels
- Instruments-Gauges
- Navigation lights
- Hydraulic Jack Plate
- Hydraulic Steering
- Speed in the 60 MPH Range with Yamaha F 250



**Scully's** CUSTOMIZED Aluminum Boats  
Louisiana's #1 Custom Boat Builder

985-385-1323  
FAX 985-384-5146  
TOLL FREE 1-866-238-8353

1015 Stephenville Rd., Morgan City, LA 70381

[www.scullyboats.com](http://www.scullyboats.com)  
Email: [info@scullysaluminumboats.com](mailto:info@scullysaluminumboats.com)



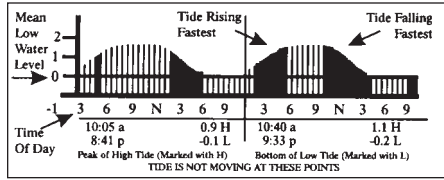
# YAMAHA



IT'S NOT THE ENGINE, IT'S THE FUEL!  
WWW.STARTRON.COM



## How to use the SPORTSMAN Tide Guide



Fish feed most actively when the tide is moving. Louisiana Sportsman has made it simple to spot the most-active feeding periods each day in the Tide Guide. Just fish those times indicated in black. To find the best time to fish your favorite honeyhole, find the spot under Tide Corrections that is closest to the area, and add or subtract the time from the corresponding daily prediction.

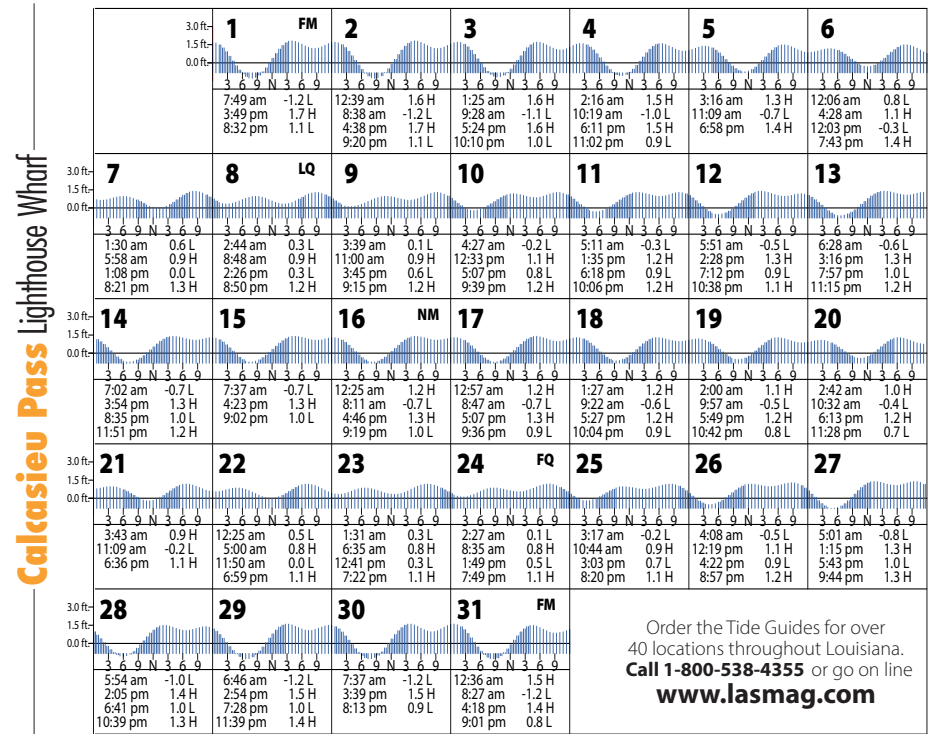
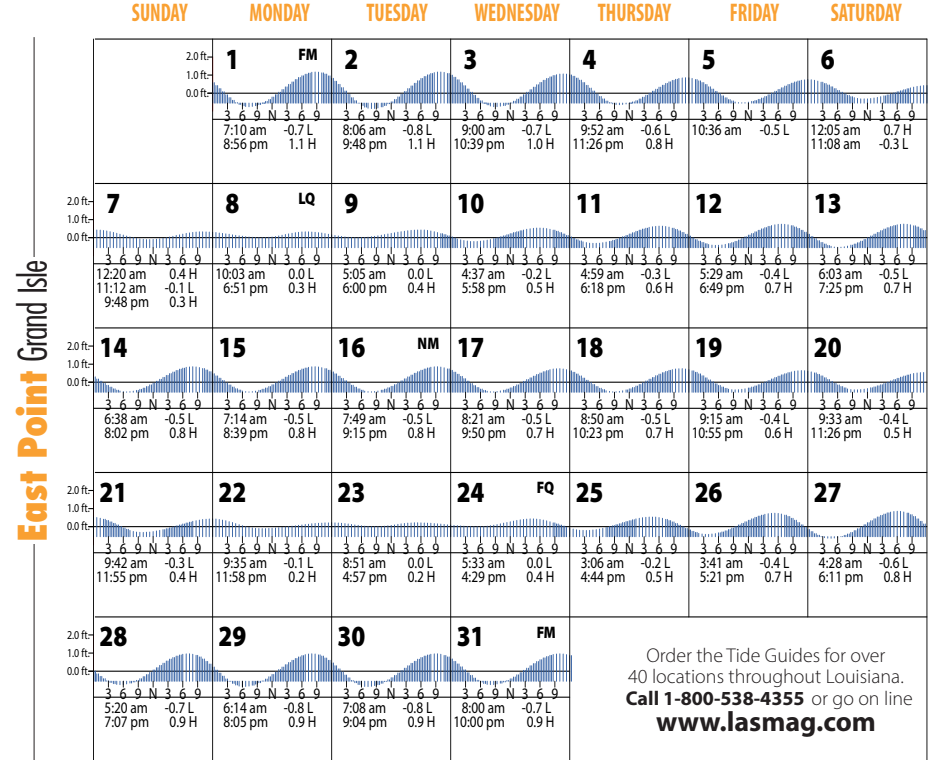
### Tide Corrections

**East Point, Grand Isle** HIGH LOW

Barataria Pass	+1:00	-0:10
Bastian Island	+0:41	+0:12
Bay Gardene	+2:51	+2:44
Bayou BonFouca	+9:59	+10:11
Breton Islands	+0:54	+0:48
Caillou Boca	+0:40	+0:48
Caminada Pass	+0:20	+0:12
Chandeleur Light	+0:37	+0:34
Chef Pass	+5:17	+5:07
Cocodrie	+1:22	+1:33
Comfort Island	+1:34	+0:54
Delacroix Island	+3:42	+3:31
Empire Jetty	-1:03	-1:45
Four Bayou Pass	+2:18	+0:17
Gardner Island	+0:40	+0:47
Grand Pass	+1:48	+1:16
Head of Passes	-0:48	+0:00
Hopedale	+4:17	+4:56
Independence Island	+2:29	+1:59
Jack Bay	+1:59	+1:28
Joseph Bayou	-0:36	-1:37
Lafitte	+1:45	+2:51
Long Point, Lake Borgne	+2:28	+2:11
Manila Village	+2:32	+3:13
Michoud Substation	+5:24	+5:02
New Canal (Bucktown)	+10:34	+10:49
North Pass	-0:31	-0:37
Paris Road Bridge	+5:53	+5:58
Pelican Islands	+2:26	+2:26
Pointe a la Hache	+3:12	+3:01
Port Eads	-0:17	-1:37
Raccoon Point	-0:03	-0:20
Shell Beach	+4:32	+4:25
Ship Shoal Light	-1:54	-1:50
South Pass, Miss. R.	-1:13	-1:20
Southwest Pass, Miss. R.	-0:38	-1:33
Tchefuncte River	+10:23	+11:01
Timbalier Island	+0:19	+0:23
Wine Island	+1:08	+1:02

**Calcasieu Pass, Lighthouse Wharf** HIGH LOW

Cote Blanche Island	+4:33	+3:40
Eugene Island	+1:49	-0:39
Lighthouse Point	+0:58	-0:53
Mermentau River ent.	+0:20	+0:25
Point Au Fer	+1:53	-1:02
Point Chevreul	+3:16	+0:30
Rabbit Island	+2:01	-0:36
Shell Island	+3:08	+0:45
South Point	+1:55	-0:33
Southwest Pass, Vermillion Bay	+1:42	+0:51
Weeks Bay	+3:58	+3:56





# Sportsman FISHING HOTSPOTS

## SEEING RED IN VENICE

**T**here are certain times of the year when the Venice speckled trout fishing is as good as you'll ever see in Louisiana. But unfortunately for speck diehards, January isn't one of those months.

But the good news is redfishing is second to none, according to Capt. Ron Price. The key this time of year is to play the weather.

"If you've got a cold front coming through, I like to stay on the north banks of the deeper canals," he said. "Typically I'll stay in Buras, and fish along the back levee canal."

Price also suggested fishing in the Wagon Wheel.

When fishing in the canals after hard fronts, Price likes to find the deepest water he can on ledges, and stay out of the wind.

"Unfortunately, there isn't a whole lot of deep water up there," he said. "Maximum is like 5 feet of water."

