

Carolina SPORTSMAN[®]



NOVEMBER 2020

www.CarolinaSPORTSMAN.com

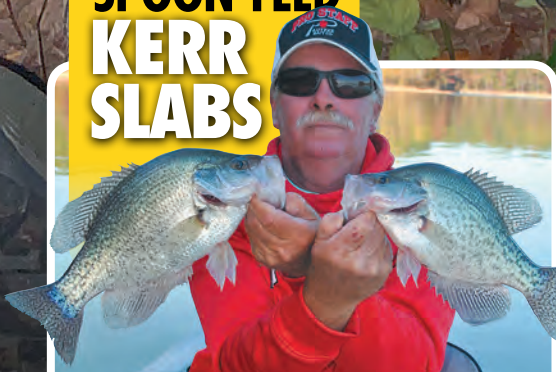
TROPHY TIME

- BUCK LIMITS WORK
- TIPS FOR THE WHITETAIL RUT
- BIG BUCK GALLERY

TACTICS FOR
LOWCOUNTRY SPECKS

'METHUSELAH'
STRIPER CAUGHT

SPOON-FEED
KERR
SLABS



SANTEE'S
BIG-GAME FISHING



MIXED-BAG
NOVEMBER
WATERFOWL

\$2.99 NOVEMBER 2020



7 25274 84783 9



THE ORIGINAL ALL-WELDED ALUMINUM SKIFF IS FAST, TOUGH AND SHALLOW!



SKIFF 185
Shown With Optional Appearance Package

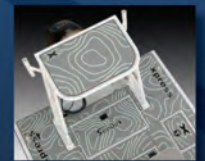
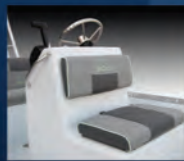


XPRESS SKIFF

FLATS STEALTH WITH BIG WATER DURABILITY



The Xpress Skiff enhances incredible opportunities for any shallow water fishing fanatic. The Skiff Hull offers a supreme level of buoyancy allowing you to quietly pole in just inches of water. The all-welded aluminum construction, supported by the longitudinal rib system and unibody injected foam, makes this the most durable platform on the market. The beautifully blended combination of shallow draft, fishability, innovative design and stealth-like properties on the Xpress Skiff will get you hooked up and ready for your next shallow water showdown. This is the boat most glass manufacturers hoped we would not introduce or perfect! No apologies necessary, no apologies needed, it is an epic craft. Whether running rivers, bays or across oyster bars, why settle for anything less than Xpress!



SeaDek MARINE PRODUCTS Available option on the Xpress Skiff

199 Extrusion Place, Hot Springs, AR 71901

xpressboats.com

220 BaySport Creek Cruising



For more information, go to PioneerBoats.com
or call **843-538-6604**
or like us on Facebook at Pioneer Boats
for the latest available information.



Avenger



Born on the
Bayou of Louisiana,
Raised in the
Lowcountry of
South Carolina



For more information, go to
AvengerBayBoats.com
or call **843-538-6604**
or like us on
Facebook at
Avenger Bay Boats
for the latest available information.



MODEL 2400

From The
Back Water
To The
Blue Water



For more information, go to
BullsBayBoats.com
or call **843-538-6604**
or like us on
Facebook at
Bulls Bay Boats
for the latest available information.



The Carolina's Largest Boat Dealer!

- On site test lake
- Over 70,000 sq ft of inside showrooms
- 9 full time sales and finance experts
- 8 factory trained service techs

**CALL US BEFORE YOU BUY...
WE WILL SAVE YOU MONEY!**

- **Huge selection to choose from!
All the best brands**



Sanford, NC
919-775-7259
chatleeboats.com

Powered by



MAKAIRA

OFFSHORE HYBRID

BLUE WAVE

BOATS



Get to know MAKAIRA, the offshore hybrid from Blue Wave Boats. Built to take up to 600hp and 135 gallons of fuel this boat will get you to the fishing ground and back. The shallow draft will also allow you to rule the bay when you want to stay near-shore.

[405.382.0349](tel:405.382.0349) | www.bluewaveboats.com



Your Blue Wave Boats dealer in the Carolinas is...
Doss Marine: Chapin, South Carolina
Performance East: Goldsboro, North Carolina

13

STUCK IN THE RUT?
YOU BET!



Carolina CONTENTS



41

SPOON-FED
SLABS

Volume 27 | Number 11 | November 2020

FEATURES:

13 STUCK IN THE RUT? YOU BET!

The peak of the white-tailed deer breeding season, aka the rut, is likely the best time to catch an old buck thinking about something other than staying safe. Here's an outfitter's guide to the particulars.

> By Terry Madewell

19 WHY BAG A BUCK?

If a trophy is a hunter's goal, buck limits — yours or the state's — may be the best way to get there. The hunter with a buck in his sights is the ultimate deer manager.

> By Jeff Burleson

27 READY FOR 'ROUGH'

Not everybody gets to deer hunting in an ideal, textbook location, and those aren't always the places where whitetails live. Don't be afraid to go where the going is tough.

> By L. Woodrow Ross

37 MIXED-BAG DUCK DOINGS

The arrival of duck season in November means waterfowl hunters will be on the water. If cold weather also arrives, it can mean a great chance at taking plenty of different ducks on the same hunt.

> By Pete Rogers

41 SPOON-FED SLABS

Fall crappie at Kerr Lake like their metal utensils; here's how one guide follows them, finds them and feeds them.

> By Dan Kibler

51 TIP THE TROUT SCALES IN YOUR DIRECTION

Lowcountry specks can be a blast throughout the fall, so don't miss a chance at hooking up with a bunch of nice fish. This veteran guide offers his ideas.

> By John Gribb

OUTDOOR UPDATE:

8 A 'METHUSELAH' FISH

COLUMNS:

32 GREENER PASTURES

By Jeff Burleson

34 STICKS & STRINGS

By Sammy Romano

60 SOUND & SEA

By Brian Cape

62 LUNKER LINES

By Davy Hite

64 SMALL CRAFT ADVISORY

By Phillip Gentry

66 COOKING ON THE WILD SIDE

By Capt. Jerry Dilsaver

68 SANTEE STRINGER

By Terry Madewell

70 HEAD FOR THE MOUNTAINS

By Bob Satterwhite

DEPARTMENTS:

18 Hunting Regs

57 Hunting/Fishing Scrapbook

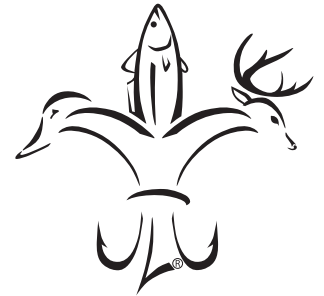
71 Astro Tables

76 Advertiser Index

ON THE COVER:



Cameron Brooks of McLeansville, N.C. killed this 133-inch, 8-point Guilford County buck the evening of Sept. 13, the third day of North Carolina's statewide archery season.



Carolina
SPORTSMAN

www.CarolinaSPORTSMAN.com

PUBLISHER: Lisa Lottinger Cuccia,
lisac@lasmag.com

MANAGING EDITOR: Dan Kibler
336.416.9631/dank@carolinasportsman.com

PRODUCTION DIRECTOR: Jeff Caldwell

ASSISTANT PRODUCTION MANAGER:
Desiree P. Lewis

ART DIRECTOR: Kevin Orgeron

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS:
Jeff Cashio, Alissa Zeringue

CONTROLLER: Juanita Guidry

NC ADVERTISING SALES REP: Mitch Eby
919.602.3862, mitche@carolinasportsman.com

SC ADVERTISING SALES REP: Bret Holten
843.442.7250, breth@carolinasportsman.com

ADVERTISING SALES:
Asa Faulkner, Mark Boyd, Burton Angelle and
Mark Hilzlm (National Sales)

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

CIRCULATION FIELD MANAGER:
Mitch Eby 919.602.3862/mitchebync@gmail.com

ADVERTISING INQUIRIES:

www.CarolinaSportsman.com/advertise

**FOR SUBSCRIPTIONS
OR SUBSCRIPTION ISSUES,
CALL 1.855.224.1667**

Monday thru Friday, 7 am to Midnight
Saturday & Sunday, 9 am - 6 pm EST

CAROLINA SPORTSMAN (USPS #012969) is published monthly by Carolina Publishing Inc., Allen J. Lottinger, Founder, 14236 Highway 90, P.O. Box 1199, Boutte, LA 70039. Mailed at periodicals postage rates and paid at Boutte, La., and additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to Carolina Sportsman, PO Box 433294, Palm Coast, FL 32143. All rights reserved. Reproduction of contents is strictly prohibited without permission of Carolina Sportsman. **EDITORIAL** information number is 336.376.5101. Editorial guidelines can be obtained by writing Carolina Sportsman, 433 Holinswood Ave., Winston-Salem, N.C. 27103. Carolina 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 27 | No 11

BAY RUNNER 210

\$34,795

BOAT, MARINE MASTER ALUMINUM TRAILER, SUZUKI 150 ATK ENGINE, HUMMINBIRD HELIX 5, MIN KOTA 70 LB THRUST TROLLING MOTOR, LINE-X INTERIOR, STANDARD PAINT, STAINLESS STEEL WHEEL, AND FLOATATION PODS INCLUDED!
CONTACT YOUR LOCAL DEALER FOR MORE INFORMATION.
BOAT MAY BE SHOWN WITH OPTIONS THAT ARE NOT INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL ADVERTISED PRICING.



**PG AND BOATGIRL
OUTDOORS**
PODCAST

PGANDBOATGIRL.COM

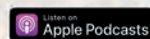
BROUGHT TO YOU BY



palmettoboatcenter.com



**Get the latest Outdoor
News, Talk and Hunting
and Fishing Reports.**
pgandboatgirl.com



with Dan Kibler



Dan Kibler of Winston-Salem, N.C., is managing editor of Carolina Sportsman magazine. He has been covering the outdoors full-time since 1985.

Dan Kibler

Aaryn Folden, Nicholas Folden, A.J. Harris and Wyatt Hatchitt killed this enormous alligator on Sept. 20 on South Carolina's Lake Moultrie. The gator was 13-foot-9 and weighed 758 pounds.



SOCIAL SECURITY STRIPED BASS? THE METHUSELAH OF ROCKFISH SHOWS UP IN NC'S ROANOKE RIVER

Josh Davidson, Casey Stevens, Dillan White and Cody Bacot, all from Florence, S.C., killed this 12-foot-10, 800-pound alligator at Santee Cooper on Sept. 12, opening day of South Carolina's alligator season.

I remember, years ago, talking to Scott Van Horn, a crackerjack fisheries biologist with the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission, about a crappie study being done on B. Everett Jordan Lake.

Van Horn told me he'd collected a nice crappie, a pound or so, but nothing out of the ordinary, and removed the ooliths, the ear bones that are used to learn the fish's age.

The fish, Van Horn said, was 16 years old.

I remember joking, "Ah, gee, Scott, he just got his driver's license, and you killed him."

I never guessed that I'd hear a story about a fish any older than that one, with the exception maybe of some old flathead or blue catfish, or maybe an ancient bull redfish older than the surf fisherman who caught it.

Then, the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries announced that angler Clark Purvis of Hobgood, N.C., had caught a tagged striped bass from the Roanoke River this past April 29 that turned out to be 31 years old.

In fish years, that's Methusalem.

Purvis found a pink tag sticking out of the side of the 40-inch fish, cut it off, released the fish back into the river and sent the tag to

the Division, whose staff members did a little research and found that the fish had been tagged in 1995 in a joint effort between the Division and Commission, in the Roanoke River, just downstream of Weldon, N.C.

Records showed that the fish was a 21-inch male when it was tagged and was likely from the 1989 year-class. It is the oldest fish on record with the Division — which doesn't even use pink tags anymore — and ties for the oldest striped bass on record; a Maryland fish caught in 1992 was also judged to be 31.

"Previously, the oldest striped bass we had seen come off the Albemarle-Roanoke spawning grounds was 23 years old," said Charlton Godwin, a Division biologist.

Before the fish Purvis caught, the longest any fish had remained at large after the Division had tagged it was about 20 years. The Division has been actively tagging fish for about 40 years. ■



Bag-A-Buck Contest underway



Don't forget to post photos of your bucks in the Carolina Sportsman Bag-A-Buck Contest to be eligible to win monthly prizes of great Sportsman swag from the online Sportsman Store.

To enter or see deer that have been entered, log onto <https://www.carolinasportsman.com/bag-a-buck-gallery/>

NORTH CAROLINA TEEN IS BAG-A-BUCK WINNER

It's amazing that a 17-year-old high-school senior killed a 130-inch, 9-point buck in mid-September.

What's more amazing is that she's not sure it's her biggest. "I've got four of them mounted; I need to score the others. I think he's the biggest, but one of them might be bigger."

That's how Natalie Garrett of Rougemont, N.C., a senior at Person Early College in Roxboro, described the huge Person County buck she killed on Sept. 13, the second day of North Carolina's archery season.



Natalie Garrett of Rougemont, N.C., won *Carolina Sportsman's* first monthly Bag-A-Buck contest with her entry of this 90-point, 130-inch Person County buck.

Garrett entered the buck in *Carolina Sportsman's* Bag-A-Buck contest, and her entry was drawn on Sept. 30 as the winner of the August/September monthly contest. She will receive a free, one-year subscription to *Carolina Sportsman* and a \$25 gift certificate to

the online Sportsman's Outdoor Store.

All subscribers are eligible for the contest, which includes four monthly contests. The grand-prize winner, drawn from all entrants, will receive a two-day, deer/hog combo hunt for two at South Carolina's Cherokee Run Lodge, a \$50 gift certificate to the Outdoor Store and a three-year subscription to *Carolina Sportsman*.

Garrett killed the buck at 7:30 p.m. with a SUB-1XR Mission crossbow, hunting from a ground blind. ■

CAROLINA OUTDOOR JOURNAL APP INTRODUCED; 408 SHOWS AVAILABLE

Joe Albea had a dream better than two decades ago to broadcast a television show for hunters and fishermen in North Carolina.

That show, *Carolina Outdoor Journal*, aired on UNC Public Television for 24 years to great acclaim.

Albea's latest dream has also come true; he's got all 408 editions of the show ready for download on a COJ app.

"I am glad that we were able to save the whole library of shows," said Albea, of Winterville, N.C., who lately has been quarterbacking an effort by the N.C. Coastal Fisheries Reform Group to get the state's sounds and other inshore areas

protected from large shrimp-trawling operations.

Shows are divided into high-definition and standard-definition; plans call for new shows to be produced in the future.

For a small fee, the App is available on smart TVs, including these platforms: Roku, Apple, Google and Amazon Fire, and on smart phones.

According to Albea, the library features 179 freshwater fishing shows, 180 saltwater fishing shows and 49 hunting shows.

To obtain the app, visit https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_bqwcd-FQggkUCIm1pafyhZ0qYksZlWZ/view?usp=sharing. ■

NORMAN SCHEDULED FOR BASS STOCKING

Bass fishermen who frequent Lake Norman's 32,500 acres in North Carolina's Foothills might notice something a little different about the largemouth bass they catch a few years down the road.

They might be bigger.

The N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission has decided to do an experimental stocking this fall with F-1 largemouths, a first-generation cross between northern bass and Florida-strain largemouth known for reaching larger sizes with fast growth rates.

The Commission met with a group of fishermen from the Lake Norman area earlier this year; the anglers asked the agency to try something to help the fishery, which is now made up of approximately 80% Alabama spotted bass and 20% largemouths.

"We listened to them, watched what other states are doing, looked at the state of the fishery at Norman, and we decided to introduce 2,000 of the F-1 bass this fall," said Lawrence Dorsey of Albemarle, a fisheries biologist with the Commission. "We're going to stock advanced-sized fish, 6 to 9 inches. The fishermen are going to raise the funding, and we're going to arrange to get the fish from a commercial producer. We will get them and mark them with a coded wire tag in the cheek that won't be visible, and when we electroshock fish in the spring, we'll be able to identify these fish by running them under a metal detector.

"This is a limited evaluation for Lake Norman. The 2,000 fish is a starting point; we'll see how it goes from there," Dorsey said. "From our perspective, we don't have any indication that these fish will displace Alabamas in Norman. We just want to know, will we see some individuals pop up larger than the lake has been producing? Those would be the F-1s." ■

CCA-SC GIVES SCDNR GEAR FOR COBIA TRACKING STUDY

The Coastal Conservation Association-South Carolina has helped out the S.C. Department of Natural Resources' groundbreaking cobia research with a donation of 20 acoustic transmitters and four receivers.

SCDNR biologists have been tracking cobia using acoustic telemetry, which relies on a network of more than 850 receivers located throughout much of the South Atlantic, Caribbean, and Gulf of Mexico. Cobia are captured and an electronic tag is surgically implanted into the body of the fish. The tag emits a "ping" that can be detected when a cobia travels within a quarter-mile of a receiver. When enough fish are tagged and detected, patterns in migration begin to emerge. ■

SPORTSMAN'S BIG BUCK GALLERY



Cody Rhinehart of Orangeburg, S.C., killed this huge, 8-point buck on Sept. 5, after having quite a few trail-cam photos of the animal.



Richard Shumaker of Mebane, N.C., killed this 160-inch, 12-point Caswell County buck on Sept. 12, opening day of North Carolina's archery season.



R.J. Seiler of Stokesville, N.C., killed this 10-point, 142-inch Rockingham County buck on Sept. 15. He had trail-cam photos of the buck last year, when it carried about a 120-inch rack.



Cameron Brooks of McLeansville, N.C., killed this 133-inch, 8-point Guilford County buck the evening of Sept. 15, third day of North Carolina's statewide archery season.



Hunter Pegg of Oak Ridge, N.C., took this Rockingham County 10-pointer with a crossbow on Sept. 15.

Michael Colins killed this big Franklin County, N.C. buck, which measures around 140 inches, on Sept. 12.



Lawton Robinson of St. Matthews, S.C., killed this unusual Calhoun County buck on Sept. 9. The buck had a normal left antler, plus one sticker point, but it's right antler had a brow tine, a long main beam and a drop tine that forked at the end.



Jerry Petree of Winston-Salem, N.C., busted this 140-inch, 8-point buck on Sept. 13 in Forsyth County.



Tommy Inman of Reidsville, N.C., arrowed this 153-inch, 12-point Rockingham County buck on Sept. 18.

Hoyt Alcon of Gibsonville, N.C., tagged this 140-inch, 9-point buck in Guilford County on Sept. 12. The buck was in full velvet.



Cale Rogers of Snow Camp, N.C., killed this 155-inch, main-frame 8-pointer, on Sept. 18 in Alamance County.

To read full stories about any of these trophy bucks, visit www.carolinasportsman.com and visit the deer-hunting section.

SPORTSMAN'S BIG BUCK GALLERY

Outdoor
UPDATE



Chris Glosson, 16, of Rougemont, N.C., took this 154-inch Granville County 10-pointer on Sept. 15.



Ashley Ingram of Newland, N.C., arrowed this 8-point, 205-pound buck in Avery County on Sept 26.



Zack Porterfield of Roxboro, N.C., tagged this 150-inch, 8-point buck on Sept. 18.



Shane Atkins of Raleigh, N.C., killed this 143-inch, 10-point buck in Wake County on Sept 15.

Erica Poston of Georgetown, S.C., dropped this impressive 9-point buck on Sept. 21 in Georgetown County.



To read full stories about any of these trophy bucks, visit www.carolinasportsman.com and visit the deer-hunting section.



Wesley Thomas of Hillsborough, N.C., used a crossbow to kill this 169-inch non-typical buck in Person County on Sept. 22



THE PEAK OF THE WHITE-TAILED DEER BREEDING SEASON, AKA THE RUT, IS LIKELY THE BEST TIME TO CATCH AN OLD BUCK THINKING ABOUT SOMETHING OTHER THAN STAYING SAFE. HERE'S AN OUTFITTER'S GUIDE TO THE PARTICULARS.

■ By Terry Madewell

STUCK IN THE RUT?

YOU BET!

The rut is the prime focal point for “big-buck” hunters in the Carolinas, and with good reason: bucks are on the move. Not just bucks in general, the big, multi-pointed, thick-tined trophy animals caught by trail cameras during the summer suddenly reappear and are as vulnerable as they’ll ever be.

A good hunting strategy is vital, and knowing when and where to hunt during the rut is the key to success.

Jim Boone has operated a highly successful commercial deer-hunting operation, Red Bluff Hunting Lodge in Allendale County, S.C., for the past 22 years. He said a significant portion of his season’s success occurs during the rut.

Boone’s insights are based on two decades of harvesting data at Red Bluff, coupled with scientific and biological assessments of that data. Boone’s educational background, a degree in wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture from Clemson, coupled with a comprehensive data-collection system, has produced detailed information on hunting patterns. He records and tracks data on every hunt and harvest, including wind direction, temperature and stand location.

“The specific timing of the rut varies based on location,”

he said. “We’ve done fetal analysis of does harvested later in the season for 20-plus years, and after 6,000 kills, I’ve got solid data on when the peak rut occurs. Here at Red Bluff, Oct. 15 through Nov. 15 is it, with 90% of the does on our 8,000 acres bred during that time period.

“But within that window of time, other factors influence hunting during the rut.”

Boone (803-300-1179) tracks weather patterns’ impact on hunting success; most veteran hunters associate cool snaps with improved hunting, and Boone has data supporting that belief. While hunting any time during the rut can be productive, a cool snap does improve deer movement during daylight hours when hunters can be in stands.

“We hunt every day, but hunters with limited time would do well to focus on cool snaps,” he said. “During the peak rut at Red Bluff, a reduction of 5 to 7 degrees in average air temperature causes everything to go wild in terms of hunters seeing bucks. Typically, when the weather is hot, much of the chasing and breeding occurs at night. But when a cool snap occurs, daytime deer traffic is noticeably and immediately improved.”

“I’ve found a remarkable correlation that as the temperature decreases during the rut, the odds of hunter success increases,” he said. “Furthermore, if we get a big drop in ambient temperature that gets us a frost during that 30 days of peak rut, the deer activity is almost too hot to handle.”

But much more goes into successful hunting during the rut than simply being in a deer stand. Being in the right stand in favorable habitat with the wind played correctly is paramount to success. Boone’s stand selections for hunting the rut are based on habitat and wind direction.

“The rut is generally about where the does are or have recently been, because the bucks are going to follow,” he said. “Stands that work best during the rut have certain characteristics that favor success, and one is to have stands where does are abundant and visibility is high.”

Boone said the time to kill a buck is when he’s seeking a doe, before he’s actively tending a doe in estrus. When bucks are seeking or looking for a doe in estrus, they’re on the move, but in a manner that gives a hunter more time to react with a well-placed shot.

Plan a solid strategy for hunting the rut to take big bucks at their most vulnerable time.





Mobility can be a key to getting your stand in the right area as the rut peaks.

Terry Madewell

While bucks are killed while actively tending does just before breeding, the shot is often more difficult, frequently on a moving target in thick, gnarly cover.

"I've spent countless hours in stands, and seeing a buck and doe actually mate is rare," he said. "That usually occurs in a private, isolated area. Hunting where deer actually breed is a lower-percentage option, because it covers only a small area, often with a restricted field of view. You have to be spot-on in your stand selection and then still get a little lucky."

But stands that take advantage of the seeking phase consistently produces best.

"I want hunters in stands that have open areas to view because it enables hunters to see more deer," he said.

Boone said during the rut, deer travel in predictable areas, including transition zones between different types of cover, such as fields and woods. They'll utilize funnels and bottle-necks to travel in the search for does, and they love utilizing cutovers during the rut.

"Cutovers with 3 to 4 years of regrowth are ideal for multiple reasons," he said. "Cutovers provide bedding areas, great cover and food sources. With a properly placed stand, hunters can see large areas, and this dramatically increases the potential to see bucks seeking or tending does."



- Quail, Mallard Ducks, Pheasants and Chucker Season, Oct. 1 - March 31
- Deer, Sept. 1 - Jan. 1
- Wild Boar, Sept. - May

- 2 New Automated 14 Sporting Clay Stations
- 5 Stand

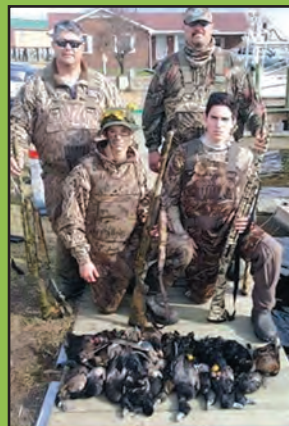
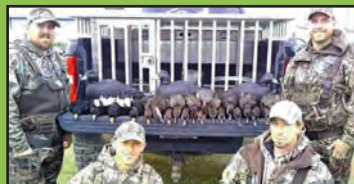
Corporate
Groups
Welcome

Contact Mike Johnson / 1217 Moree Rd
(843) 378-4831 / Society Hill, SC
moreehunt@aol.com / moreespreserve.com

CAPTAIN FROGGY'S GUIDE SERVICE (252) 661-7222



**Open water hunts
on Pamlico Sound**



**\$125 per gun
Min. 3 Hunters**



www.duckhuntingnc.com

STUCK IN THE RUT

Another area to watch are feeding areas, such as spots baited with corn. Boone said bait stations are places deer have been using and continue to use; however, as the rut increases, feeding activity may slow down.

“A doe stopping to feed has the potential to attract a buck at a bait station, so that’s good for hunters,” he said. “But when the rut is full on, I often see baited areas that are not being fed on as heavily, but have a lot of deer tracks going through the uneaten corn. This tells me bucks are watching these areas for does, and when bucks are in the area, that improves odds hunters are going to see them.”

Charles Ruth, big-game program coordinator for the S.C. Department of Natural Resource, said these specific types of areas noted by Boone for Lowcountry hunters are applicable to the piedmont and Midlands areas of the state as well, not to mention matching areas in North Carolina.

“Where cutovers occur in the piedmont and mountainous portion of the Upstate, they’re ideal for hunting during the rut,” Ruth said. “Focusing on areas with a diversity of cover types in any sector of the state is potentially good for hunting this time of the year.”

Ruth said areas near water sources are excellent choices, with creek and river bottoms, interspersed with some thick cover, ideal terrain for hunting.

Hunting around food sources during the rut is a universally productive tactic.

During the rut, hunters need to identify what’s available in their area; it can be persimmons, acorns, late-season agriculture crops, food plots and bait stations, Ruth said. Hunt where does are likely to be found, and bucks will be nearby.

Boone said the most-productive time to hunt deer also shifts during the rut. During the early season, late evenings are preferred by most hunters, and he said the harvest data supports



Terry Madewell

Acorns are a food source to which deer turn as the rut approaches. As bucks start to look for receptive does, oak flats will be great spots.

that strategy.

But during the rut, a dramatic shift occurs.

“Tracking our harvest from morning and evening hunts for many years, I’ve found that once the daily temperature drops, as it normally does by the time the rut is peaking, our morning hunting success outpaces the evening hunting by about a 2-to-1 margin,” Boone said.

Boone said to study your land and determine the prevailing wind direction, then set up some stands to take advantage.

“Wind and scent control are still crucial to success,” he said. “Bucks are still wary during the rut, but certainly are more susceptible than at other times of the year. Take advantage of that and always keep the wind in your favor.” ■

**TAKE A PEAK
AT THE RUT** ➤



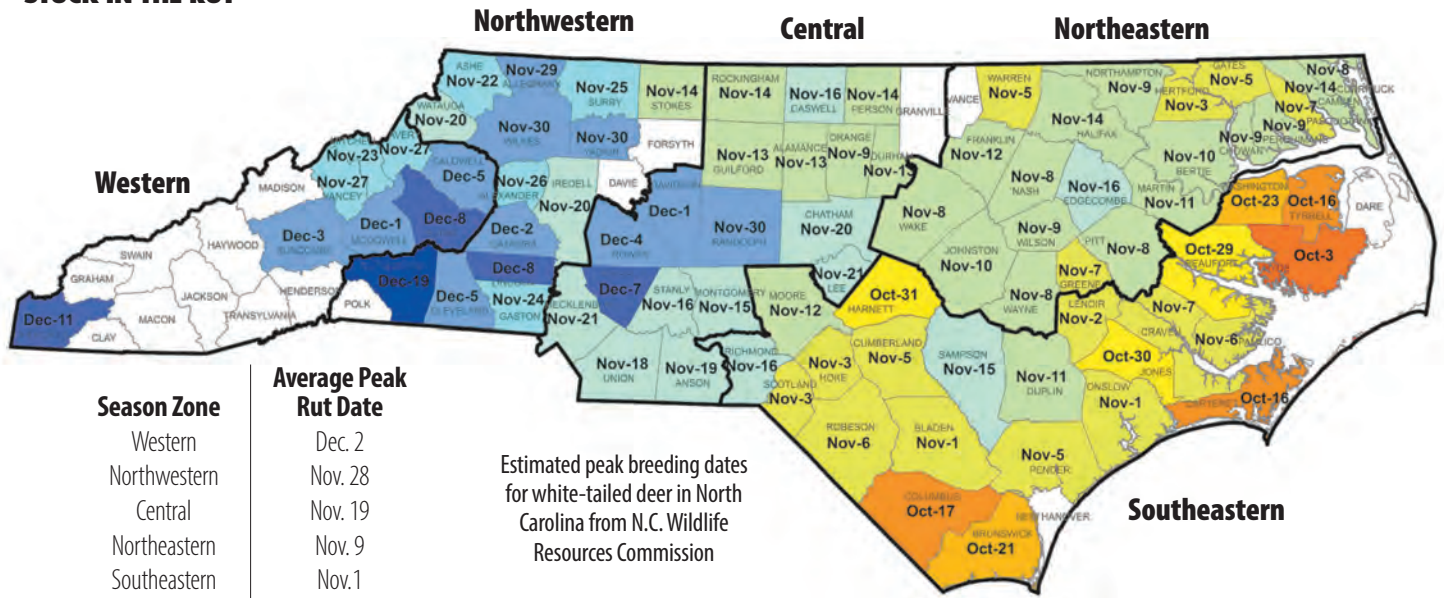
Terry Madewell of Ridgeway, S.C., has been an outdoors writer for more than 30 years. He has a degree in wildlife and fisheries management and has a long career as a professional wildlife biologist/natural resources manager.



Areas that have been baiting will get attention from bucks, not only for the feed but to keep up with does.

Terry Madewell

STUCK IN THE RUT



TAKE A PEAK AT
THE RUT

What is the peak of the rut? It's fairly simple.

Biologist Charles Ruth of the S.C. Department of Natural Resources said, "I consider the rut to be approaching a peak when the majority of doe deer in an area are in estrus and receptive."

Ruth said there is a definite time period linked to the peak of the rut across South Carolina.

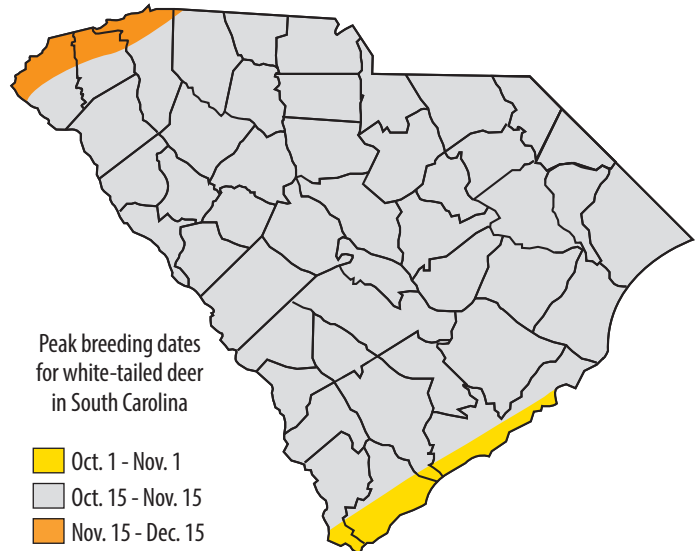
"Some minor variations are found in a small area of the Lowcountry; it may occur earlier by 10 days in that small area and two or three weeks later in the mountains, again a fairly small area of our state," he said. "The majority of the deer mating is between Oct. 20 and Nov. 10, but extend that time period from Oct. 10 to Nov. 15, the percentage of mating is about 83%. That data comes from literally checking thousands of deer."

"Localized areas can certainly experience peak rut periods anytime within that month, and it may change a bit from year to year based on external factors like condition of the local deer population.

"This historically is the prime time for hunters to harvest big bucks, and for hunters, it's important to note that this is when the urge to reproduce and propagate the species trumps a buck's normally very high-level instincts of self-preservation," he said.

Ruth said unseasonably warm weather won't stop the rut but can negatively impact hunting.

"High daytime temperatures won't stop the rut, because it's controlled by length of day, but high temperatures decrease daytime movements in favor of night," he said. "If daytime deer movements decrease then hunters suffer the consequences." ■



FARM FOR SALE - 275 ACRES

BEAUTIFUL FARM LOCATED 12 MILES NORTH EAST OF TARBORO. FORTY ACRES IN CROPLAND. BALANCE IN MERCHANTABLE TIMBER. TWENTY TO THIRTY FIVE YEARS OLD. ABUNDANT WILDLIFE. DEER, TURKEY, DUCKS, AND SMALL GAME. PRICE REDUCED.

VINSON BRIDGERS-BROKER
252.823.6653 OFC. OR 252.813.0646 CELL

HUNTING SEASONS

DEER

Region	Method	Season Dates
Western	Bowhunting	Sept. 12-27 Oct. 11-Nov. 22 Dec. 12-Jan. 1, 2021 (bucks only)
	Muzzleloader	Sept. 28-Oct. 10
	Gun	Nov. 23-Dec. 12
Northwestern	Bowhunting	Sept. 12-Nov. 6
	Muzzleloader	Nov. 7-20
	Gun	Nov. 21-Jan. 1, 2021
Central	Bowhunting	Sept. 12-Oct. 30
	Muzzleloader	Oct. 31-Nov. 13
	Gun	Nov. 14-Jan. 1, 2021
Northeastern/ Southeastern	Bowhunting	Sept. 12-Oct. 2
	Muzzleloader	Oct. 3-16
	Gun	Oct. 17-Jan. 1, 2021

BEAR

Oct. 12-Nov. 21 & Dec. 14-Jan. 1, 2021:	In and west of Surry, Wilkes, Caldwell, Burke and Cleveland counties
Nov. 14-Jan. 1, 2021:	Alamance, Anson, Cabarrus, Caswell, Chatham, Davidson, Durham, Granville, Guilford, Lee, Mecklenburg, Montgomery, Orange, Person, Randolph, Rockingham, Rowan, Stanly, Union counties
Oct. 17-Jan. 1, 2021:	Franklin, Harnett, Hoke, Johnston, Moore, Richmond, Scotland, Vance, Warren, Wake counties
Nov. 21-Jan. 1, 2021:	Alexander, Catawba, Davie, Forsyth, Gaston, Iredell, Lincoln, Stokes, Yadkin counties
Nov. 11-Jan. 1, 2021:	Bladen, Brunswick, Carteret, Columbus, Cumberland, Duplin, New Hanover, Onslow, Pamlico, Pender, Robeson, Sampson counties
Nov. 14-29, Dec. 12-27:	Dare, Hyde, Tyrrell counties
Nov. 14-22, Dec. 12-27:	Beaufort, Bertie, Craven, Hertford, Jones, Martin, Washington counties
Nov. 14-22, Dec. 12-27:	Camden*, Chowan*, Gates, Pasquotank*, Perquimans (*Seasons open Nov. 13 by local laws)
Nov. 21-Dec. 20:	Edgecombe, Greene, Halifax, Lenoir, Nash, Northampton, Pitt, Wayne, Wilson counties

SQUIRREL	Oct. 124-Feb. 28, 2021 (gray & red) Oct. 11-Jan. 31, 2021 (fox)
-----------------	--

RABBIT	Oct. 12-Feb. 28, 2021
---------------	-----------------------

RACCOON, OPOSSUM	Oct. 12-Feb. 28, 2021
-------------------------	-----------------------

QUAIL	Nov. 21-Feb. 28, 2021
--------------	-----------------------

GROUSE	Oct. 12-Feb. 28, 2021
---------------	-----------------------

RAILS	Sept. 1-Nov. 20
(KING, SORA, VIRGINIA, CLAPPER) (GALLINULES, MOORHENS)	

CANADA GEESE	Resident zone, Oct. 7-17, Nov. 7-28, Dec. 19-Feb. 13, 2021
---------------------	---

	Statewide: Sept. 1-30; NE Zone, Jan. 15-30, permit only
--	---

SNOW, BLUE, ROSS GEESE	Oct. 13-Feb. 13, 2021, Feb. 15-March 31, 2021, permit
-------------------------------	---

DUCKS	Oct. 7-10, Nov. 7-28, Dec. 19-Jan. 30, 2021
--------------	---

EARLY TEAL	Sept. 12-30 (east of US 17 only)
-------------------	----------------------------------

SEA DUCKS	Nov. 23-Jan. 30, 2021
------------------	-----------------------

BRANT	Dec. 19-Jan. 30, 2021
--------------	-----------------------

DOVE	Sept. 5-Oct. 10, Nov. 14-28, Dec. 12-Jan. 31, 2021
-------------	--

TUNDRA SWAN	Nov. 7-Jan. 30, 2021. Bag limit 1, by permit only.
--------------------	--

WOODCOCK	Dec. 10-Jan. 30, 2021
-----------------	-----------------------

WILD TURKEY (Youth)	April 3-9, 2021 April 10-May 8, 2021
----------------------------	---

HUNTING SEASONS


SPECIES	SEASON DATES (PRIVATE LAND)	BAG LIMIT	POSSESSION LIMIT
Doves	Sept. 5-7, Sept. 8-Oct. 11 Nov. 14-28, Dec. 25-Jan. 31, 2021	15	45
Crow	Nov. 1-March 1, 2021	No limits	
Quail	Nov. 23-March 1, 2021	12	36
Rabbit	Nov. 26-March 1, 2021	5	15
Squirrel	Oct. 1-March 1, 2021	10	30
Fox	Nov. 26-March 1, 2021	No limits	
Grouse	Nov. 26-March 1, 2021 (Game Zone 1 only)	3	9
Raccoon	Sept. 15-March 15, 2021 (statewide)	3 raccoons per party	
Opossum	Sept. 15-March 15, 2021	No limits	
Other furbearers	Nov. 26-March 1, 2020 (bobcat, otter, weasel, mink, muskrat, skunk)	No limits	
Bear	Game Zone 1 Game Zone 2 (parts of Oconee, Pickens, Greenville, Spartanburg counties not in Game Zone 1) Game Zone 2 (Georgetown, Horry, Marion and Williamsburg counties)	Oct. 17-23 (still hunting only) Oct. 24-30 (dogs) Oct. 17-30 (still hunting only) Oct. 17-30 (still hunting only)	
Rails	Sept. 15-20, King & Clapper Sora & Virginia Gallinules (common/purple)	15 25 15	45 75 45
Snipe	Nov. 14 - Feb. 28, 2021	8	24
Woodcock	Dec. 18 - Jan. 31, 2021	3	9
Wild Turkey	March 22-April 30, 2021 (Game Zones 3&4) April 1-May 10, 2021 (Game Zones 1&2)	3 3	

DEER SEASON

ZONE	ARCHERY ONLY	PRIM WEAPON	GUNS
1		Oct. 1-10	Oct. 11-Jan. 1, 2021
2	Sept. 15-30	Oct. 1-10	Oct. 11-Jan. 1, 2021
3			Aug. 15-Jan. 1, 2021
4	Aug 15-31		Sept. 1-Jan. 1, 2021
Youth Days: Game Zone 1, Sept. 26, Jan. 2; Game Zone 2: Sept. 12, Jan. 2; Game Zone 3: Aug. 8, Jan. 2; Game Zone 4: Aug. 8, Jan. 2.			

WATERFOWL SEASONS

SPECIES	DATES	BAG LIMIT
Duck	Teal only: Sept. 11-26 Nov. 21-28, Dec. 12-Jan. 31, 2021	6 6
Canada geese	Sept. 1-30, Nov. 21-28, Dec. 12-Jan. 31, 2021, Feb. 14-March 1, 2021	15 (Sept.) 5 (Others)
Blue/snow (light) geese	Nov. 21-28, Dec. 12-Jan. 31, 2021, Feb. 14-March 1, 2021	25
Brant	Dec. 13-Jan. 2-31, 2021	2
Sea ducks	Nov. 21-28, Dec. 12-Jan. 31, 2021	6
Mergansers	Nov. 21-28, Dec. 12-Jan. 31, 2021	5 (1 hooded)
Coots	Nov. 21-28, Dec. 12-Jan. 31, 2021	15



IF A TROPHY IS A HUNTER'S GOAL, BUCK LIMITS — YOURS OR THE STATE'S — MAY BE THE BEST WAY TO GET THERE. THE HUNTER WITH A BUCK IN HIS SIGHTS IS THE ULTIMATE DEER MANAGER.

WHY BAG A BUCK?

■ By Jeff Burleson

Deer hunting is one of America's oldest pastimes, having played a major role in the nation's culture. And it continues today, including the rural boroughs of North Carolina and South Carolina.

Even though hunters help feed their families with every venison recipe on the planet, they invest hours in a deer stand to harvest something special to hang over the fireplace or on walls throughout the house.

Finding a trophy buck can be difficult on some properties and easier on others, but selective harvest can create a more mature age structure and a happy hunter.

What does it take to grow a trophy buck? According to Charles Ruth, the deer-project supervisor for the S.C. Department of Natural Resources, it takes superior nutrition, age and genetics.

"It takes all three, with age and nutrition being the most important because there is essentially nothing you can do about genetics in free-ranging populations," Ruth said. "Both age and nutrition are controllable through management actions."



Rick Small

WHITE-TAILED DEER ARE RELATIVELY SHORT-LIVED CREATURES,

with few living past 5½ years in the wild. In fact, most only live 18 to 24 months. They are generally considered sexually mature after their first birthday; however, female fawns are known to breed in the late fall and winter at 6 months old when they reach 70 pounds or more. In doe fawns, the minimum weight will trigger sexual maturity.

The bottom line is, deer being short-lived, an extra year of growth can make a measurable impact on the size and quality of bucks in most populations.

Bucks typically reach antler maturity at 4½ years old. Bucks will make a significant jump in antler growth each year in the three years after their first birthday.