Canals can sometimes look like endless bits of the same thing, but Price said paying attention to where the drains are located can pay big dividends this time of year.

"If you can find a drain somewhere on a hard falling tide, a lot of times the fish will stack up to get out of the north wind, and to take advantage of all the bait falling out," he said.

If he's not fishing in the canals, Price likes Redfish Bay and Blind Bay. He said those places are certainly good when the weather warms up, but they can also produce in the midst of a front.

"Sometimes, when a front comes through, some of those bays will really turn on with a hard falling tide," he said. "Sometimes, they'll come alive when the tide starts pushing out really hard."

When the summer-like days hit, the bays are still on fire, according to Price.

"In the bays — even after the fronts when the weather warms back up — the (fish) will get a little more scattered out across those bays, where you can throw a popping cork out in the open, as opposed to hugging everything tightly to the shoreline," he said.

Price uses a black/chartreuse plastic underneath the popping corks.

Pulling up to a big, open bay can be daunting, but Price said there's a key thing

he looks for to help him find the best place to start.

"A lot of times on the warmer days, you just want to pay attention to the bait," he said. "Clean water is your other key factor you're looking for — finding some water with a greenish tint. The greener the water, the better." ■

- Joel Masson

## GOT PICS? Send 'em in!

Email images to:

[images@LouisianaSportsman.com](mailto:images@LouisianaSportsman.com)

All images will be considered, but those taken on the water or in the woods will have the best chance of being featured.

\*Digital images must be sent in jpeg format. High-resolution images (taken on your camera's highest setting) will work the best. All images (physical and digital) become property of Louisiana Sportsman and cannot be returned.

# FISH LATER, FISH DEEP IN SHELL BEACH

**C**apt. Tim Ursin Sr., aka Capt. Hook (504-512-2602) over in Shell Beach, said we'll possibly have a colder winter this year — which will require a switch in tactics.

"The last few years we got spoiled with winters so mild the shrimp never left the marsh and we fished like it was fall, under corks, throughout January and February," he said. "I suspect this year may snap us back into the reality that winter is cold and it brings with it low, cold water that drives fish out of the shallower marsh into deeper bayous where they snug bottom and seem to develop lockjaw. When it gets cold, if you don't fish slow and on the bottom, you don't catch fish.

"I think the shrimp will disappear, but I've been seeing small finger mullet all over the bayous in the Biloxi Marsh, so I think it'll hold fish as long as the air and water temperatures don't plummet."

Hook advised anglers to leave the dock a bit later in the morning and give the sun a chance to warm things up a bit — and then to focus on deeper bayous first, preferably those with an oyster bottom.

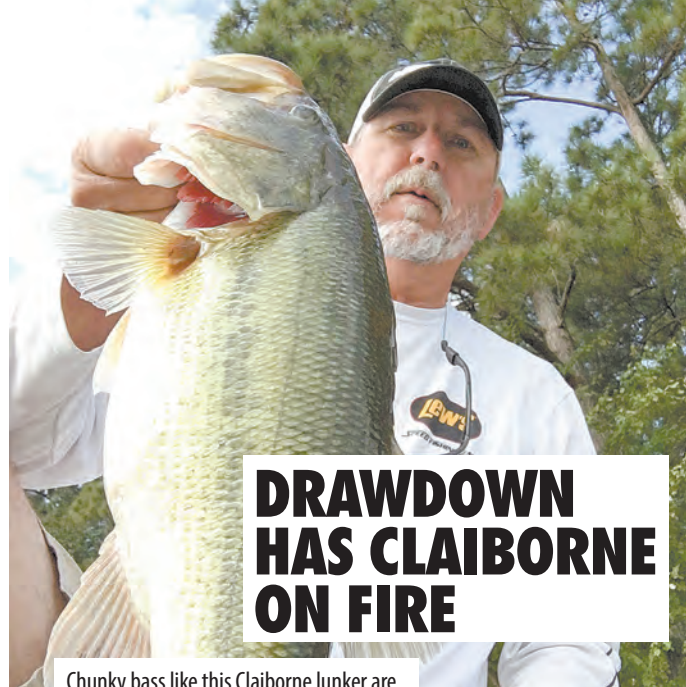
"The shell bottoms warm up faster and hold heat longer," he explained. "The mud bottoms don't hold the heat, and in colder weather the fish seek warmth.

"Lake Borgne along the rocks should produce some specks and reds, and the mouths of the bayous should produce on falling tides. Deeper bayous like Bayou Robin, Bayou Bernard, Bayou Sue and Crooked Bayou should hold fish, so any deeper water — at least 5 to 6 feet deep and preferably even deeper — is where you try first on colder mornings. Fish the bottom with live or dead bait, or just a soft plastic bounced slow off the bottom. As it warms up a bit, start fishing over shallow flats in nearby bays, under a cork. Use live shrimp if it's available, but soft plastics should do the trick. I like the small white or glow-colored Vudu shrimp under a cork, or even a small H&H beetle in white or clear sparkle."

Hook said you should pick up some reds in the mix, but you can target them at points, cuts and coves with dead shrimp about 12 to 18 inches under a cork. ■



Capt. Hook with two Biloxi Marsh specks.



## DRAWDOWN HAS CLAIBORNE ON FIRE

Chunky bass like this Claiborne lunker are a good way to get the New Year started.

**Y**ou might call it a "Winter Fire" fishing report. It's definitely winter, but the fishing is on fire at Lake Claiborne. And it has been for a while, according to guide Sid Havard. He fishes quite often all over North Louisiana, so when he gets excited, you know something good is happening.

"Claiborne is down about 7 feet and the fishing is on fire," he said. "They are catching fish all over the lake and have been for a while. And it's not just small fish. There have been several over 10 pounds, and that is unusual for Claiborne."

The drawdown is scheduled to end this month, but if the area doesn't receive more rain, it will be a while before the water level comes up. Even when that happens, action will still be good, according to the Simsboro fisherman.

"It's going to take a while for the lake to reach normal levels and in the meantime, the bass population and the shad population is very healthy," Havard said. "The good times should continue for a while. We've been catching them around stumps near the channel and up in brush tops that we haven't seen in quite a while, if ever."

White and chartreuse spinnerbaits, blue-back Rat-L-Traps and square-bill crankbaits in shad colors are producing the best. As the water cools and fish get tighter to structure, jigs and heavy plastics will come into play.

"The main thing is, as the water comes up, the fish will just follow it," he said. "They will move into the newer areas and get in brush and structure they haven't seen for months. They will test that new water. Fishermen just have to move up with them. It should be great right on through the winter."

One tip that can help you catch fish when the water comes back up is to not get impatient. The best fishing might be from 10 a.m. until early evening this time of year. That allows the water to warm up a bit, which in turn gets the baitfish and the bass stirring.

One word of warning — with the lake down, every boat lane isn't open. The old river channel and creeks are, but many boat lanes are marked for regular water levels and have stumps right under the surface with the lake down, so Havard urged extreme caution.

You can get in touch with him for the latest reports or a trip with his Local Lakes Guide Services at 318-548-4067. ■

- Kinny Haddox

- Rusty Tardo

# BEST DELACROIX FISHING IS NOW

**R**ay Chagnard rarely misses a week of fishing in Delacroix, and he said this is absolutely the best time to be there.

"So many more people fish in June and July than in the winter months, but the fishing is so much better in December and January," said the owner of Chag's Sporting Goods in Metairie. "You only have to run 10 minutes from the launch, and it's all on plastics."

And the menu is filled with speckled trout, redfish and bass.

"Everything comes inside with the fronts," Chagnard explained. "It pushes the bait in, the water is low and everything is concentrated."

If it's a cold January, fish of all kinds will gang up in deep holes in the bends of natural bayous and canals. Places like the Twin Pipelines and Oak River hold treasure troves of fish.

"Oak River is always a top producer," Chagnard said.

He said trout lounge in the depths, with the most-productive holes being near shallow water.

"If it warms up 8 to 10 degrees, they'll hit those bays and start feeding," Chagnard said.

But a lot of those fish will be throwbacks, so you'll have to weed through a lot of trout to catch your limit.

Sticking with the deep holes, however, will yield a different result.

"Your bigger trout tend to stay deep," Chagnard said. "You stick to running water around the points and bends, and you'll catch fish."

Redfish also begin schooling up, offering the opportunity to catch multiple fish in single locations. Spoons can be deadly when they're shallow.

But while they'll cruise the bays on warmer days, Chagnard said reds retreat to the same holes as trout when the temperatures are low.

Bass do the same, with bays holding a little leftover vegetation being best for warmer days, and deep water being the fall-back when the deep freeze kicks in.

Deep fishing is the same for all these species: Tight-lining jigs on the bottom.

"You're just bumping the bottom," Chagnard said. "If you find clams or oyster shells on the bottom, that's a home run."

Because the fish will be in current, upping your weight to get your lure to the fish, which are hugging the mud, is critical.

"You want enough weight to get to the bottom, but you don't want to dog your bait down," Chagnard explained.

Another key is your equipment: This isn't a time to go with light-action rods because fish will not be hammering your lure.