“The reduction in buck harvest in the younger age-classes can have a positive effect on the age structure of bucks,” Ruth said.

Older bucks generally equate to larger-antlered bucks, or at least more-mature bucks, and that is the goal of most hunters. Shifting the age dynamics of bucks in a population must be completed by protecting younger bucks, allowing them to reach older ages. Protecting younger bucks is the goal, accomplished by either antler restrictions or a conservative bag limit.

Antler restrictions alone can have its challenges when it comes to implementation and enforcement. Most are based on the number of points on one side and/or a minimum width requirement. Making these field judge-

ments can be difficult, especially when they are being made in low-light conditions or when deer are moving at a high rate of speed, but antler restrictions can be effective because they often protect younger bucks.

“Antler restrictions affect age structure, because they are designed to protect young bucks, which should lead to more bucks entering older age classes,” Ruth said.

A more practical approach to improving the age structure may be limiting buck harvests; that allows more bucks to enter older age classes by default. This has been successfully done in other jurisdictions around the nation.

“Kentucky has a one-buck limit and has been setting the world on fire with quality bucks for many years, and Kentucky hunters seem to support the limit, because it has not changed since inception,” Ruth said.



06:20AM 10/17/2018



0140



Bucks don't often live long enough to reach "trophy" status; each year a buck lives adds to its chances of becoming great. OPPOSITE: Trail-camera photos give hunters a chance to recognize and "grade" the bucks on their hunting properties, then choose which to shoot or pass on.

Jeff Burleson

Other states have adopted a blended approach, including antler restrictions and conservative buck-harvest limits.

"Knowing what I know about the deer and hunter 'matrix' in South Carolina, I believe that a two-buck limit, with one buck having an antler restriction, would work wonders," Ruth said. "This is the approach that Georgia takes. Georgia only allows two antlered bucks, where one has antler restrictions and the other doesn't."

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources allows hunters to tag 12 deer every season; up to 10 may be antlerless, and no more than two may be antlered. One antlered deer must have at least four points at least an inch or longer on one side.

Implementation may have its challenges, especially in South Carolina, where a liberal limit has historically allowed for many bucks to be legally harvested. Today, South Carolina's buck limit is five per season, but enforcement protocols leave much to be desired.



Jeff Burleson is a native of Lumberton, N.C., who lives in Myrtle Beach, S.C. He graduated from N.C. State University with a degree in fisheries and wildlife sciences and is a certified biologist and professional forester for Southern Palmetto Environmental Consulting.



YOUR LAND SPECIALISTS



WHITETAIL PROPERTIES REAL ESTATE

HUNTING | RANCH | FARM | TIMBER

WHITETAILPROPERTIES.COM



Whitetail Properties Real Estate, LLC - DBA Whitetail Properties | In the States of Nebraska & North Dakota - DBA Whitetail Trophy Properties Real Estate LLC | Licensed in IL, MO, IA, KS, KY, NE & OK - Dan Parrish, Broker | Licensed in AR, CO, GA, MN, ND, SD, TN & WI - Jeff Evans, Broker | Licensed in FL, OH, NY & PA - Jefferson Kirk Gilbert, Broker | Licensed in TX & NM - Joey Bralington, Broker | Licensed in TN - Bill Minor, Broker | Licensed in AL, GA, LA, & MS - Sybil Stewart, Broker | Licensed in TN - Chris Wakefield, Broker | Licensed in TN - Bobby Powers, Broker | Licensed in AR - Anthony Cimco, Broker | Licensed in SC, NC & VA - Chip Camp, Broker | Licensed in NC - Rich Baugh, Broker | Licensed in MI - Edmund José Nogaski, Broker | Licensed in WV - Debbie S. Laux, Broker | Licensed in ID, MT, OR, UT & WY - Aaron Milliken, Broker



In North Carolina, a two-buck limit has been in effect for 20 years across half of the state. Two years ago, the other half had its buck limit reduced from four to two. Few have challenged it, and if anything, landowners, and hunt-club managers are increasing their own management restrictions to further protect young bucks to grow a more trophy animal.

One such hunter is Tory Pegg of Kernersville, N.C. Last season, Pegg killed the biggest non-typical buck ever taken by bow in North Carolina, a 31-point Guilford County monster that measured 197 $\frac{1}{8}$ inches, qualifying for the Boone & Crockett Club's all-time record book.

"The best way for a hunting club to improve their bucks is either setting rack size limits or age limits," Pegg said. "In my opinion, the best way to improve bucks on your property is to just let them reach maturity."

Pegg started out hunting as a teen, like most hunters, shooting smaller deer at the first opportunity. When he was 16, he shot a 10-point, 151-inch buck behind his house. Ever since, he has been hooked on trying to grow and take only bigger deer.

"I start managing the bucks on my properties since day one of gaining permission," he said. "I don't think it takes but a year or two to have some potential shooters around if you are willing to let some nice buck go." ■



Hunters who pass up younger bucks with smaller racks often get the chance to reap the benefits of those choices by taking the same bucks after they have matured.

Colby Richard

SHOULD I SHOOT THIS ONE?

Deer management is something wildlife officials discuss on a routine basis. Foremost, they want to sustain a healthy deer population, but it also never hurts to implement some specific restrictions to make the hunter's success more fulfilling.

On a local level, however, hunters will make decisions on when to select a deer for harvest, depending on the size and characteristics of the animal itself. Sometimes, deer are selected for harvest for other reasons, such as a cull deer or a deer that hunters fear will be shot on an adjoining property.

Since hunters can shoot two bucks in North Carolina and five in South Carolina, they must decide what to do when a buck steps out in range. Of course, if a true wall-hanger walks out, making the decision to shoot or pass is not really part of the process. If a so-called "cull buck" walks out or a borderline buck shows up, hunters need to make the right decision to shoot or not to shoot.

So what is a cull buck? It's what someone subjectively labels as a deer that should be removed from the herd. Typically, they have unwanted antler characteristics or something that is undesirable in the gene pool. But is it right to select these deer for harvest when the future for these deer is undetermined?

Tory Pegg, a North Carolina hunter who took the state's biggest-ever non-typical by bow last season, watches the deer on his hunting properties like a hawk, with remote trail cameras and tons of hours in the stand. Pegg doesn't generally endorse shooting culls.

"Many people will see a 'messed-up' younger buck and shoot him, thinking he'll pass on bad genes," Pegg said. "In some instances, this may be true, but I've also seen so many occasions that buck coming back the next year perfectly normal. I also have never seen the same genetic pattern of these deer with supposedly 'messed-up' antlers carried on to future generations in the deer we follow year to year."

Pegg thinks hunters must give these deer a chance to grow to maturity. It's hard to know what a deer will become the next year. A lot of things go into antler growth, and another year can do wonders, even when the outlook seems grim.

A deer being shot by hunting neighbors is a common reason that a hunter selects a buck that's less than mature. If Pegg operated under that way of thinking, he would finish his limit in bow season every year.

"All of my properties are under 8 acres, and I have people hunting all around me," he said. "I can't believe in 'my-neighbor-might-shoot-him' logic, or I would shoot every buck I saw, because I know these deer spend just as much time off my properties as on them."



Jeff Burleson

A deer labeled for harvest as a cull buck or because he might be killed by a neighbor will never become a mature buck when he is dead and at the deer processor. "At the end of the day, shoot what makes you happy. But if you want to shoot big bucks, just let them grow," Pegg said. ■

Would this buck have always been a cull because of the antler configuration it showed when it was killed? Maybe not. He might have been worth passing on.

**NORTH CAROLINA:
BUCK LIMITS WORK >**



**WOAH! A BOND ARMS
FOR \$269!**

Made in Texas
by Texans.

ROUGH SERIES



ROUGH NECK	ROWDY	GRIZZLY	
9mm 2.5 inch barrel	45LC/.410 3 inch barrel	45LC/.410 3 inch barrel	HOLSTER INCLUDED!
\$269	\$299	\$377	

817-573-4445  **BOND ARMS INC.**  BondArms.com

NORTH CAROLINA: BUCK LIMITS WORK

When Scott Osborne was the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission's top deer biologist, the Commission in 2000 reduced the buck limit from four to two in the western half of the state.

Osborne predicted that areas affected by the two-buck rule would see a decline in the number of antlered bucks harvested of around 12% to 14%.

Harvest data and details from hunter mail surveys indicated that only 12% of all deer hunters in North Carolina killed more than one buck per year. A two-buck rule, Osborne said, would effectively become a one-buck limit for many hunters, who would be very careful about how they used their second and last buck tag. After all, what hunter wanted to be in the woods without a buck tag when an animal resembling Bullwinkle showed up, in range, the last few days of the season?

Osborne was prophetic. The first year the two-buck rule was in place, the buck harvest in the affected areas was down almost exactly what he had predicted, and it remained consistent for years.

Another result of the two-buck rule was the emergence of a handful of counties in the state's northern Piedmont area as big-buck havens. With more 1½-year-old bucks surviving to grow a second set of antlers — they had previously made up between 75% to 85% of the antlered-buck harvest — more made it 3½ or 4½ years and grew impressive racks.



Three huge Piedmont bucks taken after the two-buck rule went into effect: (clockwise from above) Ron Collins' 170% Rockingham County buck from 2011, Timothy Watkins' 170% Stokes County buck, taken in 2013, and John Tuttle's 171% Rockingham County buck, the state archery record, also taken in 2013.

5.88 acres - Hunting & Fishing Mecca - Engelhard NC

Conveniently located near Gull Rock/Dare Game Lands, and both Mattamuskeet & Alligator National Forests

Listed at **\$279,000**

- Pamlico Sound Retreat, 3,200 sq ft
- Expansive Views - Observatory Deck
- 3 Bedrooms, 3 Baths
- Additional 2 Bedroom Attached Apartment
- Hunting Lodge OR Bed & Breakfast Potential

LENOX AUCTION & REALTY
Gary Lenox - lenoxauctions@yahoo.com
See It Now at GaryLenox.com - 919-522-0074

Counties like Stokes, Rockingham and Guilford started to spit out huge bucks, including a number of Boone & Crockett Club trophies.

According to the Dixie Deer Classic's Honor Roll of bucks scored at the annual show, all 10 of the biggest bucks ever taken in Stokes County were killed after the change to the two-buck rule in 2000; nine of Rockingham County's best 10 were tagged after 2000, and six of Guilford County's 10 biggest were taken after 2000. ■

— Dan Kibler



Nichols Store, Inc.
Gift Cards

NICHOLS STORE
Outdoor Paradise



Your Hunting Headquarters

1980 Mt. Holly Road
Rock Hill, SC 29730 • 1-77, Exit 73

**Hunting • Fishing • Archery • Firearms
Ammunition • Clothing & Footwear
Optics • Safes • Knives • Feed & Seed
SC Concealed Weapons Classes and more!**



Let's Take It Outside



Buy • Sell • Trade • ATVs & UTVs
Service & Maintenance Available
Hunting Carts



Wild Game Processing
(803) 327.0500

Tuesday – Sunday, Closed on Mondays

**Outfitting the Outdoorsman
From Sport-to-Sport and
Season-to-Season**

**Tuesday – Saturday 9am – 6pm
Closed on Mondays**

**www.nicholsstore.com
(803) 328.9792**



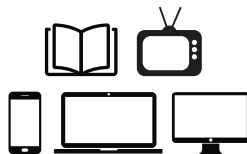
JOIN THE CLUB

Become a member at CarolinaSportsman.com

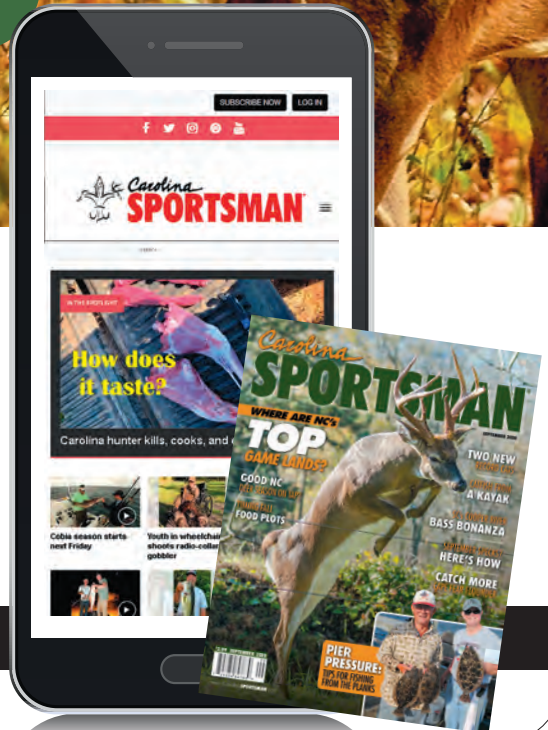


\$2.99 PER MONTH

Become a member and get FULL web access on all your smart devices and our monthly print magazine



VISIT: WWW.CAROLINASPORTSMAN.COM/SUBSCRIBE



■ By L. Woodrow Ross

READY FOR

'ROUGH'

One definition for “rough” in Webster’s Dictionary is “rugged, overgrown ground.” What better way to describe a place you’d find deer?

Hunters often fall into the trap of wanting the ideal location to set up. Their perfect spot includes a lush food plot, comfortable stand and easy access to allow vehicular removal of harvested deer. There’s nothing wrong with that, but unfortunately, many members of the deer-hunting community don’t have these luxuries. Here’s what reality looks like for many hunters.

Several years ago, I was fortunate enough to have a friend and co-worker who purchased rural hunting property. He developed it with perimeter roads, food plots and shooting lanes and even built a second home. It was a good run, and we took some good deer there.

Fast forward a few years to a new reality. We no longer worked together — he had moved on to another job — and we lost contact through the years. And as a traditional archery hunter, restrictive range became a greater factor for me. Most traditional archers would agree that 25 yards is the maximum reasonable range.

NOT EVERYBODY GETS TO HUNT DEER IN AN IDEAL, TEXTBOOK LOCATION, AND THOSE AREN'T ALWAYS THE PLACES WHERE WHITETAILS LIVE. DON'T BE AFRAID TO GO WHERE THE GOING IS TOUGH.

OVERLOOKED AREAS >



Rick Small

OVERLOOKED AREAS

Time was spent prospecting for potential hunting spots, including locations that would have been ruled out earlier when hunting with firearms; they were better candidates for traditional archery tactics. Some had yielded waterfowl-hunting success, but the fact that they were great options for deer hunting had been overlooked.

Hunting low-lying swampland that is interspersed with winding streams, beaver dams and standing water is a surefire way to see more deer. It is amazing how water and mud can affect deer movement and discourage hunter movement. Deer use beaver dams as roadways to cross the water, and they tend to move parallel to standing water and streams. Hunters can use these tendencies to increase their chances at collecting more venison.

Out-of-the-way places as deer hotspots should be obvious. Access is not easy, often involving difficult treks through mud and water to reach dry land. A favorite place might be overgrown with privet hedge, honeysuckle and scrub brush. Deer trails are like tunnels winding through the foliage. On several occasions, trailing bowshot deer involved stooping and crawl-

ing through these tunnels. Bushwhacking through such territory might not be advisable during gun season. It is remarkable how easily deer can navigate through dense foliage.

A DIFFERENT MINDSET

This kind of hunting is not for the weak or timid. It is tiring and takes patience and extensive scouting to find the right location. Due to the variables, hunting from a climbing stand is often a good option. Hunting close to deer trails requires good scent control and often, changing locations.

If you choose to pursue this type of hunting, topographical maps and Google Earth are helpful sources of information. If you view potential hunting locations on these apps, you can home in on spots off of the beaten path. A good bet is to stay alert for deer sign when trapping or hunting small game. Sometimes, a few hundred yards can be enough to get away from the crowd.

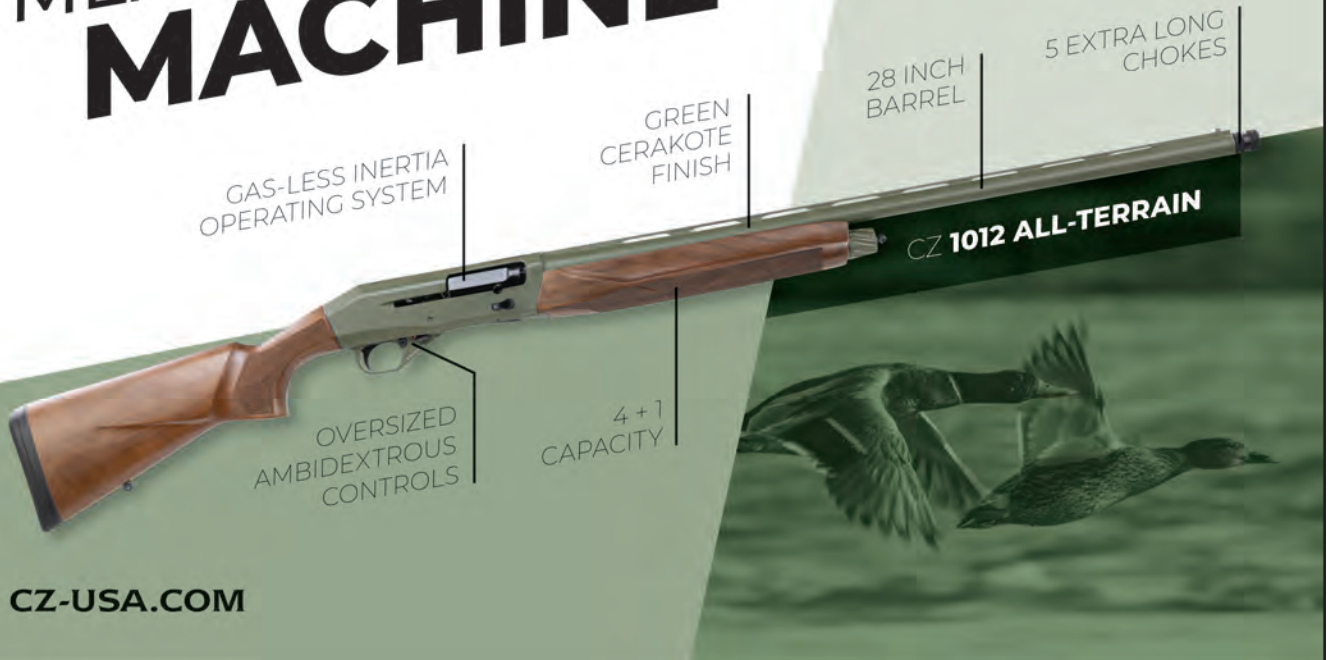
A favorite spot of mine is a jungle of dense vegetation along a river. It is a maze of ponds, small streams and beaver ponds. It is also close to a small town; voices and street noise can be heard from the stand.



Look for large numbers of deer tracks in the soft ground around creek bottoms or exposed, swampy areas.



MEAN GREEN MACHINE



CZ-USA.COM

THE NEW 2021 HUNTMASTER IS HERE.



GO
ANYWHERE



When outdoor enthusiast and amphibious machine team up, it's a game changer for the sport, and for those stories back at camp.

Visit **BOST ARGO ATV SALES**

6540 Hwy 152 East • Rockwell, NC 28138 • 704-279-5736 • www.atvargo.com

© 2021 ARGO XTV. Riders must wear an approved helmet, eye protection, protective clothing and when operating in water always wear a personal floatation device. Use handholds and stay completely inside the vehicle. Never engage in stunt driving. Along with concerned conservationists everywhere, ARGO® urges you to respect public and private lands. Ride only on designated areas or trails. Preserve your future riding opportunities by showing respect for the environment, local laws and the rights of others when riding.

A hunting buddy, Josh Lanier, has a blog titled “Wildcat Creek Journal.” In it, he makes a statement about fishing that applies equally to places I hunt.

“There is just something about fishing (or hunting) in those hard-to-get-to places that intrigues me. I have often found that the rougher it is to bushwhack your way through, the greater the chances there will be a good payoff for your efforts.”

Recovering deer in this type of environment is always difficult. Often, after field dressing, it results in dragging deer through mud, water and muck. Then comes getting to highway transportation and a trip to the processor.

Lanier shared a conversation about hunting in the mountains of South Carolina’s Jocassee Gorges. He had hunted unsuccessfully in an area, but the fourth trip yielded a fat, 4-point buck with his recurve bow. He was deep into the rugged mountain terrain.

“After an extensive search through the laurel and brush, I was able to recover the deer,” he said. “That is when the real work began. Bringing something as heavy as a deer out of a thick

ravine is hard work and calls for a lot of pulling, lifting and dragging. I have often found that any measurable amount of success in the outdoors comes with a price.”

TRIALS AND REWARDS

Trailing bow-shot deer in difficult places often results in hours of bending and crawling through dense foliage and trailing until blood sign disappears. Then, a grid search is often necessary to locate the quarry. It is amazing how difficult it can be in dense foliage to find a deer that has traveled less than 100 yards.

These hunts are very demanding, the best and the worst of conditions. It lends itself to bowhunting but can be equally effective for those who hunt with firearms. It is an exciting challenge that nature presents. When we accept that challenge and succeed, against all odds, it is very rewarding. ■



L. Woodrow Ross lives in South Carolina’s Upstate, where he enjoys traditional archery hunting, fly-fishing and fly-tying, along with many other outdoor pursuits. He has written more than 500 newspaper columns, numerous magazine articles as well as 32 books available on Amazon Kindle.



Often, good deer-hunting areas can be reached with the help of a canoe or kayak; the mobility of such vessels and the ability to use a climbing stand can help get you into the right spot. **RIGHT:** Deer are at home in thick, hard-to-reach places. Getting in there with them gives hunters a chance for a nice reward.



L. Woodrow Ross

L. Woodrow Ross

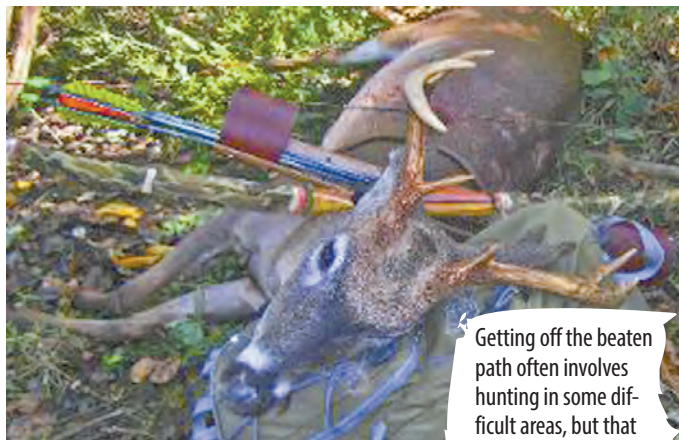
DEFINITELY NOT A WALK IN THE PARK

A typical day hunting in "rough" deer country involves getting up in the early in the morning and driving to your destination. Next may come launching a canoe and paddling to an area in the dark, disembarking and bushwhacking for some distance, or a long walk in hip boots or waders.

You may cross a beaver dam before finally locating and climbing your selected tree. Next, you might screw hooks into the tree for a backpack with your necessary gear. Then, you sit and wait for the deer. Each rustle of a leaf, ripple of the water or errant sound speeds up the heartbeat. As dawn begins to glow in the east, every stump or log takes on the shape of a deer, but staring intently, they soon change into a part of the landscape.

If you have chosen wisely, the site will soon be visited by an elusive whitetail. It is always amazing to look away for a moment, then look back and see a deer standing in plain sight. No sound betrays their presence, and their coming has a mysterious quality that never gets old.

This is a critical time requiring extreme caution. The drawing of a bow or lifting of a firearm requires motion, and this can draw the deer's attention. The best scenario is to wait for the deer to focus its attention away from your location. A favorite tactic of Ryan Gill, a bowhunter and author, is to allow the deer to slightly pass your stand. Its attention is focused on where it's headed,



L. Woodrow Ross

Getting off the beaten path often involves hunting in some difficult areas, but that makes success even sweeter.

not where it's been. Increasing the difficulty of success, Gill often hunts from ground level.

With good luck, you reach full draw, undetected. At the moment of release — if the arrow hits a vital spot — you have a good chance for success. Unfortunately, arrows kill from blood loss, and this is not often instantaneous. What this means to the archery hunter is that the recovery may be difficult and time-consuming. This is especially true in dense vegetation, and it makes success even more sweet. ■

GREENER PASTURES >

Prothro Chevrolet

Your *Family Owned*
Hometown Dealer for
90 years!



www.prothrochevy.com

452 N. Brooks St. • Manning SC • 803-433-2535 • 1-800-968-9934



A big buck might stick to his home territory 50 weeks out of the year, but when the peak of the rut nears, you're liable to find him cruising places he doesn't know as well, looking for receptive does.



ALL BETS ARE OFF

WHEN THE RUT'S PEAK APPROACHES, ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN

Donna Brookshire

A hunting license enables outdoorsmen to chase a long list of game species throughout the year.

Even though bushytails, cottontails and some feathered varieties are popular among hunters in the Carolinas, the sheer numbers of deer hunters far outweigh every other game species available on Carolina turf. And November is typically a hot month to encounter a trophy buck in places and at times when hunters may least expect it.

The white-tailed deer rut typically begins in September when the sweet smell of estrus begin filling the food plots and woodlots. As soon as the opportunity arises, bucks do not waste any time and begin looking for an available mate.

By October, breeding is well under way, leading into November when buck activity can peak along with hunting pressure. It is the busiest month in the woods for hunters and for deer activity.

BIG SURPRISES

For many hunters, the hit list is well established through two months of field surveillance, but the November rut can surprise hunters, no matter how many trail cameras are deployed. Food plots,

agriculture fields, swamps, cutovers or a mature hardwood ridge can be the final resting place for that true trophy.

Most bucks will remain within their home ranges, even during the heavy breeding periods. But it's also not uncommon for bucks to slip out of their comfort zones in a hormone-driven trip chasing a female in heat or just on the prowl for some available mates. And these slips out of their comfort zone can be a half-mile across the swamp to a neighboring farm or a full-fledged 10-mile trek. Predictability of buck movement in November can be indeterminate. As a result, any hunting stand on any hunting property can be ground zero for a lifetime buck.

SUSPENDING TIME

Timing can also be unpredictable. Sunrise or sunset are not always the times he shows up, either. The arrival of a trophy buck around the stand can happen at just about any time. Predictability and patterning a big buck is nearly impossible. Leaving a little time to take short rests, deer are on their feet for most of the day and night, and hunters can take that trophy buck at almost any time of day.

Trail cameras can bring mixed results for hunters this time of year. Their data can be fantastic and predictable during late summer and early fall, but when the rut takes off, all bets are off. But if hunters have a way to monitor activity on a daily basis, they can discover a newcomer and maybe get a chance at him before he heads to another farm or back to his home territory. Trail cameras with cellular notifications can be super helpful during this time due to the instant notification feature. Nevertheless, hunters can still pattern overall deer movement or movement of does onto major food sources that can assist hunters with being in the stand at the most probable time.

Bottom line, hunters should put as much time in the deer stand this month as possible, because the arrival of bucks on stand can be unpredictable. Always anticipate a surprise, because it happens every day in the peak of the rut. ■



Jeff Burleson is a native of Lumberton, N.C., who lives in Myrtle Beach, S.C. He graduated from N.C. State University and is a certified biologist and professional forester for Southern Palmetto Environmental Consulting.

HUNTING PRESSURE UP? DEER WILL FIND WATER

Much of the Carolinas' acreage is covered with wildlife habitat in one form or another. Even around cities and town where few trees and wooded areas are available, deer flourish in a varied habitat. Yet most hunters put the hammer down, hitting their deer properties every chance they get.

After a few months of heavy pressure, deer quickly smarten up and seek out areas less pressured by hunters — especially in areas where hound-hunting is a mainstay. Deer will seek out water sources for protection; they can be excellent places to intercept a big buck.

No doubt, deer are affected by hunting pressure, and they are smart enough to realize swamps, creekbot-toms and places inundated by water are fantastic places to evade capture and avoid conflict. Hunters accustomed to hunting with hounds understand this concept better than anyone else. Every time a big buck is jumped by the dogs, the deer nearly always heads straight to the swamp. For hunters who understand this, these water-filled wildernesses can be excellent places to hunt.

Hunters can hunt on the edges of these swamps or at swamp intersections or places where other water courses intersect. Deer will follow these water courses like a road map, and hunters can set up along them and get enlightened to what has been lurking for months on their properties. ■



Jeff Burleson

Bucks experiencing hunting pressure in their home ranges will often head to the most-inhospitable areas, especially swamps and other wet areas.

STICKS & STRINGS >

SOUTHERN LAND SOLUTIONS, LLC



- REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENTS
- RESIDENTIAL LOT CLEARING
- SHOOTING AND FIRE LANES
- TRAIL BUILDING
- WILDLIFE HABITAT RESTORATION
- FORESTRY SITE PREP
- UTILITY RIGHT-OF-WAY CLEARING
- POND CONSTRUCTION

FOR ALL YOUR BRUSH SHREDDING NEEDS
 WATCH US ON  AND CALL TODAY!
 BULLDOZER • MULCHING • TRACKHOE WORK
843-353-7375
 BRANNON TURBEVILLE - OWNER

**THE
 CAROLINA'S
 LAND
 MANAGEMENT
 COMPANY**

STICKS AND STRINGS

Sammy Romano

THE DEADLY BLACK WIDOW

MISSOURI COMPANY'S TRADITIONAL BOWS ARE AMONG ARCHERY MARKET'S BEST MODELS

After nearly 30 years in the archery industry, I've had the pleasure of shooting thousands of bows of nearly every make and model: compounds, crossbows and even traditional bows. So it's rare these days that I am surprised by how well a particular bow shoots.

A few months ago, my buddy, Billy, called to tell me that after shooting a mutual friend's Black Widow recurve bow, he immediately drove 12 hours to the factory in Missouri to buy one. He excitedly told me how he was able to shoot every bow on the wall at the factory and bought the one he shot best: a takedown recurve bow on which he spent more than \$1000.

Billy lives about three hours away, so when he drove down to purchase a Garmin sight for his Mathews bow, I asked him to bring the recurve so I could try it out. When I released the first arrow, I was blown away. The arrow shot into the 12-ring of the target from a distance of 20 yards, and my next two arrows did the same. There was absolutely no hand shock, and the bow was silent. The arrow flight was perfect, and the bow would even shoot a bare arrow shaft perfectly straight.

Over the years, I had heard about Black Widow custom bows, but I had never seen one in person. These folks have quietly been building traditional bows of unbelievable quality since 1957. Let me say they are the finest traditional bows I've ever shot.

COMPANY HISTORY

I recently spoke with Roger Fulton, one of the owners of Black Widow, about the history of his company and what makes its bows different from other custom bows. Black Widow opened in 1957 as Wilson Brothers Bows; Ken Beck bought the company and changed the name to



The Black Widow PCHII takedown recurve is a work of art.



Will Beard shows off a great buck taken with his Black Widow Custom bow.

Black Widow Custom Bows.

The current owners — Fulton, Toby Esbeck and John Clayman — bought the company in 2005; they continue to produce what I consider the finest recurves and longbows on the market. Although they have a few bows in stock from time to time, the vast majority are custom-built to order. They offer several models of recurves and longbows to fit the wants and needs of any hunter.

Many different woods are available, including exotics such as Honduras Rosewood, Tiger Myrtle and Bocote. Custom options such as laser-engraved bamboo overlays, spliced veneers and snakeskin overlays are available. Several grips are available, depending on your shooting style.

I asked Fulton what makes their bows feel and shoot so differently from other traditional bows. The model I shot and subsequently ordered for myself was the PCHII 58-inch takedown recurve. He pointed out that, unlike with other takedown bows, whose limbs screw into the front of the handle, Black Widow attaches the limbs to the back of the handle.

HANDLE-BACK ATTACHED LIMBS

This offers several advantages when it comes to accuracy and shootability. First, it places the grip forward of the limbs, leading to less grip torque, less string angle and higher brace heights. Although this makes the bow much more difficult to build, the advantages it offers the shooter are well worth the effort. Second, Black Widow offers four different limb lengths. This allows them to optimize the limb length to the shooter's

draw length, making for a much better shooting experience. The longer limb and shorter handle design of Black Widows leads to less stacking, less finger pinch and a smoother draw and shot.

LIMBS MATCH DRAW WEIGHTS

Black Widow bow limbs are built different from most manufacturers in that they are laminated specifically to closely match the desired draw weight of the bow. Black Widow has kept meticulous records since 2003 of laminations for all four limb lengths it offers. This allows the company to build their limbs so that they require less sanding and material removal to reach the desired specifications, leading to more-consistent, better-shooting limbs. They also pay huge attention to detail, down to the way they seal their bows. The frosted finish prevents glare and looks great, while protecting the wood underneath. Black Widow also offers a complete selection of arrows, accessories, and traditional broadheads. ■

For more information, contact Black Widow Custom Bows, 1201 Eagle Crest, Nixa, MO 65714, 417-725-3113.



Sammy Romano is a lifelong hunter who has worked in the archery industry for more than 25 years. His expertise includes compounds and crossbows. He can be reached at samboka31@aol.com.

SPORTSMAN SHOWCASE >

CHEROKEE RUN
Hunting Lodge

Hunt deer, wild boar & turkey in the wilds of South Carolina

Trophy Managed
Whitetail on the
Great Pee Dee River

HOME OF THE 600 LB
"GREY GHOST"

NIGHT HOG: JAN 1 - AUG 31
SC RIFLE DEER: SEP 1 - JAN 1
SC WILD BOAR: YEAR ROUND SEASON
SC TURKEY: MAR 22 - APR 30
DEER/BOAR OR TURKEY/BOAR COMBOS

Located on the border in beautiful Chesterfield County SC, one hour from Charlotte, NC. Comfortable lodging including satellite TV, pool table, bass ponds, rifle & 3-D archery range.

704-301-7950 • eatsleephunt.com

CROSS CREEK OUTDOOR SUPPLIES
537 Cross Creek Rd. • Henderson, NC 27536 252-492-9770

**NEVER WORRY ABOUT SECURITY AGAIN!
WITH SAFES FROM**

Champion
Superior Safe Company
GunVault

Hand Guns for Concealed Carry

LOCK PERFECTION
We Now Have Layaway!!!

LOCK PERFECTION Taurus Smith & Wesson BERETTA RUGER FEL

VISA We also have all the accessories for your pistols — Call Today!
www.crosscreekoutdoorsupply.com

DAIWA LAGUNA LT SPINNING REEL

The folks at Daiwa have brought out a new line of spinning reels with the budget-conscious fisherman in mind.

Daiwa's Laguna LT series features six reels in sizes from the tiny 1000 series, which weighs 7.8 ounces and is made for 2- to 4-pound mono and 6- to 8-pound braid, to the 5000C, which weighs 10.2 ounces and is made to carry 14- to 20-pound mono or 15- to 20-pound braid. You're set for anything in freshwater from bream and crappie to striped bass and in saltwater from trout to redfish.

The LT stands for "light" and "tough" with

a carbon frame, ABS aluminum spool and machined aluminum handle. All models come with 3+1 ball bearings and Daiwa's DIGIGEAR system featuring machined, digitally cut gears that are polished to increase smoothness and gear meshing.

MSRP: \$39.99-\$49.99

For more info, visit: www.daiwa.com/us/



PLANO WEEKEND SERIES SOFTSIDER

If you're not wedded to targeting one species year-round, you'll love the freedom offered by Plano's new Weekend Series Softsider soft tackle bags.

The Softsiders are available in three sizes and enable fishermen to swap plastic StowAway boxes in and out to match the trip you're taking this weekend, whether you're targeting bream, crappie, bass, speckled trout, redfish or even bigger.

The 3500, 3600 and 3700 sizes come with two StowAway boxes and room for more. The zipperless top panel allows

for quick access to the interior of the bag, with buckles used for fastening the top cover. A front pocket is accessed with a water-resistant front zipper for the protection of essential items. Mesh side pockets allow you to store smaller items that are essential to your fishing adventures, and a D-ring and multiple MOLLE attachment points are included for extra storage.

MSRP: \$21.99

For more info, visit: www.planomolding.com.

FRABILL AQUALIFE BAIT STATION

No matter how much live bait you carry to the water, Frabill has a way to keep it alive and lively.

Frabill's AquaLife Bait Station and Dual Output Aerators will meet the needs of almost every angler.

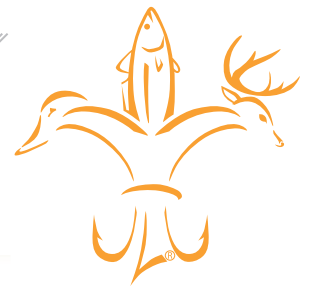
The Bait Station features an insulated, 6-gallon bait bucket with an insert for an aeration stone, plus a built-in aerator that operates for up to 72 hours on two D-cell batteries. The micro-bubbler diffuser keeps bait from freezing during the winter and helps minnows survive during the summer's heat.

The 100-gallon and 50-gallon dual-output aerators are for anglers who carry their bait in coolers or livewells. The 100-gallon model has two aeration stones and a special diffuser that can filter up to 100 gallons of water. It can be

plugged into an generator or standard outlet. The 50-gallon model can filter up to 50 gallons of water and is perfect to turn any cooler into a livewell. It connects to any 12-volt power source.

MSRP: \$99.99 (Bait Station), \$59.99-\$69.99 (aerators).

For more info, visit: www.frabill.com/bait-station-bucket



A golden retriever dog sits on a wooden dock, looking directly at the camera. In front of it, several ducks are lined up on the dock. The background shows a body of water and some reeds.

MIXED-BAG

■ By Pete Rogers

DUCK DOINGS

THE ARRIVAL OF DUCK SEASON IN NOVEMBER MEANS WATERFOWL HUNTERS WILL BE ON THE WATER. IF COLD WEATHER ALSO ARRIVES, IT CAN MEAN A GREAT CHANCE AT TAKING PLENTY OF DIFFERENT DUCKS ON THE SAME HUNT.

THE COLD WEATHER ARRIVED EARLY, AND WITH IT CAME THE DUCKS.

Normally, the opening day of the November portions of duck season in the Carolinas is usually spent shooting a few wood ducks, and if you're lucky, a speedy green-winged teal, but there are exceptions.

However, with cold weather, the arrival of shooting light greeted us with big and small ducks circling overhead and landing in our decoy spread. With the first volley, three of us downed nine ducks of four different species.

Southern duck hunts can often feel like a single-species hunt. When warm weather lingers into December, it can be somewhat defeating to go out early, set decoys and find only a few local ponytails for the bag. But when the cold air arrives, so too do the ducks — in the same variety as dance partners at a country music festival. Puddle ducks and divers are available for those wanting to chase them. Although the techniques are slightly different, the thrill is often equal, and it is not uncom-

mon to see both dabblers and divers in the same areas.

Mallards, teal, wood ducks, widgeons, gadwalls, pintails, black ducks and shovelers are all puddle ducks, aka dabblers, while common varieties of divers are canvasback, redheads, ring-necks, buffleheads, goldeneye, scaup and mergansers, among others.

Puddle ducks are mostly vegetarians with a few exceptions. They have feet that are centrally located on the body, allowing them to walk easily, while divers have feet that are further back on the body, helping them to swim better, but making walking difficult and, in some cases, nearly impossible. Divers must also run on the water to take flight, while dabblers can take off easily from a sitting position.

Whitney Phillips, owner of The Clarendon Club in Summerton, S.C., said their location near the Santee Cooper lakes allows them to attract a good variety of both dabblers and divers.



Don't overload your shotgun. Most 3-inch loads are plenty to bring down puddlers and divers over decoys.

Pete Rogers



CHOOSE THE CORRECT LOAD FOR DUCKS

Shooting big shells for ducks is pretty common, and many hunters like 3½-inch loads, but don't count veteran hunter Phillip Hunt of Greenville, S.C., among them.

"It doesn't take a big shell to kill ducks. The 3½-inch shells are really for high-flying geese and are not necessary for ducks," he said. "A lot of ducks were killed with 2¾-inch shells before 3- and 3½-inch shells were invented," he said, pointing out that 3-inch loads of No. 4 shot are plenty for ducks over decoys.

"Most shots over decoys are inside of 30 yards, so No. 4 shot in a 3-inch shell is the perfect combination for ducks," he said.

It is easy to overload for ducks when you are expecting a mixed bag

"I've seen too often that the 3½-inch shells cause some gun issues, while the 3-inch never do," Hunt said. "With flocks of teal and mallards all in the same day, choosing the right load can be tricky. This is where the 3-inch excels. It is big enough for the big ducks and doesn't overdo it on the small teal and woodies." ■

Calling too much and too loudly is a common mistake made as duck season progresses in the Carolinas.

"We are fortunate to be located near Lake Marion, and that allows us to get a lot of variety of ducks at different times of the year," she said.

With acres of water, flooded agriculture fields and excellent roosting sites, Phillips routinely sees bags of ring-necks, shovelers, mallards, widgeon, wood ducks and teal, along with the occasional gadwalls and pintail.

"As the season progresses, the variety increases," Phillips said. "While it doesn't happen often, occasionally, someone will have a daily bag limit of six ducks with six different species. If the weather cooperates, we will have large numbers of ducks the entire season."

BIG LAKE
OUTDOOR PRODUCTS

Wildly Raspierr...
BREAKS DUCKS FASTER!

NEW Pintail Passion

Make this season one for the ages with the finest waterfowling calls and accessories available, period! Proudly made in Elloree, SC.

See the entire collection today and order online at www.biglakeoutdoorproducts.com

On one hunt last season when I was a participant, there were ring-necks, mallards, teal, shovelers and a few widgeons. For the variety of species, it was one of the best hunts I've been on — bar none.

Philip Hunt of Greenville, S.C., has been chasing ducks across the Carolinas for more than two decades and knows the kind of weather that sends ducks his way — and watches for it.

“Many of the ducks that arrive in the Carolinas come from the Great Lakes area and are moving into our areas,” he said. “When I see a snowstorm in the upper Midwest, I know in a few days we will have a lot of variety of ducks here.”

Being a fan of fast-flying ducks, Hunt enjoys shooting teal.

“When it starts to get colder, the big groups of the green-wing teal and the migratory wood ducks appear in the Upstate late in the season. These birds are faster and bigger than our resident birds and are a bonus to cold-season shooting.”

When you're expecting a mixed bag of ducks, Hunt advises using a smaller decoy spread of about a dozen blocks of varying sizes — and having a few on a jerk string.