"You want a medium or medium/heavy rod with a fast tip," Chagnard said. "You want something you can cast with, but still have that sensitivity so you can feel the bite."

"If your rod is too flimsy, they can pick up your lure and spit it out without you knowing it."

Braided line also helps.

"I like to tight-line with braid because it has more sensitivity," he said. ■

- Andy Crawford



Ray Chagnard of Chag's Sporting Goods said January is the best time to fish Delacroix because speckled trout, redfish and bass will be concentrated in deep holes when temperatures are low.

Courtesy Ray Chagnard

Jay Stone with a nice deep water winter crappie from Caney Lake.



## 'STONE' COLD CRAPPIE HEATING UP CANEY

Jay Stone of West Monroe is in a duck blind almost every day in January. But his heart — and his body, too, if possible — will be on Caney Lake chasing crappie. As production manager for Duck Commander, he either goes or takes folks duck hunting every day of the season — unless he can slip away to Caney with a bucket load of shiners.

"Oh, man. It's heating up there this

month," said Stone, who lived on Caney for years. "It's a special time to be fishing Caney, a 5,000-acre lake in Jackson Parish known mostly for its big bass. I used to just bass fish, then I found out how much I liked to eat fish. And crappie is the only fish I like to eat.

"Here's what you want to do," he said. "You go out down by the dam and find that old Caney Lake Creek channel with your depth finder. Then you ease up and down the edge until you see a wad of crappie on the screen. When you do, you drop a double minnow rig down there and hold on. Anywhere between the dam and Smith Creek is a good spot to go."

Actually, Stone said it's a "modified double-minnow rig" because he usually cuts off the top hook to more efficiently fish extremely deep this time of year. He uses the pre-rigged B&M minnow rig because it saves him a lot of time, and it has a ½-ounce weight on it to keep the bait down where the fish are.

"And that would be about 2 feet off the bottom," Stone said. "And we are talking deep here. The water in the channel down there is 30 to 40 feet deep, so you have to keep your bait down where the fish are. Move slow and stay on the fish. They aren't going to chase it far. You have to pay attention, too, because at that depth, the hits are ever so slight. Look for some sort of structure, any little thing, and you'll find bigger groups of crappie."

Minnows aren't always Stone's favorite lure, but he says they are three-to-one favorites in this situation on Caney.

If you do use plastics, stick with the smaller ones in a shad color. And be aware that the water on this lake is gone clear,

so match up lures and line sizes accordingly. The smaller the better.

The average depth of the lake is 16 feet, and there are some huge ones there. Unlike many North Louisiana reservoirs, black crappie seem to thrive in Caney Lake's deep, clear water. The

lake even held the state record at 3.55 pounds for a while. Five of the Top 10 black crappie caught in the state have come from Caney. ■

- Kinny Haddox

**TOLEDO BEND UP NEXT >**

**HAMMERHEAD OFF-ROAD**

*Black's Outdoor & Marine LLC*

1423 NW Evangeline Thwy. • Lafayette, LA 70501  
**(337) 233-4272 • (337) 233-6585**

**Covers Unlimited**

- Boat Covers • Bimini Tops • Full Enclosures
- Bow & Cockpit Covers • Marine Upholstery & Repair
- On Site Marine Work • Guaranteed Workmanship

Proud Distributor of Eagle Carports

**LOUISIANA'S CUSTOM CANVAS LEADER**

**225-261-4057**

13140 Hooper Rd • BR, LA 70818  
[www.coversunlimited.net](http://www.coversunlimited.net)

# JANUARY COULD PRODUCE 10-POUNDERS AT TOLEDO BEND

**A**fter a relatively balmy fall so far, I'm convinced that bass fishing prospects for January are going to be different than the long-term norm at Toledo Bend.

It's been on my mind the past few days, and it's time to go out on the proverbial limb. Due to changes in seasonal weather patterns and temperatures, I wouldn't put the bass boats up too quick because I've got a strong feeling some hawgs will be roaming the shallows in January.

Why? Our winters seem to be getting weaker and weaker. Plus, the long-range forecast released recently by the National Weather Service in Lake Charles calls for drier and much warmer weather in December, January and February in eastern Texas and western Louisiana.

That and the fact there was hardly no winter last year have got me excited for bassin' action this month on Toledo Bend. I remember the high number of double-digit bass caught last January and February during what were almost springtime conditions over a two-week period. The 10-pounders were rolling in, and many of them got caught before Old Man Winter — who doesn't seem as powerful any more — chilled Toledo Bend again.

The weather was pretty much the same in January, 2016, too.

This is Toledo Bend we're talking about. I'm going to say January could be really above and beyond what we normally expect as far as bassin' success. People generally don't like to go bass fishing when it's cold. But January could be a very dominant big fish time, both shallow and deep. I don't think it'll be a "pre" situation, as in prespawn, but warm water like that can generate action. And we could possibly see isolated bedding fish from mid-January on.

Today the pool stage is 167.50 and there's a lot of wood showing. The water temperature ranges from 62 to 65 degrees. I wouldn't be surprised to see water temperatures like that on some days in January in the backs of creeks and coves, particularly along the northern shorelines in midday hours. Even if the water temperature dips to the mid-50s,

the sun pops back out and eventually warms it up.

Sure, we'll get cold fronts — perhaps some major cold fronts — in January. But based on the last two years, in two or three days the Indian Summer returns. With that in mind, right out of the gate in 2018, who wouldn't want to go catch a double-digit bass that this lake is famous for? I hope it happens, and I think there's a very good chance. I know I could be wrong, and this might prove to be one of the most miserably cold winters ever. I just have a strong feeling that won't be the case. I think the old February-March patterns are now January-February patterns.

I'll target 10-foot depths and much less during mid-day hours with moving baits, unless I spot a bass on a bed and, well, then we all know what to do. As for the artificial lures of choice when the trolling motor's down and humming and I'm chunking and winding, I'll throw ½-ounce orange, red, gold and even chrome Rat-L-Traps, ½-ounce shad-colored spinnerbaits, similarly colored Chatterbaits or gold/orange jerkbaits.

I'll be checking out some of my favorite creeks and coves, for sure.

Ridges might produce bass, too, in this new January age, but I'd concentrate on the back ends of coves and creeks from, say, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Look for the warmest water available. Until the water warms up in the day, it's a pretty darned tough bite early in the morning when the water temperature is in the mid-50s range.

If you need or want to probe deep water, 20- to 25-foot depths for bass in January, the main meal ticket this year is a dropshot rig. Also try a jig-n-pig combination and, of course, a Carolina-rigged soft plastic.



John Dean has his hands full with an 8.59-pound bass he caught fishing a soft plastic in grass this fall at Toledo Bend. Dean believes 10-pound-class bass will be caught starting this month at the Bend.

Remember, use your marine electronics because to catch deep you're going to need to see bass, of course, and there must be baitfish present.

As for crappie fishing, the warmer winters the past few years have all but quashed the phenomenal bite along the river channel in places like the Chicken Coop on the Texas side above Pendleton Bridge. The water temperature needs to get into the 40s to get the shad balled up to attract the crappie.

If you want to catch bass in January, I've been guiding on this lake most of my life and you're always welcome in my boat. Give me a call at (936) 404-2688. ■

- John Dean

# WINTER FISHING AT THE POINTE

## REDS AND SPECKS ON THE MENU

**B**obby Lamb, at Atlantic Marine in Waveland, Miss. (228-467-2847) has a camp over in East Pointe a la Hache, where he, his wife Emily and their three children love to spend their weekends fishing away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. And surprise of surprises, they actually prefer wintertime fishing over the action in the summer.

"The summer heat and humidity is sweltering, and since the Mardi Gras cut started pouring fresh water into the area, the rides are long to find decent, fishable water," Lamb said. "That's still our No. 1 challenge each day even in winter — how far will we have to go to find good water. But our winter advantage is that the north winds that deplete the Delacroix marshes send all that water our way, so we get a good influx of water on the days that make fishing difficult elsewhere."

Fortunately, he said he's finding good water and good fish in the in-between areas, where Delacroix waters merge with Point a la Hache's.

"I try Second and Third Bay, Big Four Bayou, Wreck Bay and Battleground Bay, and work north from there, up to Thorn Tree Bayou, Little Crevasse, Bakers Bay and Grand Pointe Bay," he said. "The farthest I usually run is to Skippy Lake and Point Fienne Bay, and only when I have no other options, Oak River. I try to stay out of Oak River even though it produces fish, because it can be a parking lot on weekends."

Lamb's tactics are simple. "Since our winters usually stay on the mild side, I generally fish the bays all winter, just drifting around cuts and points, using live bait (if available) under a popping cork, or Berkley Gulp 3-inch shrimp in the pearl or glow colors," he said. "I find they hold up well and produce both reds and specks."

Lamb said he follows that routine on all but the coldest days, when he'll yank the corks and fish slow off the bottom on a 3/8- or 1/2-ounce jighead with a pearl or glow Saltwater Assassin, or Norton sand eel in watermelon color.