“I avoid the motion-spinning decoys as the season progresses,” Hunt said. “By the time these ducks get to the Carolinas from

the North, they have seen thousands of spinning decoys, and those that make it here are somewhat shy of the spinners.”

His spread typically includes two drakes for every hen decoy, plus a little motion to get the attention of passing ducks.

Hunt believes one mistake many duck hunters make is to overcall. As the season progresses and flocks are mixed, double-reed calls go away and the whistles come out.

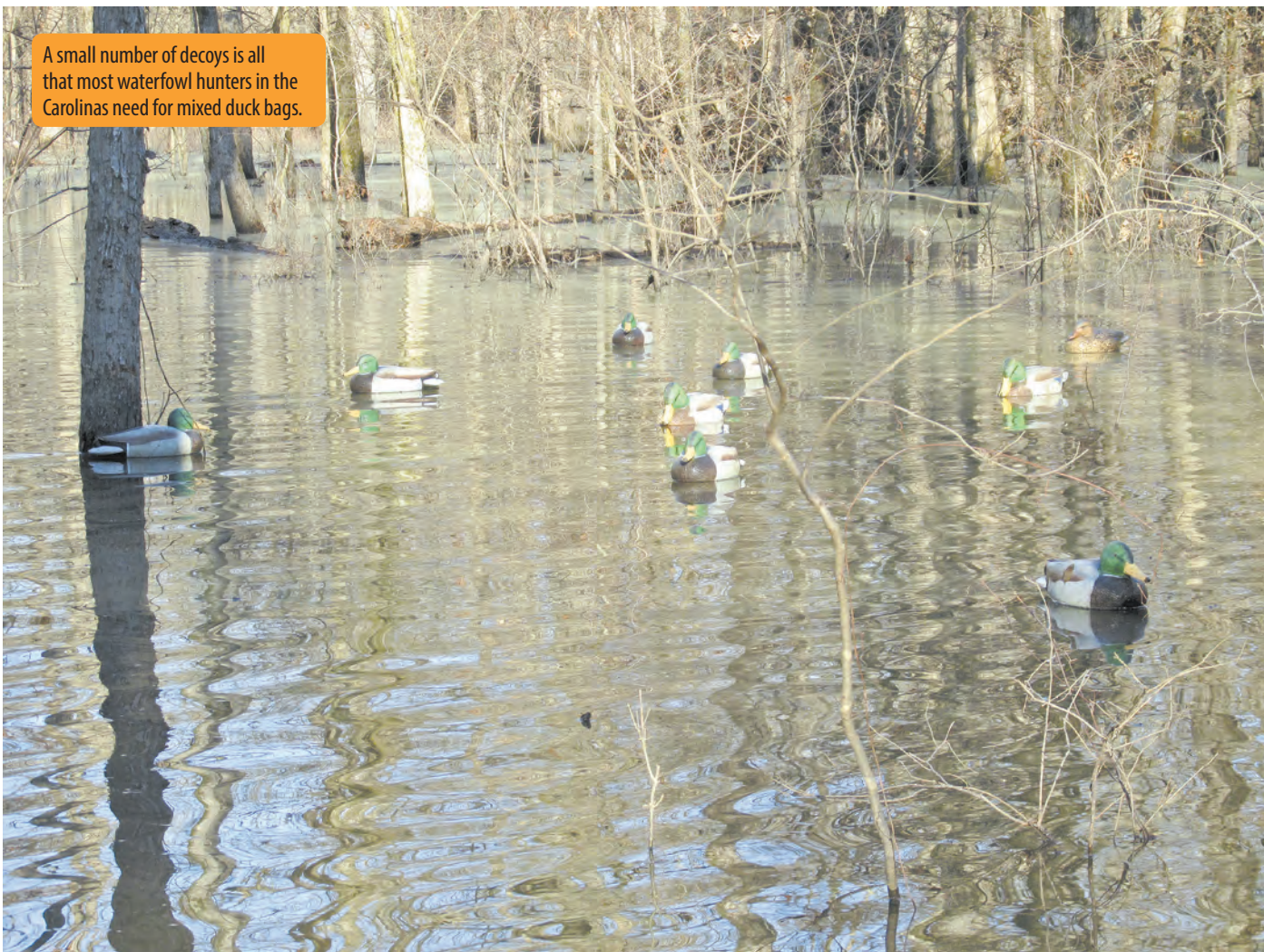
“More than any other call I have, I use a six-in-one whistle that does the mallard, pintail, widgeon, teal and wood duck whistles. That will help keep the ducks calm, and the small decoy spread looks more natural to them,” Hunt said.

When hunting mixed bags of ducks, don't overlook scouting. “Being where the ducks want to be is far better than trying to call them to where you are,” Hunt said. ■



Pete Rogers of Taylors, S.C., is employed with the USDA Wildlife Services and has been a sporting writer and photographer for over a decade. He has a real passion for trapping and enjoys sharing his outdoors experiences with his wife and five children.

A small number of decoys is all that most waterfowl hunters in the Carolinas need for mixed duck bags.



Pete Rogers

Jigging spoons have been the death of plenty of fish, from stripers to largemouth bass to walleye in freshwater and grouper, snapper and flounder in saltwater, but they seem to have been largely ignored by crappie fishermen.

Not Chris Bullock.

Bullock runs Kerr Crappie and Catfish Guide Service on Kerr Lake, aka Buggs Island, which runs along the North Carolina-Virginia border an hour or so north of the Raleigh-Durham area.

He ties on a 3/8-ounce Cotton Cordell slab spoon when crappie move out on deep brush piles in the summer, and he keeps one close by on any trip he takes through December.

The main reason? They'll catch fish, and he can get them down to fish holding in deeper water must faster than a tiny jig will get there.

"I start fishing a soon around June, when they're not chasing baits real good, and I'll use a spoon from the end of June through summer and into fall and winter," said Bullock, who hails from Fountain,

N.C. "They'll bite a spoon when they won't chase. I think it's a reaction bite. It's up and down in front of his face, and he can't stand it. He'd rather bite it than let it hit him on his head."

Bullock jigs the spoon vertically with a quick snap of his wrist, jerking the rod tip up and raising the spoon between 6 and 18 inches, then lowering the rod tip to keep slack out of the line so he can detect bites that often come on the fall.

"When you jerk it, you pause a second at the top and let it fall down on sort of a tight line," he said. "If you just let it fall on slack line, the spoon will turn over and you can't see the bite."

"I had one party; they caught 65 one day on a spoon. Their arms were so tired, their wrists so sore, the next day, they requested slip corks and live minnows. I got the pontoon boat set up, and after fishing three or four brush piles, they had caught one or two fish per brush. The next brush we came to, I got my spoon rod out, dropped a spoon down there, and caught three big ones right away."

SETTING THE TABLE >

**FALL CRAPPIE AT KERR LAKE
LIKE THEIR METAL UTENSILS;
HERE'S HOW ONE GUIDE
FOLLOWS THEM, FINDS
THEM AND FEEDS THEM.**

SPOON-FED SLABS

■ By Dan Kibler

Dan Kibler

SETTING THE TABLE

Bullock won't fish a spoon with a treble hook dressed in mylar or feathers. He will swap out the factory hook and replace it with a No. 6 Gamakatsu treble. His other alteration is to paint one side of the spoon yellow or white with fingernail polish, leaving the original silver or gold on the other side.

"I'll fish a spoon first on anything that's 15 feet or deeper," he said. "I can get that spoon down immediately; it's more efficient."

"I will use a 2500 or 3000 class spinning reel with a bigger spool, because bigger spools mean less line memory than a reel with a small spool. I count the spoon down to the depth I want it, winding the reel backwards, about one turn per foot. If you're not sure, put the spoon at the end of your rod, wind it backwards one turn, and measure the line to see what you've got."

Bullock stumbled onto the spoon bite by accident, or by mistake, depending on your point of view.

"I figured it out 15 years ago, because of a big mistake," he said. "I was running around with my flasher on, marking bait, and I came over a big school. I dropped a spoon down to try and catch a largemouth bass, and the first time I dropped it down, I caught a 2-pound crappie. Then I dropped it down and caught another 2-pound crappie. Then I dropped it down again and

got hung up, so I figured out that I had pulled up over a brush pile — not a big pile of shad.

"After about a year, I figured out the back-reeling part, and I got more precise with it."

With the technique down pat, Bullock was able to make it work under summer and fall conditions, when crappie are mostly in deeper water, hanging out around brush and stumps, cover attached to the bottom.

THE FALL MIGRATION

Bullock said that in September, crappie begin to move out of the main-lake area on the upper end of Kerr Lake and head back in major tributary creeks.

"Small crappie will get back in the creek first, while big crappie are still out on the main lake," he said. "And (the upper) end of the lake definitely fishes different from the other end. You might have bigger fish in the upper end, but they'll still be on the main lake until October, or in the first third of the creek back — when they're back in the creeks down in Nutbush Creek. But down there, the creeks are so massive, there are crappie that live in the creeks year-round."





Guide Chris Bullock paints one side of a Cotton Cordell slab spoon with fingernail polish, either white or yellow. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** Bullock turns to spoons when crappie retreat to deeper water after the spring spawn. He said dropping a tiny jig down to them takes too long, whereas a spoon can get to them quickly.



Kerr/Buggs Island Lake



Dan Kibler

DESTINATION INFORMATION

HOW TO GET THERE — John H. Kerr Reservoir, aka Buggs Island Lake, runs approximately 38 miles from the outskirts of South Hill, Va., to just north of Henderson, N.C. The 49,500-acre is shared by Virginia and North Carolina. Good access is provided by I-85, US 58 and US 15. For a complete list of public boat ramps, visit <https://www.kerrlakeguide.com/boat-ramps-camping-picnic-areas/>

WHEN TO GO — Fall crappie fishing is excellent from October through December.

BEST TECHNIQUES — With fish relating to brush piles through the fall, multi-rod techniques give way to single-pole techniques, including fishing live minnows, mini-jigs and jiggging spoons. Fish will be moving back into tributary creeks from the bigger, deeper areas where they spent the summer.

FISHING INFO/GUIDES — Chris Bullock, Kerr Crappie and Catfish Guide Service, 252-902-4039. www.kerrcrappieandcats.com. See also Guides & Charters in Classifieds.

ACCOMMODATIONS — Vance County Tourism Department, 866-438-4565, www.kerrlake-nc.com.

MAPS — Gmco Map Co., 888-420-6277, www.gmcomaps.com; Kingfisher Maps, 800-326-0257, www.kfmaps.com.

Your Pontoon Restoration Specialist

Ryan Stewart
366 Neeley St.,
Sumter, SC 29150
803-720-4105
www.ToonTimeSC.com
rstewart@toontimesc.com
f @ToonTimeSC

Removes Black Mold & More!

FREE SHIPPING

ProClean MARINE™
PROFESSIONAL GRADE CLEANER

Learn More at **ProcleanMarine.com**
MADE IN THE USA **SAVE \$10** per gallon USE CODE **SAVE10**

Finding brush or a stump starts guide Chris Bullock's search for crappie. He won't fish unless he sees crappie on his sonar.

Bullock finds crappie by following the movement of bait-fish like shad, which head back into creeks as the water cools in the fall. They use creek channels and ditches as highways, so Bullock looks mostly around those places, especially where the end of a flat drops off into a channel. That's where plenty of fishermen, bass and crappie alike, plant brush piles, Bullock among them.

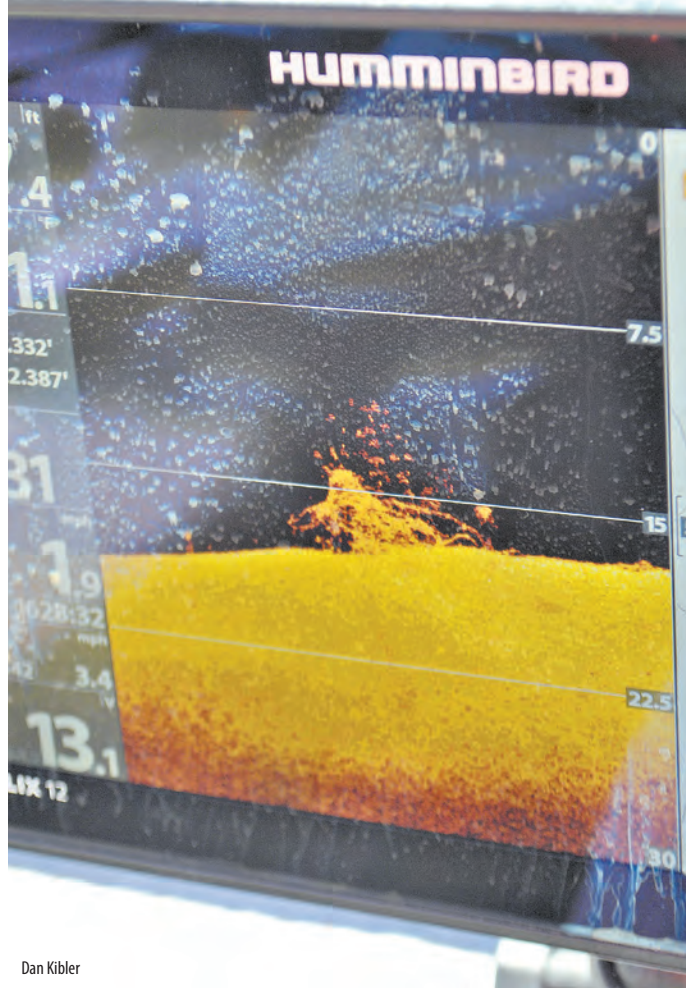
"I will cut a tree, tie a cinder block to the bottom of it and a milk jug to the top to give it some flotation," he said. "I've put 'em out one day and had fish on 'em the next day. As long as they have green leaves when you sink them, they'll have bugs on 'em, and the fish will get on 'em. When the leaves turn brown, they'll leave 'em."

Bullock searches for brush in 10 to 16 feet of water, using his Humminbird Helix depth finder to pinpoint them. He uses the unit's down-imaging feature and won't pick up his rod until he sees what he believes to be crappie.


"If you down-image and see brush and no fish, there's no need to stay there and fish," he said. "If you ever mark a big school of fish on a brush pile and they don't bite in the morning, go back in the afternoon and try them again."

The depth he marks fish determines how he fishes.

"If they're in less than 14 feet of water, I like to cast a jig or bucktail to them first," he said. "If they're 14 feet or deeper, it takes too long for the jig to get to the bottom — you have to wait too long before you start winding. On that deeper brush, I'll start with a spoon. You're much more efficient."




Dan Kibler



DOWNLOAD THE CAROLINA OUTDOOR JOURNAL APP TODAY!

**ONLY \$2.99 A MONTH
WITH A FREE 7-DAY TRIAL
OR \$29.99 ANNUAL
SUBSCRIPTION!**

**ACCESS THE ENTIRE LIBRARY OF FISHING,
HUNTING, COOKING AND NATURE
SEGMENTS, OVER 400 EDITIONS!
OVER 70 SPECIES OF FISH CAUGHT BY
FISHING GUIDES AND EXPERT ANGLERS!**




APPLE

**PLUS NEW EXCLUSIVE
CONTENT COMING
SOON!**

SCAN CODE WITH
YOUR PHONE

LEARN MORE AT
WWW.CAROLINAOUTDOORJOURNAL.COM



ANDROID

Black's Camp

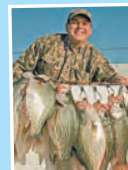
on the
Santee Cooper Lake System

**Deer Water Access
to Diversion Canal
and Both Lakes...**
Boat Launch is
Protected From
Wind and Current

Bait,
Ice
& Fuel
Available



FOOD TO GO, ORDER ONLINE



Please
Call Us For
Campground
Lodging &
Guide Service
Availability

Cross, South Carolina 29436
(843) 753-2231
www.blackscamp.com

A tiny bucktail jig is often a productive alternative to a jighead dressed with a soft-plastic lure.



TACKLE SET UP FOR SLABS

Bullock fishes a medium-light, 6-foot spinning rod and a reel spooled with 10-pound monofilament: hi-vis yellow when he's fishing a jig; color isn't as important when fishing a spoon. His jigs will be 1/8-ounce leadheads, dressed with either a tiny, soft-plastic bait like Bobby Garland's 2- and 3-inch Baby Shad, Shad Slay'R or Stroll'R in electric chicken color, or hand-tied bucktails he buys at Bobcat's Bait & Tackle in Clarksville, Va.

When he casts his jig toward the brush pile, he'll close the bail when the bait hits and start counting it down — about one foot per second — until it gets to the depth he wants to fish. That's where the hi-vis line comes into play.

"I use the hi-vis line with a jig or a bucktail so I can watch the line as it falls," he said. "A lot of times, I see the line jump before I ever feel the fish. You don't need the yellow line when you fish a spoon as much as you do when you're counting down a jig or bucktail."

Bullock will usually start with a jig and soft-plastic combo when he's fishing brush. If he finds crappie ganged up on a natural ledge, he'll start with a bucktail because he wants it to fall straight down, whereas a jig will often flop or swim off to the side a little. ■



Dan Kibler of Winston-Salem, N.C., is managing editor of *Carolina Sportsman*. He has been covering the outdoors full-time since 1985.

CRAPPIE HOTSPOTS >

REMOVABLE SAND BAG WEIGHTS AVAILABLE

ON A TRAILER OR LIFT... WE KEEP YOU COVERED!

O'BRIAN
CUSTOM BOAT COVERS

1-800-334-8277
2330 Womble-Brooks Rd.
Wilson, NC 27893

COLLINS INC
11700 W. 10TH AVENUE
DENVER, CO 80231

SEE YOUR LOCAL DEALER FOR SPECIALS OFFERED BY



A.K. MCCALLUM CO.
715 Ramsey St
Fayetteville, NC 28301
(910) 483-6804
akmccallumco.com

ANGLERS MARINE NC
842 Ocean Hwy West
Supply, NC 28462
910-755-7900
anglersmarinenc.com

ANGLERS MARINE NC
13578 US-70 Bus
Clayton, NC 27520
919-585-7900
anglersmarinenc.com

BAY RACER MARINE
213 US Highway 70 West
Havelock, NC 28532
252-447-2277
bayracermarine.com

BERKELEY OUTDOORS
2955 S. Live Oak Dr
Moncks Corner, SC 29461
843-761-2628
803-333-9992
803-505-8727
berkeleyoutdoors.com

BOAT DOCK MARINE
5981 NC Hwy 8
Lexington, NC 27292
(336) 357-5906
boatdockmarinenc.com

BRAZDA MARINE
2645 Highway 24
Newport, NC 28570
252-240-1600
brazdamarine.net

BROAD CREEK MARINA
18 Simmons Road
Hilton Head Island, SC. 29926
843-681-3625
broadcreekmarinahn.com

BROWN'S MARINE INC
1825 Anthony Rd
Burlington, NC 27215
336-229-5784
brownsmarine.net

BROWN'S RV SUPERSTORE
30049 Hwy 151
McBee, SC 29101
(833) 209-7274
brownsvsuperstore.com

CAPE ROMAIN MARINE
10129 Hwy. 17 N.
McClellanville, SC 29458
843-887-3330
caperomainmarine.com

CAROLINA BOATWORKS OF COLUMBIA, LLC
181 Pontiac Business Center Dr
Elgin, SC 29045
803-736-0035
cbwofcolumbia.com

CAROLINA INBOARD
1225 Bickley Road
Irmo, SC 29063
803-781-1024
carolinainboard.com

CAROLINA OUTBOARD
220 NC Hwy 210 West
Hampstead, NC 28443
910-319-0506
carolinaoutboard.com

CAROLINA WATERSPORTS AND MARINE
114 Days Inn Dr.
Mooreville, NC 28117
704-663-4500
carolinawatersportsmarine.com

CHARLOTTE SKI BOAT
1206 Brawley School Rd
Mooreville, NC 28117
704-525-6006
charlotteskiboats.com

CHATLEE BOAT & MARINE
2615 Jefferson Davis Hwy.
Sanford, NC 27330
919-775-7259
chatleeboats.com

COASTLINE RV & MARINE
2340 S. Highway 17
Murrells Inlet, SC 29576
843-458-3999
coastlinervrentals.com

COLLINS INC.
4620 US 70 Bus Hwy East
Smithfield, NC 27577
919-934-3143
Collinsboating.com

COUICK'S MARINE
3613 Providence Rd.S.
Waxhaw, NC 28173
(704) 843-2155
couicksmarine.com

COVE 2 COAST MARINE
1821 Lake Murray Blvd.
Columbia, SC 29212
803-814-1514
cove2coastmarine.com

COVE 2 COAST MARINE
2476 savannah hwy.
Charleston, SC 29407
843-212-3915
cove2coastmarine.com

DOSS MARINE
1720 Chapin Road
Chapin, SC 29036
803-345-1001
dossmarine.com

DOWN EAST MARINE
455 Highway 70 Otway
Beaufort, NC 28516
252-728-5817
downeastmarine.com

EAST COAST MARINE
3372 Freedom Way
Hubert, NC 28539
(910) 548-1240

ED WATKINS MARINE
3333 Hwy 16N
Denver NC 28037
704.483.2628
edwatkinsmarine.com

FORT MACON MARINA INC
417 E FT Macond Rd Pob 370
Atlantic Beach, NC 28512
252-726-2055
fortmaconmarina.com

FOUR SONS MARINE
855 Causey Rd
Fair Bluff, NC 28439
910-649-5755
foursonsmarine.com

GRAHAM MARINE
318 W Harden St
Graham, NC 27253
336-227-8711
grahammarinesales.net

GREENVILLE MARINE
3600 Greenville Blvd. N.E.
Greenville, NC 27834
(252) 758-5938
greenvillemarine.com

GREG'S OUTBOARD CTR INC
1105 E Ocean Rd
Holly Ridge, NC 28445
910-329-0040
gregsoutboard.com

GUNNELLS MARINE
102 Rock Church Rd NW
Greenwood, SC 29649
864-223-2275
gunnellsmarine.com

HOLDEN'S MARINE
1265 Boiling Springs Rd
Spartanburg, SC 29303
(864) 585-1484
holdensmarine.com

HUNTLEY MARINE
307 N. Polk St.
Pineville, NC 28134
704-889-2111
huntleymarine.com

J & J MARINE
2530 Badin Road
Albemarle NC 28001
704-983-867
jandjmarinesales.com

JET JOE'S MARINE SALES AND SERVICE
565 Satterwhite Point Rd.
Henderson, NC 27537
252-430-6209
jetjoesmarine.com

JIMMY'S MARINE
6685 Beach Drive SW
Ocean Isle Beach, NC 28469
910-575-3600
jimmysmarine.com

JOHNSON'S MARINE & OFFROAD
1782 Old Edisto Dr.
Orangeburg, SC 29115
(803) 531-1655
johnsonmarineandoffroad.com

LEWIS MARINE SUPPLY
3601-B Meeting Street Rd.
Charleston, SC 29405
843-554-3732
lewismarine.com

LEWIS MARINE SUPPLY
220 SW 32nd Street
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33315
954-523-4371
lewismarine.com

LONG'S FISHING & MARINE
5401 HWY 24
Anderson, SC 29625-6020
864-287-9064 • Fax 864-287-2965
longs-marine.com

LONG ISLAND MARINA
8400 Long Island Road
Catawba, NC 28609
828-241-4877
longislandmarina.com

MARINE 360
1925 Johnson Marina Rd
Chapin, SC 29036
803-749-2360
marine360sc.com

MARINE SERVICE PRO, INC.
8210 River Road SE
Southport, NC 28461
910-363-4725
marineserviceprosinc.com

MARINE WAREHOUSE
6921 Market Dt
Wilmington, NC 28411
910-799-1277
marinewarehousecenter.com

MARINE WAREHOUSE CENTER
3881 Savannah Highway
Johns Island, SC 29455
843-974-5353
marinewarehousecenter.com

MARTIN'S PERFORMANCE BOATING
9345 Macedonia Church Rd
Prosperity, SC 29127
803-364-2162
martinsmarine.com

MERRITT MARINE
1804 NC-86
Hillsborough, NC 27278
919-732-7377
merrittmarine.com

MIRAMAR BOATS LLC
209 Arendell St
Morehead City, NC 28557
252-726-7678
portsidemarina.com

NORTH POINT WATERSPORTS
112 Doolie Rd.
Mooreville, NC
704-799-1994
northpointwatersports.com
info@npwatersports.com

PERFORMANCE EAST
604 Corporate Drive
Goldsboro, NC 27530
888-503-8900
ncpowersports.com

PRECISION MARINE INC
5201 US Hwy 70 E
Goldsboro, NC 27534
919-751-1199
precisionmarineinc.com

RADCLIFFE MARINE
865 US-264 Bypass
Belhaven, NC 27810
(252) 943-3923
radcliffmarine.com

ROCK OUTDOORS
7440 NC Hwy 8
Lexington, NC 27292
336-793-8710
rockoutdoors.com

ROGUE MOTION BOAT SALES, SERVICE & STORAGE
65 Sycamore Ave
Charlottesville, SC 29407
(843) 633-1433
roguemotion.com

SEA ISLAND MARINE
1105 Rodgers Street
Beaufort, SC 29902
843-524-7272
seaislandmarinebeaufort.com

SEEL'S OUTBOARD, INC.
1937 Savannah Highway
Charleston, SC 29407
(843) 556-2742
seelsoutboard.com

SOUTHPORT MARINE MART
4711 Long Beach Rd
Southport, NC
910-477-6350
marinemartnc.com

SOUTHPORT WATERSPORTS
4888 Coastal Drive
Southport, NC 28461
910-477-6681
southportwatersports.com

SOUTHSIDE OUTDOORS
1077 Clarence Coker Hwy
Turbeville, South Carolina 29162
(843) 659-2628
southsideoutdoors.com

STRICKLAND MARINE CENTER
4520 Hwy 24
Anderson, SC 29626
864-225-0145
stricklandmarine.com

STROUD AND SON MARINE SALES
1897 Ocean Hwy
Edenton, NC 27932
252-482-8938
stroudandson.com

SUTTON MARINE
914 park avenue southeast
aiken, sc 29801
803-648-6141
suttonmarine.com

THE BOAT RACK
7565 E NC 150 Hwy
Sherrills Ford, NC 28673
(828) 478-2222
theboatrack.com

THE GREAT OUTDOORS
112 A North Cherry St.
Cherryville, NC 28021
704-445-8848
teamgreatoutdoors.com

TRI-COUNTY MARINE
1203 Premier Road
Granite Falls, NC 28630
828-728-4845
tricityboats.com

TWIN LAKES MARINE, INC
265 Satterwhite Point Rd
Henderson, N.C. 27537
252-431-0416
twinlakesmarinenc.com

UNIVERSAL MARINE
144-A Wayne Drive
Morehead City, NC 28557
252-723-1577
universalsmarineinc.com

WACCA WACHE MARINA
1950 Wachesaw Road
Murrells Inlet, SC 29576
843-651-2994
waccawachemarina.com

WEBSTERS MARINE INC
5974 N Okatie Hwy
Ridgeland, SC 29936-8248
843-987-6663 • Fax 843-379-2628
webstersmarine.com

YOPP BROTHERS INC
883 Hwy 210 W Pob 849
Sneads Ferry, NC 28460
910-327-2831
yoppbrothersmarine.com

Not all North Carolina and South Carolina American Suzuki Motor of America Inc. marine dealers are represented in this advertisement.

Fall Specials from Suzuki Marine



Fish On! Make sure you don't miss a single bite this fall. Reel in a super low finance rate from Suzuki Marine or hook a select model and get instant savings.



Now bring it home with Gimme Six, get six years of protection without paying extra!



Gimme Six Extended Protection promotion applies to new Suzuki Outboard Motors from 25 to 350 HP in inventory which are sold and delivered to buyer between 10/01/20 and 12/31/20 in accordance with the promotion by a Participating Authorized Suzuki Marine dealer in the continental US and Alaska to a purchasing customer who resides in the continental US or Alaska. The Gimme Six Promotion is available for pleasure use only, and is not redeemable for cash. Instant Savings applies to qualifying purchases of select Suzuki Outboard Motors made between 10/01/20 and 12/31/20. For list of designated models, see participating Dealer or visit www.suzukimarine.com. Instant Savings must be applied against the agreed-upon selling price of the outboard motor and reflected in the bill of sale. There are no model substitutions, benefit substitutions, rain checks, or extensions. Suzuki reserves the right to change or cancel these promotions at any time without notice or obligation. * Financing offers available through Synchrony Retail Finance. As low as 5.99% APR financing for 60 months on new and unregistered Suzuki Outboard Motors. Subject to credit approval. Not all buyers will qualify. Approval, and any rates and terms provided, are based on creditworthiness. \$19.99/month per \$1,000 financed for 60 months is based on 5.99% APR. Hypothetical figures used in calculation; your actual monthly payment may differ based on financing terms, credit tier qualification, accessories or other factors such as down payment and fees. Offer effective on new, unregistered Suzuki Outboard Motors purchased from a participating authorized Suzuki dealer between 10/01/20 and 12/31/20. "Gimme Six", the Suzuki "S" and model names are Suzuki trademarks or ®. Don't drink and drive. Always wear a USCG-approved life jacket and read your owner's manual. © 2020 Suzuki Motor of America, Inc.

TARGET HIGH ROCK

slabs around bait, brush piles in November

Two years ago, Shane Walser of Midway, N.C., realized a lifelong dream, operating a fishing guide service, Yadkin Lakes Crappie Guides, on High Rock, Tuckertown, Badin and Tillery lakes.

His favorite fall crappie haunt is High Rock, and 25 years fishing there has taught him how to put slabs in the boat in November.

"Find the bait, and you'll find the fish," he said.

But finding isn't enough to guarantee success alone. Instead, you need to understand how the bait looks on your electronics.

"I don't like seeing clouds of forage on my sonar unit," said Walser (Facebook.com/Yadkinlakescrappieguides). "That usually means no predators are around trying to eat them. When the bait is scattered or broken up, that means crappie are present and feeding."

Bunched forage serves as a defense mechanism against lurking predators; when the crappie actually begin feeding, Walser said the big balls or pods of bait will break down into smaller ones.

Walser looks for feeding crappie either at the backs or mouths of Second, Swearing or Crane creeks in 6 to 25 feet of water.

They'll hold on brush, although High Rock's fluctuating water level can affect which brush draws fish.



Yadkin Lakes Crappie Guides

Nice crappie like these are available for High Rock anglers who can find bait concentrations around brush.

He slow-trolls likely places with eight 15-foot Denali Pryme Brad Chappell trolling rods on his bow, paired with Shimano 1000 spinning reels filled with 6-pound Slime Line monofilament.

Walser uses a double-minnow rig that employs a Jenko 3way Big T Tangle Free swivel with the main line tied to one swivel, a ½-ounce weight connected to another and the double-minnow rig attached to the third. The rig has a leader with a No. 1 red Aberdeen hook at the end with another hook attached above the bottom hook.

"I use minnows about 95% of the time," he said. "Crappie feed up in November, and I've found live bait works better than jigs."

Water color doesn't matter at High Rock, which can change from slightly stained to crimson in a heart beat, he said: "I've caught crappie at High Rock in every hue imaginable." In terms of water flow, Walser prefers a steady pull of the lake rather than a robust one.

On a given trip, Walser said his clients can expect to catch 40 to 50 crappie 10 inches or longer

"High Rock is known for its number of crappie rather than its size of fish," he said. "A 2-pound crappie is considered a big fish."

— Tony Garitta

ATTENTION
Mine Operators & Independent Contractors

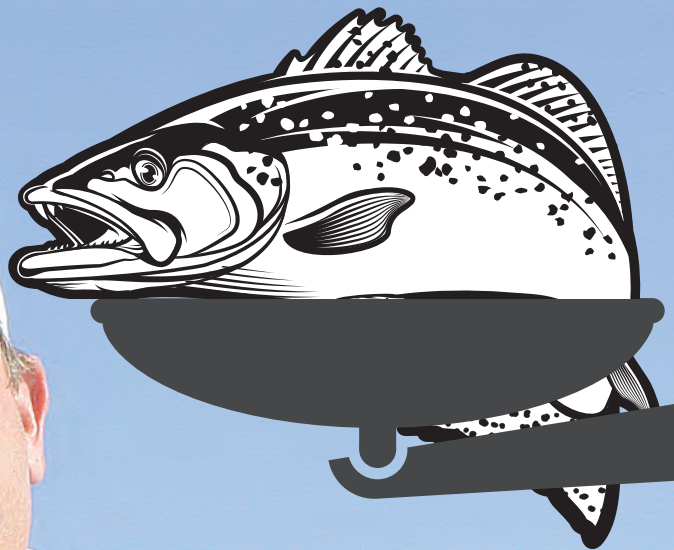
Your Complete Mine Safety And Compliance Resource

- MSHA Training
- Compliance Audits
- First Aid/CPR Training
- Respirator Fit Testing

Palmetto State Training
843-569-6872
When You Need it...Where You Need it.
www.PalmettoStateTraining.com

TIP THE TROUT SCALES IN YOUR DIRECTION

■ By John Gribb



LOWCOUNTRY SPECKS CAN BE A BLAST THROUGHOUT THE FALL, SO DON'T MISS A CHANCE AT HOOKING UP WITH A BUNCH OF NICE FISH. THIS VETERAN GUIDE OFFERS HIS IDEAS.

THERE ARE GOOD TIDES FOR CATCHING SPECKLED SEATROUT

IN THE CAROLINAS, and there are better stages of the tide, so anglers with flexible schedules naturally focus on the best times. But as a fishing sage once said, “The best time to go fishing is when you have time to go fishing.”

Guides in South Carolina’s Lowcountry know the best stages of the tide and the best spots for catching speckled trout and redfish, but they often need to go when their clients are free, so they must find fish at all stages of tides or end up with unhappy fishermen in the boat. The techniques the pros use during those not-so-good tides will improve your fishing, too.

Almost all Lowcountry guides with paying clients focus on red drum, aka spot-tails, and most action on trout is incidental or self-guided. But trout in autumn can be very easy, and almost anybody can catch a few when the water is just approaching or just leaving the grass.

Tim Carver, a guide based in Beaufort, S.C., who can find spot-tails with the best of them, actually spends lots of his time in the autumn targeting trout because they are fun and, at times challenging, especially the big “gator” trout — plus very good eating. He employs the standard jighead and soft-plastic trailers for proficient casters or a live shrimp hung below a popping cork for those less adept when conditions are easy.

But anglers need and want to know how to catch trout at

other times of the tide, such as when all you see are sand bars and oyster outcroppings sitting high and dry, many yards from the water or when the high tide has all the grass edges flooded 6 feet deep. It’s more difficult then.

To find fish on low water, Carver looks to the mouth of large creeks that hold water even at dead-low tide. Sometimes, rock piles or other structure are in the deep water near the main channel. He casts along the drop-offs in the creeks and main channel with a Bass Assassin Sea Shad in his favorite color, 10W40/limetreuse tail, on an 1/8-ounce jighead so it falls slowly. He likes the jighead to be black or red rather than chartreuse so the fish focus on the lime tail.

His other technique for shallow, low-tide situations is casting a suspending MirrODine 17MR lipless hard lure in the 808 color. Though called a suspending twitch bait, this lure actually sinks slowly and darts from side to side when twitched. He makes long casts into shallower water along the drop-offs and retrieves with a twitch-twitch-pause action through the strike zone.





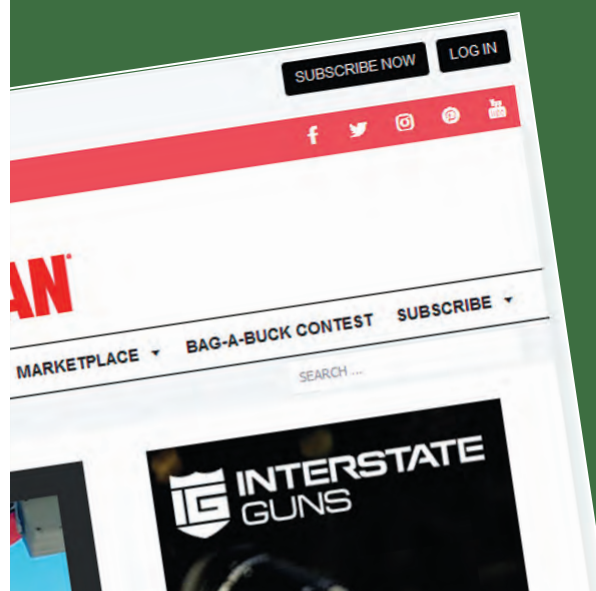
John Gribb

A live shrimp fished under a popping cork is a favorite bait and technique for many anglers who target speckled trout in the lowcountry. **BACKGROUND:** On periods of lower tides, look for specks in water close to the junction of larger creeks and the main, open marsh.

ARE YOU A SPORTSMAN SUBSCRIBER?

then you are already a member

Simply log in to get full web access on all smart devices and our monthly print magazine



GO SPORTSMAN:
CAROLINASPORTSMAN.COM

TIP THE TROUT SCALES

Higher periods of the tide are the best times to use walk-the-dog topwater baits to target speckled trout.

Carver agrees with most trout fishermen that mid-tide on rising water is the most-ideal trout time, and he'll work the standard hot spots and lure selections. In November, speckled trout are schooled up, moving around with the tide, and are most-often found feeding along grass edges, over-flooded oyster outcroppings and around creek mouths large and small. Top techniques are casting jigs near oysters on points, standalone oyster bars with current, upcurrent and downcurrent sides of creek mouths and grass-line edges, especially where oysters break the current flow. A crucial point to remember is that trout are sight-feeders and like clear water, so if the water is clouded by mud or silt, find another spot; trout will not likely be there.

Learn to identify all different types of lines: tide lines, eddy lines, grass lines, shorelines and current lines and, whenever possible, fish a line. Carver generally does not use live bait, but for those who do, floating a shrimp in these same hot locations will be just as effective.

As the tide approaches high, finding fish is more challenging. Carver switches to a full-sinking MirrOlure 18MR, called the "Heavy Dine," and casts around the edges of smaller creeks that were dry at low tide. He uses the same twitch-twitch-pause retrieve cadence on these deeper presentations. He also looks for cut-back areas along grass lines where the edge forms a small pocket. High tide also is ideal for walk-the-dog presentations with topwater plugs that sometimes generate impressive surface strikes from big trout. Most effective in early or late, low-light periods, Carver's current favorite plug is the Rapala Skitter Walk in bone color.

For those without access to a boat, you definitely can catch trout from shorelines, public piers or boat landings where fishing is permitted. Remember, when you fish at public boat ramps, the people launching or loading their boats have priority but everybody is normally cordial.



John Gribb

According to Joey Ballenger of the S.C. Department of Natural Resources' Marine Division, stocks of speckled trout are in good shape since we have not had a cold winter in several years.

Anglers should see plenty of 18- to 20-inch, solid keepers, along with some big gators. Keep a few if you like fresh fish, but release the rest to fight again. ■



John Gribb is a licensed charter captain, upland hunting guide and former Orvis endorsed saltwater fly-fishing guide who lives in South Carolina's Lowcountry. A freelance writer for more than 25 years, he specializes in small game and waterfowl hunting, freshwater and inshore saltwater fishing and sporting dogs.

TROUT ON A FLY ROD

Though most anglers who target speckled trout fish conventional tackle with lures or live bait, fly fishermen, especially those accustomed to plying smaller, sweet-water venues, can have a blast with a fly rod while avoiding the sight-fishing frustrations of long, quick casts in the wind.

During November — in fact, through the entire fall, from October through when the shrimp and small baitfish vacate the creeks in late December — trout tend to move and feed in schools as they fatten up. A good plan is to prospect with a spinning rod and jighead with a Gulp or plastic trailer until you find fish, then switch to the fly. Purists can go all the way with the fly, but experience suggests the soft-plastic trailer's action will often find fish faster.

When you switch to the fly rod, an ideal setup would be a 9-foot, 6-weight rod loaded with a 200- or 250-grain sinking, shooting-head line such as the Orvis Pro Depth Charge.

Use a simple, 4-foot leader made of 20-pound fluorocarbon, because you want the sinking line to drag the fly deep; a long leader will allow a lighter fly remain too close to the surface.

Pick a good-sized, brightly colored fly, maybe in the popular electric chicken combination of chartreuse and pink, in a size 1/0 with a bead-chain eye or light dumbbell. You want the fly to sink, but not faster than the line, as the line quickly moves the fly into the typical strike zone of a foot or more below the surface and keeps it there as you retrieve it back to the boat. Make casts into the shallows and retrieve fairly quickly. Some fish may strike from very shallow water, but most will hit in 2- to 4-foot depths.

Casting a sinking, shooting-head line requires a slightly different casting stroke, but it's not hard to pick up, and landing good-sized speckled trout on a 6-weight is definitely fun. ■

DESTINATION INFORMATION

HOW TO GET THERE — South of the Broad River, anglers have good access at the Chechessee River Landing or the Broad River Landing, both on SC 170. Beaufort anglers have easy access from the landing on Lady's Island and down Sam's Point Road. Eddings Point Landing on St. Helena Island and Station Creek Landing are also good. Many other free public landing options are available.

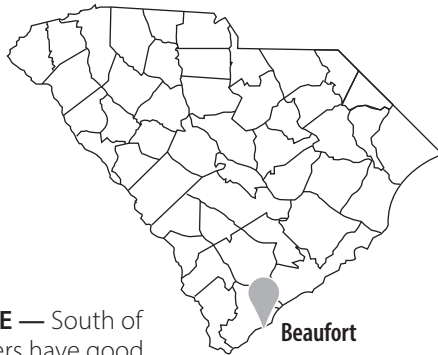
WHEN TO GO — Trout are very active from October into December. The top half of the tide, either rising or falling, is often considered most productive.

FISHING INFO/GUIDES — Tim Carver, Tight Lines Unlimited, 843-941-9490, Owen Plair, 843-812-3656, www.beaufortscfishingcharters.com; Tuck Scott, 843-271-5406; Dan Rourke, 853-263-3863; Shannon O'Quinn, 843-368-1558; Bay Street Outfitters, Beaufort, 843-524-5250. Grayco Hardware, Lady's Island, 843-521-8060; Boat and Dock Supply, Port Royal, 843-986-0552. See also Guides & Charters in Classifieds.

ACCOMMODATIONS — Beaufort Area Chamber of Commerce, 843-986-5400.