"On the really cold days I



Dylan Lamb shows off a Pointe a la Hache redfish that weighed 7 pounds, 2 ounces and was caught in Bay Law on a Gulp Glow Shrimp under a cork.

prefer to park in a deeper bayou where I know there's an oyster bottom, and just fish slow, bouncing my bait off the bottom and up the ledges," he said. "Remember, you have to slow down your retrieve on those cold days because the fish are just not going to hit aggressively." ■

- Rusty Tardo

**BAYOU BLACK UP NEXT >**

## THE SECRET WEAPON FOR CRAPPIE AND SPECKS!

*From The Crappie Psychic, LLC*



### CRAPPIE TRAILERS

- Comes in 6 colors
  - Flavored with Psychic Sauce
  - Diamond shaped design creates more wiggle action
- Makes your favorite bait IRRESISTIBLE!**

### TROUT TRAILERS

- Comes in 6 colors
  - Flavored with Psychic Sauce
  - Unique diamond shaped design for more action
- Makes Your Lure a TROUT MAGNET!**



Call **985-790-0862** or visit [www.thecrappiepsychic.com](http://www.thecrappiepsychic.com)

to find a retailer near you!  
[thecrappiepsychic@yahoo.com](mailto:thecrappiepsychic@yahoo.com)



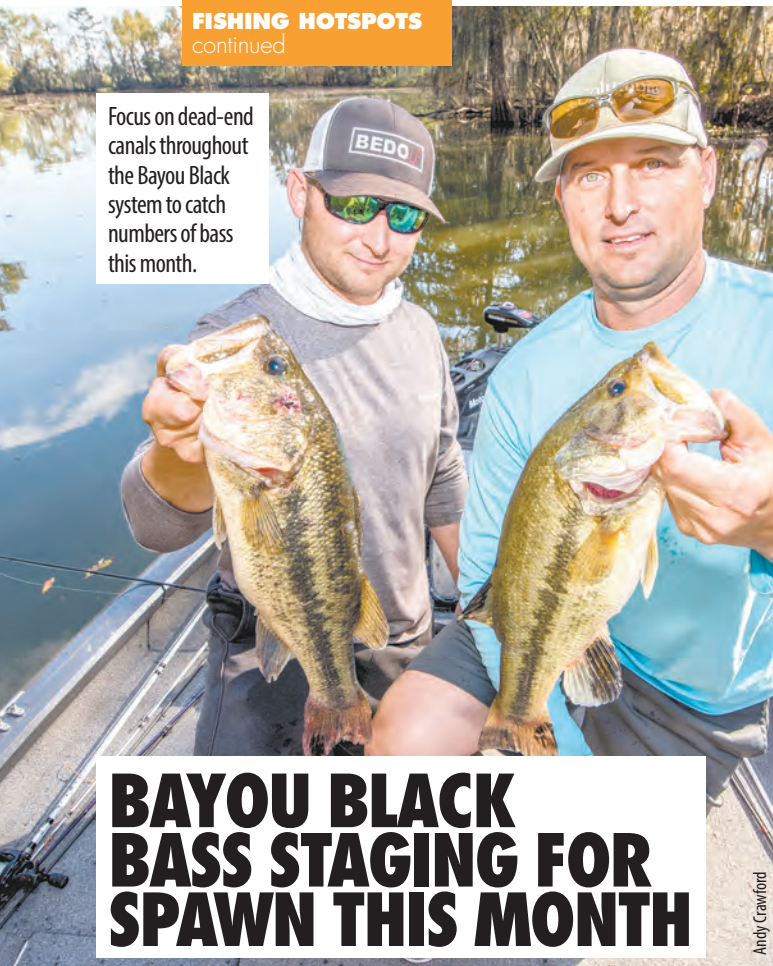
**TERREBONNE MARINE** 1201 St. Charles St, Houma • 872-3314



**BACKWATER** Revolutionary Shallow Water Motors  
MOTORS • PROPS • FRAME KITS • PARTS



Focus on dead-end canals throughout the Bayou Black system to catch numbers of bass this month.



## BAYOU BLACK BASS STAGING FOR SPAWN THIS MONTH

Andy Crawford

**P**rairieville anglers Kurt and Adam Cook spend pretty much every weekend fishing together, and Bayou Black is one of their favorite wintertime targets. "The population of fish is just amazing," Kurt Cook said. "You can come here and catch 20, 30, 40 fish."

And this month the job gets a little easier for the uncle/nephew team because fronts have pushed water temperatures down, forcing fish to move into dead-end canals in preparation for the annual spawn.

"The whole prespawn/spawn is the deal," Kurt Cook said.

He said weather is the real key, dictating where fish will be set up along the banks.

"The back ends of canals warm up faster," Cook said. "If you get a warm January, some fish will move up to spawn. You'll catch them in 2 to 3 feet of water. Four to 5 degrees

makes a difference.

"It's all up to the weather. It's 50/50."

If it's a cold January, fish will be close to those shallow flats, just waiting for water temps to jump.

"They'll stay off in that 5, 6, 7 feet of water," Cook said.

He said warm days will give up bass to crankbaits, but most of their fishing will be done with soft-plastics like Zoom Brush Hogs and Speed Craws.

Another good choice is a spinnerbait with upsized (No. 5) Indiana or Colorado blades.

"I might throw the jig a little more," Cook said. "It's really the only time of the year I'll use a jig. A lot of people throw it all year, but I don't."

Bass will be ganged up in the Shell canals near Bob's Bayou Black Marina and the Orange Grove complex, but Cook said all the canals throughout the system can produce fish. ■

- Andy Crawford

# HONDA GENERATORS

**Are Available at These Fine Local Dealers:**

**Brookhaven Honda**

111 STRIBLING DR. BROOKHAVEN, MS 39601  
601-833-6041



**Congress Outdoor Power Equip, Inc**

4801 WEST CONGRESS ST. LAFAYETTE, LA 70506  
337-988-9990

**G & C Honda**

15449 CLUB DELUXE ROAD HAMMOND, LA 70403  
888-515-4468

**G & C Honda**

2415 E. 70TH ST. SHREVEPORT, LA 71105  
318-797-1222

**Hall's Motor Sports NOLA**

1440 WESTBANK EXPRESSWAY HARVEY, LA 70058  
504-227-2272

**Honda of Covington**

152 HOLIDAY SQUARE BLVD. COVINGTON, LA 70433  
985-892-9730



**Honda of Lafayette**

1708 N. UNIVERSITY AVE. LAFAYETTE, LA 70507  
337-234-6632

**Honda Village of Natchitoches**

367 South Drive Natchitoches, LA 71457  
318-352-8174



**K&D**

9550 Old Hammond Hwy. Baton Rouge, LA 70809  
225-926-6242

**Loewer Power Sports**

5909 COLISEUM BLVD. ALEXANDRIA, LA 71303  
318-487-9495



**McKinney Honda**

715 N. SERVICE ROAD E. RUSTON, LA 71270  
318-255-6777

**Metro Boating**

3028 4TH ST. HARVEY, LA 70058  
504-341-4852

**Michael Canal & Son's, Inc**

313 SO. CYPRESS ST. HAMMOND, LA 70401  
985-345-4376



**Pellegrin Marine, Inc**

10215 MAIN ST. HOUMA, LA 70363  
985-872-4841



**Ponder Power Equipment**

3402 INDUSTRIAL DR. BOSSIER CITY, LA 71112  
318-747-4343

**Romero's Power Sports, Inc**

900 S. LEWIS NEW IBERIA, LA 70560  
337-364-2914

# Whether It's Fall Fun Or Winter Storms, WE HAVE THE POWER OPTION FOR YOU!



## EU2000i

- 2000 Watts (16.3 A) of Honda Inverter 120V AC Power
- Super Quiet - 53 to 59 dB(A)
- Lightweight (less than 47 lbs.)
- Eco-Throttle™ - Runs Up to 15 Hours on 1 gal. of Fuel
- Advanced Inverter Technology Provides Reliable Power to Computers and Other Sensitive Equipment
- 12V - 8.0A DC Output • Oil Alert®, Overload Alarm and Eco-Throttle™

AS  
SEEN ON  
TV



## EU20001 "Companion"

- 2000 Watts (16.7A) of Honda Inverter 20V AC Power
- Super Quiet - 53 to 59 dB(A) \* Lightweight (less than 47 lbs.)
- Eco-Throttle™ - Runs Up to 15 Hours on 1 gal. of Fuel
- Advanced Inverter Technology Provides Reliable Power to Computers and Other Sensitive Equipment
- Simultaneous AC/DC use (Auto Battery Charging)
- Parallel with Other EU2000i for Additional Power
- Oil Alert®, Overload Alarm and Eco-Throttle™
- Power for Microwave, Refrigerators, Hair Dryers and Small AC Units

FOR  
PARALLEL  
USE WITH  
EU2000i



## EG2800i

- 2800 Watts max, 2500 Watts rated
- 20A 125V Duplex, 30A 125V lockdown plug
- 12.1 hrs. per tankful at ¼ load, 5.1 hrs. at rated load
- 16.9" x 17.7" x 18.9"
- Noise level 61-69 dB(A)
- 66.6 lbs.
- 3 yr. homeowner warranty/1 year commercial

PERFECT  
FOR  
SUPPLEMENTAL  
POWER



## EU3000is

- 3000 Watts (25 A) of Honda Inverter 120V AC Power
- Super Quiet Operation - 49 to 58 dB(A) \* Convenient Electric Starting
- Eco-Throttle™ - Runs Up to 20 Hours on 3.4 gal. of fuel
- Advanced Inverter Technology Provides Reliable Power to Computers and Other Sensitive Equipment
- Simultaneous AC/DC use (Auto Battery Charging)
- Oil Alert®, Overload Alarm and Eco-Throttle™
- Power for RV's Including 13,500 BTU AC & Basic Home Backup Power

GREAT FOR  
RECREATIONAL  
USE



## EU7000is

- 7000 Watts (58.3/29.1 A) of 120/240 Power
- Fuel Injected for Long Run Time and Sure Starts
- Runs up to 18 hours @ ¼ load
- New Push Button Starting – No Choke Required
- No Carburetor Enables Extended Fuel Storage
- Output Indicator/Overload Alarm
- Integrated Folding Handles with Wheel Kit
- Honda 3-Year Warranty

GREAT  
FOR HOME  
STANDBY



Check the list at left for a dealer near you!