MAPS — Top Spot waterproof map number N233, is available from local tackle shops.

TROUT HOTSPOTS >



Beaufort

Trusted By Sportsman For 30 Years

Sarah Judy's
INSURANCE AGENCY

BOAT - MOTORCYCLE & ATV - CAMPER & RV
HOME - AUTO - RENTAL - FLOOD - LIFE

Personal Service Guaranteed

3090 Jefferies Hwy • Walterboro SC
Phone 843.538.5856 • Fax 843.538.5282

www.sarahjudysinsurance.com

hydrotechs

Hoodies

Long Sleeve
Shirts

Neckgaiter

sportsman gear
Fishing & Hunting Apparel
www.SPORTSMANGear.com

ADAMS CREEK SPECKS

will be travelling, eating in November

November became Thanksgiving month for America's first settlers because more of nature's bounty became available for their food supply.

Glenn Grigg of Merrimon, N.C., partakes of the fall feast as a fishing guide in inside waters from Oriental to Morehead City. Close to his home is Adams Creek, a section of the Intracoastal Waterway where many gamefish species, including spotted seatrout, migrate south from Pamlico Sound each fall. They follow baitfish headed for the Newport River and Beaufort Inlet to the ocean, adding weight to survive the coming winter.

"November is really good for speckled trout in Adams Creek and tributaries," said Grigg, owner of Back Creek Guide Service (252-515-2971). "As it gets colder, specks go into creeks to follow baits."

Those baits include "some shrimp, small menhaden and little glass minnows," he said. "Trout suspend off ledges in deeper water than other fish. You can catch red drum and flounder up against the banks."

Grigg's main November lure is a 17MR MirrOlure suspending jerkbait in pink, green or purple.

"It's got a slow fall, so you cast it, let it sit, jerk it once, then let it sit for 3 or 4 more seconds," Grigg said. "They usually hit while it's falling. The colder (the water), the longer you wait to move the lure."

Grigg makes one change to 17MRs out of the box — he attaches a "tail" to the lure's No. 2 rear treble hook.

"I tie some shiny Mylar to cover the hook and a feather that matches the lure's color," he said. "I think fish are attracted to the Mylar flash. The feather makes it look like a big baitfish."

Grigg's second-favorite setup is a popping cork with a 3½-inch, red Vudu shrimp tied to a 4-foot leader.

Grigg casts from mid-channel toward a creekbank, then pops the cork so the Vudu shrimp rises and sinks near ledges where specks wait in ambush mode.



Guide Glenn Grigg expects great fishing for speckled trout in the Adams Creek section of the ICW this month.

"Sometimes, I throw a ½-ounce jighead with a 3-inch swimbait, such as a Z-Man," he said. "I love Gulp baits, but pinfish eat their tails; Z-Mans are tougher."

Grigg said November offers some of the year's largest spotted seatrout to anglers. "We catch some of our bigger fish then," he said. "Average weights are 3 to 4 pounds, but we see some 5-pounders and bigger ones. The last few years, we haven't had cold months that killed trout, so I expect November to be really good for trout." ■

— Craig Holt



**MARINE
WAREHOUSE
CENTER**



TWO LOCATIONS TO SERVE YOU!
6921 MARKET ST WILMINGTON, NC 910.799.1277
3881 SAVANNAH HWY JOHNS ISLAND, SC 843.974.5353
MARINEWAREHOUSECENTER.COM

GREAT TROUT ACTION

expected in SE North Carolina inshore waters

Don't think there is anyone, anywhere, who would argue that 2020 hasn't been an unusual year. With free time from not being able to work, lots of folks went fishing, and one of the fish that hasn't disappointed has been speckled trout. Surprisingly, good numbers of nice specks have been caught all year, and what is typically the best fishing of the year is just beginning.

Thanks to several consecutive mild winters, there hasn't been a recent trout stun or kill, and with those fish surviving to spawn, a lot of specks are around to be caught. Even better, there are a good number of gator specks in the mix. The creeks and marshes from Topsail, N.C., to the South Carolina border are holding specks and they specks are already hungry and biting.

The last of the baitfish and shrimp usually move out of the marshes in November, and the trout are following and ambushing them. It's a great time to catch 4-fish limits and add a citation for a 5-pound or heavier trout to the wall in your man cave.

Many fishermen believe the best way to catch fall trout is by suspending a live shrimp under a cork. This works well, but, unfortunately live shrimp aren't always available. Capt. Butch Foster of Yeah Right Charters in Southport, N.C., said he has found a surprisingly good substitute, and it works easy enough that even beginning fisherman will catch fish using it.

"I really like the (Betts) Halo Shad," said Foster (336-309-5900). "We've been using them for a

while, and our clients continue to put nice fish in the boat. They catch red drum and flounder, also.

"I use a handful of colors to keep checking, but green tiger in the 1/4-ounce size and chartreuse in 1/2-ounce size regularly outfish the others. They are almost too easy to fish. Simply cast one out, let it sink and then reel it back in just fast enough to make the tail wiggle."

Foster said the water temperature in November should be just about perfect to keep trout active and feeding. They'll be looking for food, and anywhere that concentrates bait may be holding trout. Good places to find them are at creek mouths (especially during the falling tide), on points where the current eddies turn or slow, dropoffs along grass edges, along oyster bars and along rip-rap. ■

— Jerry Dilsaver



Speckled trout around North Carolina's Cape Fear will have their feed on throughout November.



**Pig Cookers, Patio Grills,
Smokers
Customized BBQ Trailers**



For More Info **1-252-236-4464**
www.BQGRILLS.com
6043 Hwy 301N, Elm City, NC





Brian Cope

HEY, LET'S GET SMALL

Downsize lures for Bohicket reds, specks

As inshore waters have cooled over past month or so, speckled trout and redfish have turned on strong in South Carolina's Lowcountry, especially the Bohicket area, patrolled by Rob Bennett of Lowcountry Inshore Charters. The best tip Bennett has for anglers is to scale down the size of your lure. He prefers 2½-inch swimbaits like the Z-Man Slim Swimz; it was initially developed as a crappie lure, but Bennett said it works great for specks, and redfish like it, too, although they usually bite in different areas than the trout.

"It's not uncommon to catch 50 speckled trout on these lures in a day this time of year," said Bennett (843-357-3777). "You'll get plenty of bites casting them along oyster banks on a rising tide."

Bennett's favorite oyster shell banks have deep water close by, but he said small feeder creeks are also good, especially the mouths of those creeks any time the tide is moving. When he finds shell banks within casting distance of spartina grass, docks and deeper water, he gets especially interested.

While catching trout in these spots, he said it's not unheard of to catch a redfish or two, but when he really wants to target reds, he heads to docks, where they are often stacked in November.

The same small lures work fine for redfish, and these aren't rat

Guide Rob Bennett catches plenty of nice redfish and speckled trout in the Bohicket area by downsizing the lures he uses.

reds. He catches redfish of all sizes, including upper-slot ones.

"You want to cast the lure under the dock, but even getting close is often enough," he said. "You have to be ready, because they will usually bite the lure as it is falling. They'll grab it and run you around a dock piling if you aren't quick enough."

Bennett stresses keeping your distance from casting spots. The water is generally pretty clear in November, and fish can be wary.

"Making long casts is essential; that goes for trout along shell banks and redfish around docks," he said. "It's easy to push them away without realizing it. The more space you can give them, the better luck you'll have."

When fishing either type of spot, Bennett said you don't want your lure to hit the bottom.

"Most of the time, these fish will hit the lure either when it is falling or when you first begin reeling. If you let it sink all the way to the bottom, you can get hung up on oysters," he said. "And once you move in to free your hook up, the fish will scatter. So make long casts, keep the lure moving, and don't sit still in one spot for too long if you aren't getting any bites." ■

— Brian Cope



Hunting/Fishing SCRAPBOOK



Brady Moynihan

Brady Moynihan, from Clayton, N.C., caught his first walleye out of Green Bay, Wis., on July 5, while visiting family.



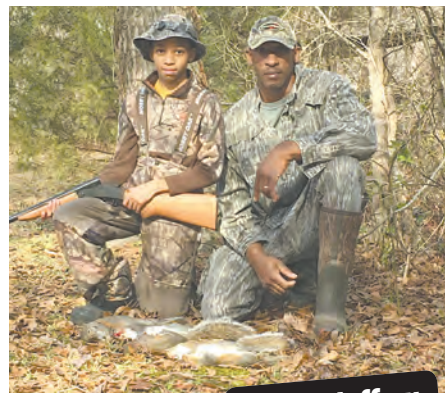
Jessica Runyan

Jessica Runyan shot this nice, 8-point buck in velvet on Sept 25, 2019, with crossbow in Granville County, N.C.



Kayo Auge

Kayo Auge, 10, of Maysville, N.C., had a great summer fishing. He caught this slot-sized red drum near Swansboro.



Wesley, Jeffrey Stewart

Wesley Stewart and his dad, Jeffrey, had a good day squirrel hunting in Lancaster County last season.



Hunter Hammill

Hunter Hammill caught this 30-pound flathead catfish at Badin Lake on May 15, 2020.



Ronald Greeson

Ronald Greeson killed this 7-point, 190-pound buck with a blackpowder rifle on Nov. 22, 2019, in Iredell County, N.C.

Take your camera **TO THE WOODS!**

Send us your photos, and you may appear on the pages of the most widely read outdoor magazine in the Tarheel State. Send clean, sharp shots of you with your deer, ducks, rabbits, squirrels, doves, etc. to

**Hunting/Fishing Scrapbook,
Carolina Sportsman,
433 Hollinswood Ave.,
Winston-Salem, N.C. 27103
or to images@CarolinaSportsman.com**

Digital images must be at least 500KB and in jpeg format. Print photos cannot be returned.



Hunting/Fishing SCRAPBOOK



C.J. Addison

C.J. Addison of Lancaster, S.C., caught a 6-foot-10 shark on July 20, 2020, in South Carolina's Bulls Bay.



Nate Kaiser

Nate Kaiser caught his biggest-bass ever in a Gaston County, N.C., pond this spring. He used a shaky head worm.



Ron Ochse

Ron Ochse killed this 10-point buck hunting with Dare To Hyde Hunting Adventures in Hyde County, N.C., on Oct. 23, 2019.



Brandon Davis

Brandon Davis caught this 8.2-pound bass from North Carolina's Hyco Lake on May 30 on a Lucky Craft Gunfish.



Anderson Long

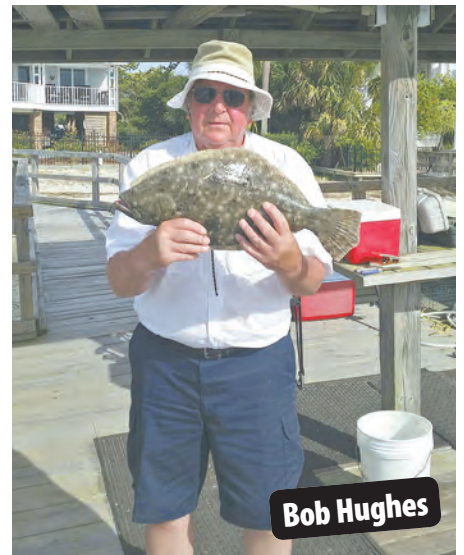
Anderson Long, 12, caught this 30-pound, citation red snapper on July 17, on a trip out of Southport, N.C., with Capt. Boo Herring aboard the *Summertime*. His father, Bug Long, also caught an almost-identical fish.

GOT PHOTOS? WE WANT 'EM

Send us your photos, and you may appear on the pages of Carolina Sportsman magazine. Send clean, sharp shots of you with your fish, deer, ducks, rabbits, squirrels, doves, etc. to

**Hunting/Fishing Scrapbook,
433 Hollinswood Ave.,
Winston-Salem, N.C. 27103
or to images@CarolinaSportsman.com**

Digital images must be at least 500KB and in jpeg format. Print photos cannot be returned.



Bob Hughes

Bob Hughes of Gastonia, N.C., caught and released this nice flounder in Murrells Inlet, S.C., this past June.



Kandice Stroud

Kandice Stroud killed her first wild turkey gobbler last spring in Wilson County, N.C. The big tom sported an 11-inch beard.



Walter Golosky-Benjamin Barnard

Benjamin Barnard (right) and Walter Golosky show off a nice redfish caught on a trip with Brandon Hartman of Charleston Charter Company at the mouth of Elliot Cut.



Finn Buckley

Finn Buckley had a great fishing day this past spring, catching this 31-inch striper from North Carolina's Badin Lake.



Parker Queen

Parker Queen caught this 8-pound bass from a farm pond near Burlington, N.C., on May 29, 2020. The fish hit a plastic worm. fished on a Texas rig.



Bryan Buckner

Bryan Buckner of Saluda, N.C., landed this 6-pound bass while fishing Lake Jocassee in August 2020.



Clayton Maynor

Clayton Maynor of Zebulon, N.C., killed his first pintail in January 2020 near Hatteras.



Jacob Revels

Jacob Revels, 6, tagged his first buck last Nov. 10 with a cross-bow, hunting from a ground blind in Johnston County, N.C.



Jennifer Beasley

Jennifer Beasley killed her first buck last fall on public land in Bladen County, N.C., while running dogs.



Brandon Whittington

Brandon Whittington caught this beautiful dolphin on a May 5, 2020, trip out of Wilmington, N.C.

Coastal rivers hold waters that range from salty to fresh, but mostly in-between. Redfish often inhabit those areas, and anglers can target them with freshwater tactics.



GATHER AT THE RIVER

BRACKISH, COASTAL RIVERS CAN BE HAVENS FOR REDFISH, OTHER MIXED SPECIES

Brian Cope

Tidal rivers are some of the most underfished areas across the Carolinas when it comes to targeting redfish — at least their upper reaches. But these areas have everything redfish need to thrive, and because they are so underutilized, anglers can have fish all to themselves.

November is a great time to explore these areas. Rivers are often narrow waterways with trees lining the banks, protecting anglers at least somewhat from the wind. And while the water level rises and falls with the tides, these areas are much calmer, for the most part, than even a skinny, inshore creek. No one likes to get wet, and that's usually not a prob-

lem in upper reaches of these rivers.

To the naked eye, these areas can look like freshwater hotspots for largemouth bass. Downed timber is abundant, thanks to saltwater influx killing trees that grow for years with minimum resources, only to die of eventual salt poisoning when they're the perfect size for fish to hide around to ambush prey. Anglers don't hear crashing surf, furthering the feel of a freshwater environment.

If you blindfolded a man before dropping him into these locales, he'd be hard pressed to know what part of the state he was in. He'd figure it out once the tide starts rolling in, reversing the current temporarily.

REDFISH HABITAT

Redfish love these areas. The water is typically fairly shallow and holds a steadier temperature than water closer to the open ocean. Brackish is fine with redfish; they can tolerate very low levels of salinity for extended periods of time.

And they find plenty to eat. Small saltwater and freshwater fish, turtles, crabs



Brian Cope of Edisto Island, S.C., is a retired Air Force combat communications technician. He has a B.A. in English Literature from the University of South Carolina and has been writing about the outdoors since 2006. He's spent half his life hunting and fishing. The rest, he said, has been wasted.

and shrimp live in these areas, and as the temperature continues to drop, many of them slow down, conserving energy, sticking close to structure and moving as little as possible. They're sitting ducks for redfish, which thrive in the cooler waters of November.

Anglers can either soak bait on the bottom or take a more-active role. Many drop their trolling motors and cruise up and down the banks, pitching lures at targets just like bass anglers do. It's a good strategy, allowing you to cover lots of water relatively quickly and catch plenty of redfish.

BRACKISH LURES

Spinnerbaits like Strike King's Redfish Magic or the Z-Man DieZel Spin are tough to beat. These bladed lures are easy to cast, and although they have exposed hooks, their designs allow them to bounce off of structure with far fewer hangups than you might expect.

Proficient anglers can skip them under fallen timber, but casting and retrieving them parallel to those structures is also deadly, keeping the lure in the strike zone much longer.

Fishing soft-plastic shrimp under a popping cork is also a very effective tactic. In small, inshore creeks, these are great for casting toward the bank, then working back to the boat. That works in coastal rivers, too, but just like spinnerbaits, these are especially effective when cast parallel to a downed, half-sunken tree. The strike zone runs the entire length of such a tree. A swift pop of the cork often finds the lure below greeted with a violent strike from an aggressive redfish.

These areas look ripe for topwater lures, but they are less effective for redfish, which have downturned mouths, making it difficult for them to bite surface objects. But depending on recent rainfall amounts, these lures could catch speckled trout or largemouth bass.

BONUS SPECIES

That's another great thing about fishing in the upper reaches of tidal rivers. Because redfish can tolerate either heavy salinity or light salt, the ones that take up home in these areas will stay put when rain — or the lack thereof — runs other species away.

Long periods of rain bring freshwater pouring into these areas, dropping salinity levels enough that speckled trout and baitfish head toward to the ocean. Typically, in inshore creeks, redfish will also leave because they chase the bait, but in these upper reaches, the heavy influx of freshwater brings largemouth bass, bream, crappie and baitfish from upriver, so redfish stay and enjoy some new menu items.

That dynamic offers anglers a steady supply of redfish, as well as an ever-changing selection of bonus fish. Some anglers even talk of the lower half of the water column being filled with salt-water fish and the upper half full of freshwater fish, with redfish intermingling with both. On rivers with striper populations, this adds another predator species that's a blast to catch.

Give fishing these upper reaches of tidal rivers a try this month, especially on days with less than ideal weather that can make inshore fishing less pleasant. You just might find your new hotspot and have it all to yourself. ■

“Soft Dine’s for Trophy Trout!”

Soft-Dine™
SD-19
2-5/8" Long,
3/8 Oz.

Soft-Dine™ XL
SDXL-24
3-1/4" Long,
5/8 Oz.

LOW-FREQUENCY

Paul Brown's Soft-Dine™ and Soft-Dine™ XL are designed for fishing the shallows and catching trophy size Trout and Redfish. Both feature a built-in reflective foil insert for added realism and a special sonic-rattling chamber for more vibration and noise.

ORIGINAL Mirrolure® L&S Bait Company • 1415 East Bay Drive • Largo, Florida 33771 • Tel 727-584-7691 • www.mirrolure.com

PAUL BROWN'S ORIGINAL SERIES
B&L MFG

On a laydown tree, largemouth bass can be holding shallow, along the trunk, or suspended toward the end of the tree, in the branches.

NOVEMBER: MINI MOP JIG TIME

A SMALLER JIG ALLOWS YOU TO CAST, COVER MORE WATER, CATCH MORE BASS

For most of my career as a pro bass fisherman, spring fishing was certainly my favorite. Now that I've gotten a little older, I'm enjoying fishing the fall almost as much as I do the spring. I love the cool mornings, pleasant afternoons, the changing colors of the leaves. Anyone who has some time between being in the deer stand should spend a couple of days on the water, because it's beautiful.

Oh yeah. Forgot. I also catch fish.

Typically, November is something of a transition month in my home state of South Carolina. We can definitely have some mild days in late October, and we'll have fish going from a late-summer pattern to a fall pattern, all the way to a winter pattern by the end of November. I love topwater fishing starting in September, and that can be in play maybe the first week of the month, but November is time to fish a jig. I will have one tied on wherever I go, any time of year, but in November, I love to fish a jig.

I love to fish a Mop Jig, but in November, I'm going to scale down and go to a Mini

Mop Jig, which has a lighter wire hook and fewer strands of rubber. I'll fish a ¼- to ⅜-ounce jig, compared to the half-ounce jig I throw in the spring. And instead of browns, I like to throw black/blues in the fall — but it depends on the water clarity.

SCALING DOWN

One thing I've talked to several guys about is that a lot of them don't like to fish a jig as big as a ½-ounce Mop Jig. If they fish a jig, they want to go smaller. That's where a Mini Mop Jig fits in. It is perfect to fish in November, when you're going to be doing more casting than flipping or pitching. You can catch an 11-inch fish on it, or an 11-pound fish.

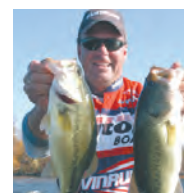
The biggest thing is figuring out the cover and depth that bass are holding, but once you do, you'll have a bait that can catch the biggest fish of your life, as well as a lot of quality fish. Where to start depends on the lake you're fishing. Here on my home lake, Lake Murray, you've got wood and rock, docks and floating piers. You go to Santee, and you've got

every type of wood you can think of: cypress trees, laydowns, everything. There probably isn't going to be a lot of vegetation, because many of our lakes are starting to be drawn down in the fall, and that shallow grass might be high and dry.

I fish a Mini Mop Jig with a Yamamoto Flappin' Hog as a trailer. They make two sizes, 4½ and 3¾ inches; I fish the smaller one on the Mini Mop Jig. I like to fish the bait on a 6-foot-6 or 7-foot, medium-heavy baitcasting outfit spooled with 14- to 17-pound fluorocarbon.

CASTING SETUP

I do a lot of casting instead of flipping and pitching like I do in heavy cover in the spring. You don't want to fish that big, 7-foot-6, heavy flipping stick and



Davy Hite of *Ninety Six, S.C.* is a two-time BASS Angler of the Year who won the 1999 Bassmasters Classic and 1998 FLW Tour Championship. He is sponsored by Phoenix, Yamaha, Bass Pro Shops, Rapala, Buckeye, VMC, Humminbird, War Eagle and Yamamoto.

braided line. The Mini Mop Jig's hook is designed to be cast and for a hookset 20 to 25 feet from the boat. That big rod and braid, if you set the hook with the Mini Mop Jig, who can flex that lighter hook.