**HONDA**  
GENERATORS

Please read the owner's manual before operating your Honda Power Equipment and never use in a closed or partly enclosed area where you could be exposed to poisonous carbon monoxide. Connection of a generator to house power requires a transfer device to avoid possible injury to power company personnel. Consult a qualified electrician. © 2013 American Honda Motor Co., Inc.

# HEAD TO DEER BAYOU FOR DULARGE SPECKS

**A**fter an extra warm early winter, South Central Louisiana anglers still realize a big chill could drive speckled trout from the lakes and other shallow water areas into their winter holes.

Bill Lake of Houma, a veteran charter boat captain, anticipates traveling to some of his favorite deep holes in the Dularge area to bring in speckled trout in January. They are located just past the north shoreline of Lake Mechant in what locals call the Deer Bayou/Little Deuce area, a network of deeper waterways.

Lake, who owns Bayou Guide Service (985) 851-6015, said, "We've been busting up those speckled trout (during the balmy weather). It's really great the past few weeks, lots of fish."

That was in December, after a third straight week of warm weather in the region. However, two cold fronts arrived and changed the game.

"They'll be moving into a deep pattern after these (cold fronts)," he said. "That's alright. We know what to do."

"January's so damn tricky. Fish definitely won't be in the spots we're catching now. They'll strictly be in dead-end canals and pipeline canals and one place sticks in my mind," he said, referring to the Deer Bayou/Little Deuce area.

"It's one of the best places to fish in January in our area. To get into the system you have to go into Deer Bayou north from Lake Mechant. Those canals are deep, with 8 to 10 feet of water. They're easy to get to, navigable and safe. You don't have to worry about shallow water."

Lake, however, did issue a warning to anglers: Stay in the canals and don't venture into the adjacent marsh, because they are private lands. And if a boater travels far enough north, there are gates put up years ago to block entrance into those waterways.

The wintertime hotspot is about a 15- to 20-minute boat ride from Jug's Boat Launch at the end of Louisiana 315, Lake said. Go due south on Bayou Dularge for about 5 miles and take the first right into Mud Lake. Cross Mud Lake



Speckled trout can be caught in deep holes north of Lake Mechant this month.

heading due north and when you get into Lake Mechant, go north hugging the east shoreline — which will take you right into Deer Bayou.

"The good thing about fishing there is you're protected from the wind," Lake said.

When you get there, it's time to break out the soft plastic swimbaits. Why? The shrimp won't be around any longer and the speckled trout are feeding on fish, switching their diet from the crustaceans to baitfish.

The first thing he usually offers is Egret's new Vudu Vixen, a 3-inch soft plastic that "is tough as hell" and catches dozens of speckled trout.

"It's a great bait to target fish with in January," he said.

He also uses Tsunami and H&H swimbaits in glow/chartreuse and bunker (brown/black spots).

Whatever swimbait he has tied on, he works it slowly in the middle of the bayou, touching the bottom if he must to trigger a strike.

On warmer days, soft plastics under a popping cork can nail the speckled trout, too, if the water temperature is in the upper 50s or higher. Lake fishes with a glow/chartreuse or purple/chartreuse Bayou Chub Minnow then.

Just don't expect to be alone.

"It does get crowded on weekends, just like anywhere else," he said. ■

- Don Shoopman

## COLD-WEATHER FISHING AT CATFISH LAKE

OYSTER REEFS ARE KEY, ACCORDING TO GUIDE

Although the fishing can be great when hard cold fronts pass, there's nothing like the action in-between fronts. It just

doesn't get much better when you're whacking the fish, and the temperatures are also pleasant.

When South Louisiana gets those mild winter days, Golden Meadow guide Capt. Troy Robichaux loves to fish an area hot spot.

"On the warmer days, you want to fish the flats of Catfish Lake and the Sulphur Mine," he said.

When fishing those warmer weather areas, the veteran guide uses a popping cork with an old school H&H Sparkle Beetle.



Capt. Troy Robichaux puts clients on big numbers of speckled trout in Catfish Lake this month.

One of the good things with Catfish Lake, Robichaux said, is the place can give up some respectable trout.

"Normally, (December) and January are two of the best months for Catfish Lake," he said. "I've caught some of my biggest stringers of limits out of Catfish Lake in those months instead of in the summer."

For people looking to have productive

continues on page 162

# A & S powersports

SALES • PARTS • SERVICE



2017 E-Z-GO  
Freedom RXV  
2+2 Electric

2018  
Prowler  
EV



**Gas &  
Electric  
Available**

Arctic Cat 2017 & 2018's

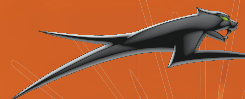


2017 Textron  
Off Road Stampede EPS

Stampede 4 seat  
2017 Textron Off Road  
Stampede XTR EPS



**Used Golf  
Carts  
Starting  
at \$2999**



**ARCTIC CAT**  
SHARE OUR PASSION.™



A Textron Company

1060 Front St • Slidell, LA 70458 • 985-641-8833

## CATFISH LAKE CONTINUED

drifts in Catfish Lake, oyster reefs are key, according to Robichaux.

"It used to be littered with oyster reefs around that lake, but there are still some predominant points that stick off the eastern shoreline and the western shoreline of Catfish Lake."

One of the things that's important is to leave the trolling motor down, at least when you're trying to locate fish in Catfish Lake.

"We find our fish by drifting with an electric motor," he said. "I'll start off at a spot that has been relatively good for me over the years, and I'll drift down the bank with my trolling motor, and after about 300 yards if I don't start picking up what I consider a significant amount of fish — 10 fish, 15 fish — I'll move on and try another spot in the lake."

Robichaux did point out anglers want to stick close to the shoreline, rather than in the middle of the lake when picking an area to drift. ■

- Joel Masson



# HIT 'OLD RIVER' ON THE RUN TO MERMENTAU

## REDFISH ARE STACKED UP AT THE DRAINS

**T**he Mermentau River's "Old River" has been giving up beaucoup redfish this winter — and shows no signs of slowing down in January.

"Man, we've been smoking them, catching redfish in the river ... but I focus on drains coming out of the marshes," veteran charter boat captain Vince Theriot of Grand Chenier said.

"Outgoing tides are the best and there are several locations along the old river that are payoff spots," he said.

Theriot, who owns Coastal Guide Service (337-540-6048), lives near the Mermentau River and doesn't have to go far to wet a line in the river that gives up redfish and speckled trout regularly in lower Cameron Parish.

Usually, before he heads to the "Old River" — if he can catch the tide starting to move out and favorable water conditions — he'll target redfish along the trestles of the Mermentau River Bridge (Louisiana 82).

After that, he'll make his move.

"Old River" is located about a



Vince Theriot holds a bull red caught at the Mermentau River Jetties. Anglers can try the jetties if the reds aren't biting at the Mermentau River Bridge, or the "Old River" of the Mermentau.

quarter-mile south of the bridge on the west bank. Start looking for the mouth when you get across from the old Crain Bros. dock, which is on the east bank, and turn right. Motor about 3 or 4 miles and fish all the drains. The redfish usually are stacked up at one or more of those spots.

Theriot cautioned boaters to follow the crab traps that mark the channel along that shallow waterway. Otherwise, your boat could be beached.

"Going down Old River is kind of tricky. You've got to follow the crab traps. You don't want to get out of the trail. As you're going along, there are several spots. Just fish those drains," he said.

He catches plenty of redfish, mostly 18 to 20 inches long, on an Egret Wedgetail soft plastic.

"If the water's clear enough, fish

something that matches the baitfish. I'll fish that 4-inch Wedgetail, chicken-on-a-chain or anything that kind of matches the baitfish," he said.

He also fishes with similarly colored Egrets Mambo Mulletts, he said.

When the redfish turn their nose up at those two soft plastics, his go-to artificial lure is a whitish or shrimp-colored 4-inch Gulp Shrimp.

Position the boat so that you can cast to where the water is coming out of the drain, he advised. Most of the time redfish are close to the bottom this time of year.

Quite often larger reds provide a lot of action and fun — bulls from 15 to 20 pounds also sock those baits.

"They're too big to keep, but they are a lot of fun to catch," Theriot said. ■

- Don Shoopman

# LAKE BORGNE REDFISH ARE SUNNING IN SHALLOW BAYS

Common sense says deep water and wintertime go together like caramel sauce and ice cream, but Capt. Bubby Lamy finds redfish this time of year piled up in the shallow marshes off Lake Borgne and Proctor's Point.

"In January when it's cool outside, the (reds) are swimming in the shallow bays because in the daytime when the sun's out, the shallow bays are warmer," he said.

Even in the wintertime with hard fronts, Lamy said water clarity usually isn't an issue.

"You normally get a lot of west winds, and that area stays crystal clear," he said.

Because of the pristine water clarity, Lamy uses his eyes to begin the process of targeting redfish.

"The water is so clear, you can sight-fish a lot of them," he said.

When sight-fishing, Lamy uses a Matrix Shad on a 1/4-ounce jighead to catch the fish. He pitches the lure just past the red, and watches them gobble the bait up.

However, when the clouds move in or the sun isn't up high enough to sight-fish, Lamy recommends two different techniques.

"You can throw a popping cork, which the sound draws them to you," he explained. "You can throw a gold spoon, which the flash off the spoon, even though the water is dirty, will grab their attention. The gold spoon has been around forever and it works."

Quarter-ounce gold spoons are the most popular size in South Louisiana, but Lamy likes a heavier one.

"If it's a really grassy pond, I'd throw a 1/4-ounce," he said. "If it's one that is not as grassy, a 3/8

will go down a little bit and it won't grab all the grass."

Lamy prefers the spoons that have the red weed guard on them — he says it makes a big difference in getting less grass on the hook. ■

- Joel Masson



Capt. Bubby Lamy says the marshes around Lake Borgne are home to many redfish this month that eagerly gobble up artificial baits.

## Demanding Jobs Demand Kubota.



### RTV-X1140 Utility Vehicle

- 24.8 HP\* Kubota Diesel Engine
- K-Vertible™ Second Row of Seating and Expandable Cargo Bed with Hydraulic Lift
- 1,300 lbs. Rugged Towing Capacity



### ZD1211 Commercial Zero-Turn Mower

- 24.8 HP\* Kubota Diesel Engine
- All-New 60" or 72" Kubota PRO Deck
- Deluxe Reclining Suspension Seat with Lumbar Support



### SSV75 Skid Steer Loader

- Tier 4 Final Engine with 74.3 Gross HP\* at 2600 RPM
- Spacious Cab Designed to Reduce Stress and Fatigue
- Available Hard-Working, Performance-Matched Attachments and Implements



### M5-111 Deluxe Utility Tractor

- 105.6 HP\* Tier 4 Final Kubota Diesel Engine
- Available Climate-Controlled, Ultra Grand Cab II
- Kubota-Exclusive, Bevel-Gear Front Axle for Easy Handling and Maneuverability



**337.436.4366**  
2351 E. McNeese St.  
Interstate 210 Hwy 14 Exit  
Lake Charles, LA 70607

**337.893.1451**  
11238 Veterans Memorial Dr.  
Abbeville, LA 70510



kubota.com

\*For complete warranty, safety and product information, consult your local Kubota dealer and the product operator's manual. Power (HP/KW) and other specifications are based on various standards or recommended practices. Kubota Tractor Corporation Markets a Full Line of Tractors and Construction Equipment Through a Nationwide Network of Over 1,000 Authorized Dealers. Optional equipment may be shown.



© Kubota Tractor Corporation, 2016



Tommy Vidrine shows off a big December speck caught at the Caminada Pass jetties at Grand Isle. By mid-December, trout in numbers hadn't yet moved into their typical wintertime holes along Highway 1, where they normally ride out chilly temperatures.

Courtesy Tommy Vidrine

## **SPECKLED TROUT TOUGH TO PATTERN ON GRAND ISLE**

FISH HAVEN'T ARRIVED IN USUAL  
WINTERTIME ROADSIDE SPOTS

In a typical January, Grand Isle speckled trout angler Tommy Vidrine knows roadside hot spots along Highway 1 will usually produce some nice fish.

But so far this winter, somebody apparently forgot to tell that to the trout.

At least through mid-December, the script was flipped, and roadside anglers weren't having much success — but some nice specks were still being caught out at the Fourchon barges and along the Caminada Pass jetties.

"It hasn't been typical so far this year," Vidrine said. "I've got friends of mine fishing the side of the road that are really good at it who live on the island, and they went after some cold fronts and caught nothing," he said. "And I left them biting at the jetties and the Fourchon barges like it was springtime. I've been catching some 4 ½ pound fish in December — it's been awesome."

Vidrine said water temperatures stayed relatively warm right up until some strong cold fronts arrived, and shrimp are still in the pass — two potential reasons why specks didn't make their usual gradual move inside.

"Buggie (Vegas at Bridge Side Marina) has still been catching

Discover the **BEST**  
Inland Fishing in the South



- Close to New Orleans
- Great Fishing
- Duck Hunting
- Gated
- Pool
- Private Launches
- Protective Covenants
- Close to Marina (Bait/Fuel)
- Best Time to Buy
- Lawn Maintenance Included



Call Hunter Cazes at 985-226-3106  
[www.FortBMarina.com](http://www.FortBMarina.com)

live shrimp," Vidrine said in mid-December. "The last two years, he didn't have live shrimp right now. So the shrimp are in the pass, and as long as the shrimp are in the pass, guess where the trout are going to be?"

Vidrine suspects because water temperatures never really gradually dropped, specks stayed on the Gulf side of the island — and still haven't made it to the relative warmth of the deep-water roadside holes along Highway 1.

"They weren't in the marsh. They were still out in the Gulf, so when it did get cold pretty fast, they're not going to run to the marsh in that shallow water — they'll die," he said. "They stayed right where they were, because they had access to deeper water right there instead of going inside."

Eventually, Vidrine suspects the specks will make it to their typical roadside haunts like the Snake Pit, the Forbidden Hole and along the two bridges leading into Grand Isle. When they do, he favors a Tsunami swimbait or a MirrOlure pogie imitation fished really slow early in the morning.

"I think they just see a shadow," he said. "I don't think they really know what it is, but they smash it. Sometimes I'll catch 10 or 15 fish before daybreak."

The good news is redfish apparently got the memo, and have appeared as expected along Highway 1.

"The redfish made the move. They got out of the shallow water, felt the cold and headed for the deep holes," Vidrine said. "So I think the redfish are somewhat normal from what everybody is telling me."

"But the trout are a weird phenomenon this year."

Vidrine's plan was to keep working his odd springtime pattern in the middle of the winter at the jetties and the barges — and enjoy it for however long it lasts.

"I'm going to keep doing it until I skunk," he said with a chuckle. ■

- Patrick Bonin



**Captain Paul's G.P.S. Systems™**  
 For the Best Advice & Hands on Instruction  
 in this New High Tech Navigation System

**CAPTAIN PAUL'S FISHING EDGE of GPS WAYPOINTS  
 are available on the Web at  
 THE LOUISIANA SPORTSMAN'S "OUTDOOR STORE"  
[www.LouisianaSportsman.com](http://www.LouisianaSportsman.com)  
 PRIVATE GROUP SEMINAR RATES  
 INDIVIDUAL TUTORING • SCHEDULED SEMINARS**

**For information  
 Call Captain Paul@ (985) 847-0536  
 e-mail: [captainpaultgps@gmail.com](mailto:captainpaultgps@gmail.com)**

**Avenger 26**  
Honda BF250 Sport Trail

*AVENGER*



Payments as low as  
\$412<sup>82</sup>/mo

**2200 Bulls Bay**  
Honda BF150 Sport Trail



Payments as low as  
\$233<sup>85</sup>/mo

*BULLS BAY*

## Atlantic Marine

Waveland, MS

103 Highway 90 Waveland, MS  
 (20 minutes from Slidell)  
 (228) 467-2847 • Toll Free: (877) 396-8079  
[bobbyatlantic@bellsouth.net](mailto:bobbyatlantic@bellsouth.net)

Monday - Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
[www.atlanticmarinebk.com](http://www.atlanticmarinebk.com)

**HONDA**  
**MARINE**

Honda Repower Dealer

\*APR fi financing available on all new Honda packages (boat, motor and trailer, where Honda outboard engine is the main source of power) through American Honda Finance Corporation upon approved credit. 3.99% APR fi financing for 24 - 84 months, available to customers who qualify for AHFC credit tier 1. Example for new Honda outboard engines: 3.99% APR for 84 months fi financing at \$13.66 a month for every \$1,000 fi financed. 4.99% APR for 120 months fi financing at \$10.60 a month for every \$1,000 fi financed. 4.99% APR for 144 months fi financing at \$9.24 a month for every \$1,000 fi financed. Offer good on any new and unregistered Honda package, with a minimum amount fi financed of \$1,000 and a minimum monthly payment of \$100. Check with participating dealers for complete details. Dealers set actual sales prices. For well-qualified buyers, not all buyers may qualify. Higher rates apply for different terms and/or buyers with lower credit rating. Lower rates may also be available. Offer valid through 07/06/17, on new and unregistered Honda packages (marine engines 2hp - 250hp) and only on approved credit by Honda Financial Services through participating dealers. Honda Financial Services' standard credit criteria apply. Always wear a personal flotation device while boating and read your owner's manual. All Honda outboards meet EPA and CARB emission levels. © 2017 American Honda Motor Co., Inc.

For optimum performance and safety, read the Owner's Manual before operating your Honda Marine Product. Always wear a personal flotation device while boating.

Atlantic Marine is an authorized Honda Marine dealer.

# Guides & Classifieds

## Display Ads

1/32 Page ..... \$75/mn  
 1/16 Page ..... \$107/mn  
 (vertical or horizontal)  
 1/8 Page ..... \$155/mn  
 (vertical or horizontal)

To place a classified display ad  
 Call 1-800-538-4355  
 Mon-Thurs 8-5 • Fri 8-3

**Guaranteed Fish!**  
 Experience Louisiana's  
 Most Professional  
 Guide Service

**BAYOU CHARTERS**  
 Retail #1 in Louisiana  
 504-278 FISH  
 www.CaptainCharlie.com

- Light Tackle
- Fly Fishing
- Redfish
- Speckled Trout

**Dufrene's**  
 GUIDE SERVICE, INC.  
 Specializing in Redfish & Speckled Trout

**Fishing Delacroix**  
 Chad Dufrene  
 dufrenesguideservice@yahoo.com  
 Cell: (985)-637-6357

**HUNTING**

**BIN THERE HUNTING**  
 Welsh, Roanoke & Pine Island Areas

Dove, Teal, Duck, Goose, Quail, Pheasant,  
 Big Game Exotics, & European Style Pheasant Shoot.  
 Guides/Camp/Cook/RV Hook Ups Available

**David Faul - 337-438-4868 field**  
 www.bintherehunting.com  
 email: binthere@centurytel.net  
 1-888-507-9288 Toll Free

**New Flighted Mallard Hunts Guaranteed**

**Best Prices Around**

**FISH-N-TELL CHARTERS**  
 CAPT. BARRY SCHEXNAYDRE  
 (225) 938-2419 • FISHNTELLCHARTERS@YAHOO.COM  
 24' BAY BOATS  
**SPECIALIZING IN SPECKLED TROUT & REDFISH**  
 FISHING FROM  
 FOURCHON TO GRAND ISLAND AREA

**Poisson Rouge Fishing Charters**

**Delacroix Inshore Specks & Reds**  
 NOLA accommodations available  
 504-782-4917

**RIPPIN LIP GUIDE SERVICE, LLC**

fishing the Golden Meadow, Grand Isle & Fourchon Area

TRIPS OUTINGS, FULLY SUPPLIED  
 CATCH CLEANED, & PACKED  
 Specializing in Redfish & Speckled Trout

ACCOMMODATIONS AVAILABLE  
 CAPT. MIKE GUIDRY  
 406 E. 74th St.  
 Cut Off, LA 70345  
**985-632-5846**  
 e-mail: boodro@viscom.net  
 www.rippinlipguideservice.com  
 BROCHURES AVAILABLE!

Louisiana & Coast Guard Licensed & Insured

**MS Exotic Hunting Ranch**  
 Mississippi's Finest Exotic Trophy Hunting

Why travel all over the world to hunt Trophy Exotic's when you can come to Liberty, Mississippi??  
 We have a unique array of exotic big game animals available to hunt: Fallow Deer, Nyala, Waterbuck, Pere' David, Axis, Zebra, ZeDonk, Gemsbok, Black Buck, and Moufolan Sheep just to name a few!

**Meat Hunts Available**

**MS Exotic Hunting Club**  
 2423 South Greensburg Road  
 Liberty, MS 39645

www.msexotichunting.com  
 Wayne (337)380-6019  
 poorho@msexotichunting.com

**SHIRLEY RANCH**  
 JOHNSON CITY, TEXAS Since 1963  
**TEXAS TRADITION**  
 Located in the of Texas Hill Country

**CURRENTLY BOOKING**  
**NOVEMBER & DECEMBER**

(830)868-7109 | Ryan@ShirleyRanch.com | Follow Us:   
 www.ShirleyRanch.com

**FISHING SUPPLIES**

Since 1999

**alltackle.com**

- Over 40,000 Fishing and Boating Items
- Rods, Reels, Lures, & Tackle
- Outriggers and Fighting Chairs

www.alltackle.com • 888-810-7283

**HUNTING**

**Briar Creek LODGE**  
 Alabama whitetail and quail hunting at its best!!

Contact Larry W. Adams  
 P.O. Box 107  
 Millry, Alabama 36558  
 dladams@millry.net  
**251-846-2717**  
 www.briarcreeklodge.com

**WILD HOG RIDGE HUNTING CLUB**

Experienced guides for bow, gun or horseback/dog hunts.  
 Full accommodations.

**Jerry Bailey**  
 3918 Hwy. 846  
 Columbia, LA 71418  
 318-331-1000  
 www.wildhogridge.com

**HUNTING**

**MISCELLANEOUS**

# Peel & Stick



**SPORTSMAN**Gear.com  
or 866-616-3315



**QUAIL**  
Oct 1-Mar 15

Hunt in the Field Trial Capital of the World  
1/2 Day | Full Day | Multi-Day  
Famous Sweet Home Alabama  
3-Day Quail Tournaments  
Unlimited Birds (no overage charges)  
No Cleaning Fees

## GREAT SOUTHERN OUTDOORS Wildlife Plantation

Union Springs, AL | 334.738.5066  
Support@GreatSouthernOutdoors.com  
GreatSouthernOutdoors.com

Home of the Alabama World Championship Bow Hunt

**WILD HOG**

April - Oct.  
Unlimited  
\$500 for 3 days  
Blowout Hunts

**BOW HUNTS**

Oct. 25 - Feb. 10  
3 days - \$900

**TURKEY**

Mar 15 - Apr 30  
2 mature gobblers  
per 3 days

**DEER/GUN**

Nov. 22 - Nov. 30  
Dec. 11 - Feb. 16  
\$1,495/\$1,695(rut)  
per man

**ALABAMA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP BOW HUNTS**  
Dec. 1 - Dec. 10  
2 man teams



**TROLLING MOTORS**

## CUSTOM INSTALLATION AND RIGGING

- BATTERIES
- CHARGERS
- MINNKOTA
- TALON
- HUMMINBIRD
- YAMAHA
- FISHING TACKLE



- STEERING
- JACK PLATES
- MOTORGUIDE
- POWER-POLE
- LOWRANCE
- MERCURY
- MAPS & MAP CARDS

2221 N. Airway • Baton Rouge, LA 70815  
**NEW & USED SALES & REPAIRS**

**TRAILERS**

## Claude's Trailers and Sales

Since 1963 Claude's has been taking care of the trailer needs of Acadiana. Whether you need a new Boat, Utility or Gooseneck trailer or just have a problem with your current trailer, Claude's can solve your problem.

No matter where you bought your trailer, no matter what brand, Claude's services them all. We are one of a few service facilities that can build custom axles



**We Build Axles In House!!!**

**6400 Hwy 14  
New Iberia, La. 70560**

**337-367-1141**

## Cajun Custom Fabrication & Marine LLC

- \* Aluminum And Metal Welding
- \* Boat Welding & Repair Is Our Specialty
- \* Farm Repair On Equipment, Etc.
- \* Skeg Welding Repairs & Trim Tabs Available

**337-288-2609**

**337-288-2609** Cell  
(TEXT ME!)

1818 Tornado Dr  
Church Point, LA 70525



Call Lucas Comeaux today for free estimate and book appointment

## ATTENTION DEER HUNTERS

Plant Game Management Trees

**Many Varieties Available**



**Assorted Fruit & Nut Bearing Trees**

From \$10-\$30 per tree

**Contact: Gerald**  
**Cell: 337-739-4130**

## DON'T GET BUSTED BY THE DHH

LUS-75 Camp Unit.

LA State Approved sewage treatment system for Camps and Houseboats

- Compact & Lightweight
- Corrosion Resistant
- Operates in Fresh or Sea Water
- Easy to Install
- Simple to Maintain



No Licensed Plumber Required, Install It Yourself.

**Houseboat Outlet, Inc.**

329 Hardware Road, Broussard, LA 70518  
www.houseboatoutlet.com • 337-330-4408  
www.aheadsanitationsystems.com

## Polarized sun blockers



**SPORTSMAN**Gear.com  
or 866-616-3315

# Guides & Classifieds

## Display Ads

1/32 Page ..... \$75/mn

1/16 Page ..... \$107/mn  
(vertical or horizontal)

1/8 Page ..... \$155/mn  
(vertical or horizontal)

To place a classified display ad

**Call 1-800-538-4355**

Mon-Thurs 8-5 • Fri 8-3

## HUNTING

**S&D WHITETAILS HUNTING** over 7500 acres in Central Texas. 100% Success. 20 years in business. No Fancy Gates or Lodge, Just Big Deer. Buy 1 hunt at the base price of \$2,950 buck up to 139, bring a friend FREE for a hog hunt or whitetail doe includes lodging & meals. www.sdwhitetails.com 325-642-7596

## REAL ESTATE

**COCODRIE WATERFRONT LOT** in restricted subdivision. 60 ft water frontage x 250 ft depth. Inside new Hurricane levee/flood gate. \$65,000. Robert Hale Real Estate (985)804-7525 985-804-7525 6RE-101/W

## REAL ESTATE



**WATERFRONT NEAR COCODRIE, CAMPERS-MOTORHOMES OK** near Falgoust Canal Marina fronting on Lower Bayou Dularge, south of Houma Only 9 Lots left, 4ft plus elevation inside an existing hurricane floodgate levee system & flood gate) In the middle of the best saltwater fishing in Terrebonne Parish close to fresh water bash fishing. Driveways in place!!!! Call for details. Robert Hale Real Estate (985)804-7525 or go to Roberthalealestate.com for photos, maps and restrictions. 985-804-7525 3RE-103/P

# Classifieds

Up to 25 words \$19.95/mn or \$45 for 3mns. Add a photo for \$10/mn

To place a classified ad

**Call 1-800-538-4355**

Mon-Thurs 8-5 • Fri 8-3

BE A BETTER GUIDE...

GET THE LATEST REPORTS ON WIND/MARINE & WEATHER FORECASTS, TIDES, ASTRO TABLES AND THE LATEST FISHING & HUNTING REPORTS on [www.LouisianaSportsman.com](http://www.LouisianaSportsman.com)

# Top It Off!



**SPORTSMAN**Gear.com  
or 866-616-3315

ACE'S RETRIEVERS.....	105	G3 BOATS.....	43	PITMAN'S METAL WORKS .....	141
AMERICAN HONDA MOTOR CO., INC. .....	80, 81	GATOR TAIL OUTBOARDS.....	3	PRIMOS .....	33
AQUA MARINE DENHAM SPRINGS.....	61	GATOR TRAX .....	57	PRO DRIVE.....	78
ASCENSION EQUIPMENT & RENT ALL.....	6	GO DEVIL .....	55	PUGLIA'S SPORTING GOODS .....	98, 99
ATLANTIC MARINE .....	165	H&H MARINE.....	79	QUIRK'S WELDING LLC .....	131
B & B ENTERPRISES INC .....	73	H&M MARINE.....	46	R&R POWERSPORTS.....	161
BAYOU OUTBOARDS, INC. ....	16	HANKO'S.....	122	R. SCHEXNAYDER & SONS .....	31
BERRYLAND CAMPERS.....	100	HENDERSON.....	163	REED'S METALS, INC.....	5
BIG TEX TRAILER-JENERETTE .....	113	HONDA PE .....	158, 159	SCULLY'S.....	97, 150
BLACK'S OUTDOOR AND MARINE .....	155	HUGHES WELDING AND MFG.....	112	SEA TRAC OFFSHORE SERVICES .....	37
BLUE DOT MARINE .....	67	HYDRO TURF.....	45	SERVICE CHEVROLET.....	11
BLUE WAVE BOATS .....	9	JEFF REGISTER BUILDING & TRUSS.....	16	SHIMANO AMERICAN CORP.....	4
BOAT STUF.....	89	K2 MARINE .....	87	SONNY FREEMAN.....	111
BOATS UNLIMITED .....	62, 63, 65	KING MACKEREL TACKLE.....	41	SOUTHERN OUTDOORS AND MARINE .....	121
BREAUX AND DAIGLE MARINE.....	18, 19	KOOLA EZE.....	105	SOUTHERN POWER AND EQUIPMENT, LLC .....	129
BROOKHAVEN HONDA .....	52	LAFAYETTE SHOOTERS .....	46	STERLING'S UPHOLSTERY .....	96
CAJUN OUTBOARDS .....	23	LAKE AREA MARINE .....	45	STEVE GERMANS TAXIDERMY ART.....	17
CAPTAIN PAUL TITUS.....	119, 165	LOEWER POWERSPORTS.....	39	SUPREME FORD.....	35
CAROLINA COMPOSITES, LLC.....	83	LOUISIANA LOTTERY .....	27	TERREBONNE MARINE .....	157
CHRIS' CAJUN BOILER / STEAMER.....	141	LOUISIANA SPORTSMAN SHOW.....	25	THE BOAT SHOW .....	117
COTTONMOUTH CUSTOM BOATS.....	87	M&L ENGINE.....	106	THE CRAPPIE PSYCHIC, LLC.....	157
COVER'S UNLIMITED .....	155	MARINE LIFT AND DOCK SUPPLY COMPANY.....	115	THE PROP SHOP .....	95
CUSTOM CORRUGATED AND SUPPLY ....	13	MCCLAIN LODGE.....	29	THE SPORTSMAN .....	95
DAGATE'S MARINE .....	77	MCM LUMBER .....	133	TIM'S MARINE .....	15
DEEP SOUTH GOLF CARS.....	109	METRO BOATING .....	64	TOGO LAND COMPANY, LLC.....	17
DIXIE RV .....	8	MIKE GERALD'S TRAILER.....	95	TOWN & COUNTRY MARINE .....	149
DOCKSIDE MARINE.....	116	MIKE PEREIRA .....	23	UNITED COUNTRY GIBSON REALTY.....	21
DOUG RUSHING REALTY, INC. ....	131	MOLPUS TIMBERLANDS MONROE OFFICE .....	31	WHITETAIL PROPERTIES .....	51
DOUG'S HUNTING LODGE.....	106	MOSSY OAK PROPERTIES LAND INVESTMENTS .....	49	XPRESS BY ALUMA-WELD, INC. ....	172
DOWN EAST GUIDE SERVICE.....	105, 119	NATIONAL LAND REALTY RICHARDSON PROPERTIES INC.....	71		
DUVIC'S BOATS.....	41, 148	NAUTIC STAR BOATS.....	2		
EXCEL BOATS .....	5	PELLEGRIN MARINE .....	91		
FIRST SOUTH LAND-UD.....	171				
FORT BEAUREGARD ESTATES .....	164				
FRED NETTERVILLE LUMBER.....	61				

Get decked out in the latest  
from the **SPORTSMAN** Store . . . . 10, 123

Subscribe Today and SAVE . . . . . 147

# DUVIC'S! YOUR #1 Re-Power Center



## THE POWER OF CHOICE

Select Suzuki Outboards  
Are Now Available  
In Your Choice of  
Black or White



**177SKV Red Fish**  
Edition w/90HP Suzuki  
and poling platform

**Kw KEY WEST**



**230BR w/250HP,**  
Suzuki, T-top, tandem axle  
aluminum trailer

**239FS w/300HP**  
Suzuki, hard T-Top

## **BLAZER BAY**



**2200 Blazer Bay**  
w/200HP Suzuki and tandem  
axle aluminum trailer

**2400**  
w/300hp Suzuki,  
Tandem Axle  
Aluminum Trailer

## **SOUTHFORK** Aluminum Boats

### **Southfork 2070V**

**Southfork**  
**1756CC**  
w/90HP Suzuki,  
welded floors, 18 gal  
uel tank, galv trailer



**Southfork 2260**  
w/115HP Suzuki, 18 gal fuel tank, trailer



**MSRP IS A DIRTY 4 LETTER WORD... WE WILL NOT BE UNDERSOLD!**



**DUVIC'S, INC.**  
3650 Westbank Expwy. Harvey, LA Mon-Fri 8am-5pm  
**504-341-1654**

SERVING  
ALL YOUR  
BOATING  
NEEDS  
SINCE 1890



Powered By  
**SUZUKI**  
**MARINE**



WHAT DOES *The* FARM MEAN TO YOU?



WHATEVER *The Farm* MEANS TO YOU, LET FIRST SOUTH FINANCE IT.

When it comes to financing or refinancing your place in the country, First South is the lender for you. With a century of experience in financing rural property, we're ready to help you with a loan for that perfect piece of land - for whatever

The Farm means to you. So please contact us today.



*Your Rural Lender* | [FIRSTSOUTHLAND.COM](http://FIRSTSOUTHLAND.COM) | 800-955-1722



**First South**  
*Farm Credit*



2018

# xpress boats: Xclusive series: next level xcitement

Xpress Boats the "Original" All-Welded Aluminum boat manufacturer prefers to lead, not follow, prefers to pioneer, not copy, prefers to be the choice as the finest performing, finest built, high performance aluminum boat on the market today.

The NEWLY designed Xclusive Pro Series features, elite enhancements including sleek new console, redesigned front and rear deck, seat and step coolers, larger center storage with optional tackle organizer, and new upholstery.

The game has been elevated and the separation from those that wish to be and those who try to be, just got a bit wider. Settle for nothing less than Xpress as the day has come for "next level xcitement".

[www.xpressboats.com](http://www.xpressboats.com).

**Xclusive Pro: X21, X19, X18, X17**



Xpress Boats, Inc. 199 Extrusion Pl.,  
Hot Springs, AR 71901