Here's how I fish a Mini Mop Jig in the fall. Remember, it's important to try and find the cover the fish are relating to. That's most of the battle.



Mini Mop Jig

COVER THE COVER

If I'm fishing on Murray, with all the boat docks, I'm going to start with them, and I'm going to fish around the first 2 or 3 feet

of water out from the bank and keep that jig on the bottom. I let it get down there and bounce it along the bottom on the shallowest part of that dock. If it's a floating dock or doesn't have any pilings on the deep end, I'll cast shallow and swim it back under the deep end, because you will definitely get some fish suspending under floaters in November.

When I get a bite, I'll go to the next dock and fish it the exact same way. If you catch two or three fish like that, you can get a pattern going, but before that, you need to do both things: fish the shallow end and swim it under the deep end.

If you're fishing a blowdown, approach it this way. You've got a blowdown that's fallen off the bank; the trunk might start in one foot of water, but the end of the tree might be in 15 feet of water. So I will fish that tree from shallow to deep. I'll work it along the bottom around the trunk, and when I get it out toward the end, I'll swim it through the branches.

Now, in any situation like those, once you figure out where they're holding, that's what you fish, because it's all about being time-efficient on the water. You fish that part of the cover where you've found the fish before, and fish only that part of the cover. You might jump from dock to dock or lay-down to laydown. If they're under floaters and you're swimming the bait to them, then you'll bounce from dock to dock, hitting only the floaters.

November fishing can really be fun. I like to spend time in a deer stand, too, but I know how enjoyable a day on the water can be when you really get dialed in on the fish. ■

Barefoot
ARCHERY
CHARLOTTE, NC
www.barefootarchery.com



BAREFOOT ARCHERY

Pro Shop & Indoor Archery Range



One stop shop for all your Bow Hunting & Archery needs!

We have all the Archery and Hunting accessories to make your season a success.

HOYT TORREX \$599⁹⁹

MAKE YOUR BULLSEYE TODAY!

Full Service Proshop, Authorized Dealer for Hoyt, Mathews, PSE, and Bear Archery



4410 Old Pineville Road, Charlotte, North Carolina 28217
Call today (704) 527-1110 • www.barefootarchery.com

SMALL CRAFT ADVISORY

Phillip Gentry

Backs of creeks are hot spots for November bass, and kayaks can get there when other vessels can't.

PADDLE UP FALL BASS

TIPS FOR GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOUR NOVEMBER OUTINGS

Phillip Gentry

Something about falling leaves and bass fishing just naturally goes hand-in-hand. It's a great time to pick up a baitcasting rod armed with just about anything in your arsenal and start chunking.

Aside from the great fall fishing that's available across both Carolinas, sitting alone in your kayak on some forgotten stretch of river or the back of a secluded cove and taking in the scenery and solitude is simply good for the soul.

Obviously, some places are better suited for fall bass fishing, and kayak fishermen know that any roadway access in the back end of a creek is a great place to throw in a kayak. When you do, there are several things to keep in mind, in no certain order.

RESIDENT BASS

Resident bass are a real thing. That lone boat dock in the back of the creek, that blowdown that's hanging on that steep bank or that old stump on the edge of the channel leading to the back of the creek, that's where he lives.

You know he's there, and somehow, he knows that you know it, too. That fish is not going to rocket out of his hideaway and hit a topwater lure or a Fluke. Keep

an old-school, jig-and-craw in black, brown or dark blue tied on for just such an event. Give him plenty of space, but put that bait deep in his living room and make him choose to eat it.

FRESH INFLOWS

Fall bass love freshwater inflows. Maybe the lake is turning over somewhere out on the main lake, or maybe it's just the current that instinctively means food. Barring flooding conditions, water inflows are a great place to throw blade baits: spinnerbaits, in-line spinners, ponyheads, etc. Some anglers refer to these as ditches, but most will have some kind of water entering the back. It's hard to beat white for a color in this situation.

TARGET WOOD

The backs of creeks, coves and even the banks of a slow-moving river are typically lined with some type of wooden cover. Bass love blowdowns year-round, but especially in the fall when the end of a tree sticking out in the water offers a great ambush point to ambush baitfish.

Bass can be on, under or simply around wooden cover, depending on their mood. Start working the area with an weightless, weedless soft plastic like a Fluke or

floating worm to pick off bass that may be holding high in the water column. Next, work the sides of the blowdown or brush pile with a shallow- to medium-diving crankbait.

Be sure to make contact with the wood, then pause the crankbait and let it float up before continuing your retrieve. A jig-and-craw, Texas-rigged worm or other weighted bait, preferably weedless, can be used to work the bottom of the cover.

FIND BAITFISH

In a typical kayaking throw-and-go scenario, there's a temptation to forego the electronics on the yak and only fish what you can see. This can be a big mistake, especially when the presence of baitfish will coincide with fish.

Kayak anglers may not even notice the fish as bass will run up into skinny water at times and charge back out to attack baitfish.

Electronics will not only alert you to



Phillip Gentry of Waterloo, S.C., is host of "PG & Boat Girl Outdoors" podcast and a veteran outdoor writer.

structure that may not be visible on the surface, but also if baitfish are holding further back into the creek run or cove.

Pay particular attention to changes in water temperature. This can go both ways. If the weather has been unseasonably hot, water inflows or shaded areas may offer cooler water, as noted on the temperature gauge. On the other hand, note any warmer areas if a cold snap has been the norm for a few days.

COLORS, SIZE, STEALTH

When in doubt, choose natural shad colors. As space is limited, there isn't a big need to carry a multitude of color choices in your kayak, assuming water colors maintain the normal clear or only slightly stained during the fall. Bass will be keying on baitfish anyway, so it's best to match the hatch with baitfish-imitating colors.

Size matters. One of the chief complaints that kayak anglers have about fishing fall baitfish patterns is that the bass are feeding on bait that is smaller than what you have tied on. Remedy this by using 3-inch crankbaits instead of 4- and 5-inch models.

Smaller jigs and plastics can also be the norm. It's very common to paddle up on a school of baitfish when quietly stalking the back stretches, so pay attention not only to how the bait is behaving, but also at the size of the bait and whether it is threadfin shad, gizzard shad, herring, or some other type of prey species.

On a final note, stealth is your friend when kayak-fishing for bass in water less than 15 feet deep. Try to avoid any kind of paddle slap, banging tackle boxes and gear around or any other noise that will spook fish. ■

BEST BETS

NORTH CAROLINA

WHAT — Largemouth bass

WHERE — Lake Phelps

HOW — Topwater fishing for bass is the name of the game. Don't be afraid to go big.

LAUNCH — <https://www.ncwildlife.org/boating/where-to-boat/>

INSIDER TIP — Largemouth Bass in Lake Phelps have been managed under trophy bass regulations, with a minimum size limit of 14 inches and a protective slot limit between 16 and 20 inches.

SOUTH CAROLINA

WHAT — Smallmouth bass

WHERE — Broad River

HOW — Safety pin and in-line spinnerbaits are a favorite go-to bait in the fall. Fish moving water at the upper and lower end of large pools for the best action.

LAUNCH — Public access to the Broad is generally better in the upper stretches than the lower. Check the SCDNR website for public access at www2.dnr.sc.gov/ManagedLands/BoatRamp/BoatRampSelected/1251826

INSIDER TIP — The Broad remains an untapped public smallmouth fishery because so much of the access to the river is private. A little homework getting permissions and finding access will pay off.

STANDING TO FISH

Many anglers look for specific features in a kayak that will allow them to stand while fishing. These features include a wider beam, optional attachments such as outriggers for stability, adjustable seats and open cockpit areas. At the end of the day, the question is, "Is it worth the effort to stand while fishing?"

The answer is not so simple and boils down to a matter of preference. On one hand, standing makes it easier to see activity on the surface in front or away from the kayak. Standing also makes it easier to make longer and more-accurate casts. Finally, many bass anglers are simply accustomed to standing while casting because they've always fished that way from a powerboat.

The downside is it takes a wider, usually heavier boat to stand in comfortably and safely. There's nothing worse than concentrating on maintaining balance to stand rather than on fishing. A big downside is that propelling the boat is more difficult from a standing position. It's impossible from a pedal kayak, and you have to use only one end of the paddle to scull along, with reduced boat control, to paddle standing up.

There's no right or wrong answer. In most cases, anglers like the ability to stand to fish in certain situations and remain seated the remainder of the time. Casting from a seated position also requires some skill refinement. If the angler stores rods vertically in a carry crate behind the seat, most casting will be done sidearm.

If you're having trouble making up your mind, you might want to do so before next month, as there can be a considerable range in temperature between early November and late December for an unplanned swim. ■



Phillip Gentry

COOKING ON THE WILD SIDE

Jerry Dilsaver



Grouper and shrimp stuffed into pasta bowls with vegetables and cheese make an interesting meal featuring one of our favorite bottomfish. **INSET:** The finished product will make for a great November meal.

Jerry Dilsaver

GROUPEP PASTA BOWLS

A NEW WAY TO ENJOY A FINE FISH

While we have made it to November, 2020 isn't through yet, and things haven't returned to normal. We are on the tail end of hurricane season, but don't let your guard down, especially when planning a hunting or fishing trip.

The one constant in all the weirdness is that much of the fall weather has been excellent. The weather gives sportsmen access to many opportunities this month. This recipe features grouper that came from deeper water 30 to 50 miles offshore.

Grouper is one of the mildest-flavored fish off the Carolinas' coast. They look a bit rough and tumble, but once the skin is removed and the fillets exposed, it is pretty meat, and anyone who likes fish should like it. That even goes for those folks who say they don't like fish but eat flounder. Yes, it's that mild.

The best way to get fresh grouper is to catch it yourself, but

they're not as easy to catch as one would think. For larger, robust fish, they can clean a hook surprisingly subtly — a lot like the wily sheepshead. On other days, they hit like runaway freight trains. But it's worth the time and effort to get positioned just right and drop baits to hungry grouper. Heading home with a cooler full of fillets is a good thing, a really good thing, and something that is well worth the time and effort.

With shallow-water grouper season closing for several months on New Year's Day, the Thanksgiving holidays would be a great time to head offshore for grouper, plus whatever else is biting. You can keep enough out for one good meal to escape the post-Thanksgiving leftover turkey blahs and put the rest in the freezer for meals until the season opens again.

This has been an unusual and stressful year, but I still hope you can find many reasons to be thankful this Thanksgiving. ■

GROUPEP PASTA BOWLS

I like fish, and grouper is a favorite, but I wanted to find a different way to prepare it. I've eaten it grilled, baked, blackened, fried and more, but I wondered what could be different and still preserve the mild, but rich, taste. One idea was in a stew or something using a tomato base, but I feared the base would overpower the grouper's flavor.

One day, surfing the TV through the cooking channels, I saw something made with leftover chicken mixed in a tomato base and rolled up in lasagna noodles as pinwheels. I didn't like the idea of the tomato base and didn't see how pieces of fish would roll up, but I liked the idea and eventually came up with the first version of this. There have been several versions since the first attempts, and it is still being refined, but enough of my friends like it and suggested I use it here, so here it is. As is usual with my recipes, feel free to vary it as you think you would prefer. I think this is a pretty good base, but I'm still experimenting a bit.

There are several small things that influence the taste of this, and you may prefer one way or the other. The first is salt. I rarely use salt, but I use a little when boiling the noodles. I use pink Himalayan salt and believe it makes a difference. The smoked paprika and black pepper is important. I like both of them and sprinkle them on liberally. It really does change the flavor.

Also in boiling the noodles, I use a good shake or two of olive oil to help keep the noodles from sticking. This could also be done with 1/8 to 1/4 of a stick of butter. I don't taste it, but my wife said it

tastes a little richer using butter.

When sautéing the vegetables, I start with the onions; when they begin to turn opaque, I add the spinach, and once it is wilted or warmed, I add the mushrooms. Remember, you're just warming these to combine the taste and get them ready, as they will cook for 25 minutes in the oven. To make the vegetables richer, sauté them in butter instead of cooking spray.

Making the pasta cups is the hardest part, especially the first few times; experiment with how large a circle works best in your pan.

Adding the shrimp is the cherry on top. They add a nice visual and taste great. They are good unseasoned, but a little pepper and smoked paprika gives them an even better taste. Feel free to add a little salt too, if you must. ■

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound** grouper
- 1/2 pound** medium shrimp
- 1 sweet** onion
- 1 pkg** fresh sliced mushrooms
- 1 pkg** fresh or frozen spinach
- 1 pkg** lasagna noodles
- 1 bottle** creamy Alfredo sauce
- 1/2 cup** coarse, grated Parmesan or Parmesan-Romano mix cheese
- Smoked paprika**
- Salt and pepper**
- Splash** of olive oil or 1/8 to 1/4 stick of butter
- Buttery flavor** non-stick cooking spray.

PREPARATION:

Shell and devein the shrimp, leaving tails attached and return them to ice or fridge. Cut the grouper in pieces of several inches and return to ice or fridge. Slice onions and any large pieces of mushrooms. Boil 8 lasagna noodles to "al dente" per their instructions. If the instructions do not include adding a little olive oil or butter to help prevent the noodles sticking, add a little of one or the other.

Spray a large frying pan — I like cast iron for this — liberally with the buttery flavored, non-stick cooking spray and sauté onions, spinach and mushrooms until the onions turn lightly opaque and the spinach has wilted. Remove the vegetables to a bowl and stir in a couple of spoons of the Alfredo sauce. Spray the bottom and sides of the bowls or pan you will cook in with the buttery flavor non-stick cooking spray.

Preheat the oven to 350°. Drain the lasagna noodles. Cover the bottom of the bowls or pan with a lasagna noodle — cut as needed. Roll the lasagna noodles into circles approximately 2 to 3 inches across and arrange them with an open end up in the bowls or pan. The size of the cooking bowls or pan will determine the size of the circle for the noodles.

Season the grouper to personal taste with salt and pepper and place a piece in each pasta circle. Spoon the sautéed vegetable mixture around the fish in each pasta circle until almost full. Cover the pasta circles with several spoons of Alfredo sauce. Sprinkle the smoked paprika and coarse-ground black pepper on the top. Bake in oven at 350° on a middle rack for 17 to 18 minutes. Check at about 12 minutes for the exposed edges of the pasta beginning to scorch. If it is trying to scorch, cover it loosely with a piece of aluminum foil.

Slide the oven tray out and cover each pasta circle liberally with the grated cheese. Place the shrimp on top of the grated cheese. Return to oven for 6 to 8 more minutes to cook the shrimp.



Jerry Dilsaver

Remove from oven and let stand for 5 minutes before serving. The small bowls are ideal individual servings of 2 to 4 circles.

Some folks eat all the pasta and some nibble at it, much like they do with taco or tortilla shell salads. This has vegetables, fish and pasta and can serve as a standalone meal. A salad or lettuce wedge is always welcome. For those who like a sweet dessert, it's hard to go wrong with Key Lime pie. ■



Jerry Dilsaver of Oak Island, N.C., is a freelance writer, as well as a former national king mackerel champion fisherman. Readers are encouraged to send their favorite recipes and a photo of the completed dish to possibly be used in a future issue of the magazine. E-mail the recipes and photos to Jerry Dilsaver at captainjerry@captainjerry.com.

SANTEE STRINGER

Terry Madewell

Guide Brett Mitchell works fairly shallow targets for bass in November, even during the cooler weather of late November.



Terry Madewell

TIME FOR 'FISHY' BIG GAME

COOLING WEATHER, BUNCHED-UP BAITFISH MAKE FOR A BIG-FISH MONTH

November is big-game season around the Santee Cooper lakes, and while deer are certainly a prime choice for many, the phrase “big game” applies to critters such as enormous catfish, trophy bass and slab crappie.

Late October and November is traditionally when the deer rut peaks, offering a prime opportunity to take big bucks. Sportsmen are taking full advantage by spending productive time in deer stands, but November produces a large number of outlandish-sized fish from a variety of species.

MONSTER CATFISH

Catfish have been feeding heavily during the warmer months, and now, with cooler weather, the baitfish bunch into larger schools, enabling catfish to chow down on quality forage. The big fish are really on the move at this time of the year.

Kevin Davis, the owner of Black's Camp

on the Diversion Canal, said the fishing is outstanding on both Lake Marion and Lake Moultrie, giving anglers option to play the wind and weather to their favor.

“The conditions align with water temperatures, forage availability and aggressive feeding by big catfish enabling more big fish to be hooked,” Davis said. “Target underwater points, humps and drops to focus on really big fish. It’s difficult to leave biting catfish in the 5- to 15-pound class, but if you’re targeting a catfish in the 40- to 80-pound class — or larger — that’s the smart move.”

Davis (843-312-3080) said baitfish are mobile at this time of year, and catfish follow the forage. This mobility makes drift-fishing often the best tactic for consistent success.

“I generally like to drift about 0.5 miles per hour, but a little more or less can be ideal, so experiment with speed,” he said. “Bait is another crucial consideration and, at this time of the year, mullet are

available, and big chunks of cut mullet are always a great option. White perch used whole or cut — or just the heads of big perch — are ideal. Gizzard shad and herring are good options. I’d suggest using a variety of baits on multiple rods until you find the daily pattern. And trust me, the patterns can change day-to-day.”

Davis said the best depths may vary from 20 to 50 feet, but typically, big catfish are found in slightly deeper water than the smaller fish.

BASS ON THE MOVE

Another positive aspect of the abundance of fall forage in the lake is the impact on largemouth bass. They are on



Terry Madewell, of Ridgeway, S.C., has been an outdoors writer for more than 30 years. He has a degree in wildlife and fisheries management and has a long career as a professional wildlife biologist/natural resources manager.

the move following forage and can be targeted in multiple ways during November.

Guide Brett Mitchell said one of the keys to his November success is versatility in using different lures.

Mitchell (803-379-7029) said fish can be on several different patterns, including busting shad on the surface, holding near trees, stumps and logs to ambush forage and patrolling the edge lines of weed beds looking for prey.

“My advice would be to have an assortment of lures rigged and ready, and then search for the pattern for that specific day,” he said. “Weather will play an important role in November, for sure, and although it may be more stable than what we had during the spring, the bass are prone to change patterns, and we’ve got to adapt as they do.”

On a past November fishing trip with Mitchell, his lure options included spinnerbaits, topwater frogs, plastic worms and crankbaits as well as topwater lures that he could cast long distances for the occasional fish schooling on the surface.

“The potential to catch a trophy bass is real, coupled with catching numerous bass, makes it an ideal time to target big bass on either lake,” Mitchell said.

TARGET BIG SLABS

November brings the best potential to hook super-slab crappie since the spring spawn, and when discussing super slabs, the potential to catch fish approaching the 3-pound class is possible.

The November pattern typically finds crappie locked onto brush piles in open water in depths ranging from 20 to 35 feet.

The best tactic is to use your graph to find sunken brush in either Marion or Moultrie. The many recently refurbished public fish attractors are excellent areas to catch crappies; they are marked by buoys with coordinates on the SCDNR website at www.dnr.sc.gov.

Use either live minnows, small jigs or a jig-minnow



Terry Madewell

GOING PUBLIC:

Public fish attractors sunk at various spots around the Santee Cooper lakes are great places to target slab crappie in November, when fish are relating to brush piles. Pat Robertson of Columbia, S.C., is convinced.

combo on a tight-line rig. Fish the rig vertically over the brush and around the edges. If the bite is slow, work into the brush, but at this time of the year, the

bite is often aggressive.

If you don't get action quickly, or if the fish are smallish, move until you find the slabs you're targeting. ■

An advertisement for Santee Cooper Country. It features a large image of a striped bass being held by a person. The text reads: "Come See Us In Santee Cooper Country! The Striped Bass Are Biting!". Below the image, it says "SC'S FINEST FISHING & RECREATION IS ON LAKES MARION & MOULTRIE" with a logo of a fish in a lake. To the right, it says "SANTEE COOPER COUNTRY" and "Across Berkeley, Clarendon, Calhoun, Orangeburg, & Sumter counties" followed by the website "FISHSANTEECOOPERCOUNTRY.COM".

Come See Us In Santee Cooper Country!
The Striped Bass Are Biting!

SC'S FINEST FISHING & RECREATION IS ON LAKES MARION & MOULTRIE

SANTEE COOPER COUNTRY
Across Berkeley, Clarendon, Calhoun, Orangeburg, & Sumter counties
FISHSANTEECOOPERCOUNTRY.COM

HEAD FOR THE MOUNTAINS

Robert Satterwhite

Don't lower your expectations when you decide to spend a day on a trout stream during the colder months. With less pressure, catches like these three rainbows aren't unusual.



COLD DOESN'T MEAN STOP

THE APPROACH OF WINTER ACTUALLY SIGNALS SOME GOOD TROUT FISHING

Die-hard trout fishers don't pay attention to the calendar or the weather, because trout can be pursued and caught any time of year and in any kind of weather. Plus, dedicated anglers know that the mere act of fishing is just as satisfying as catching fish.

As Ray Bergman says in *Trout*, the bible of American trout fishers, "I believe that fishing was simply an excuse to get out in the open, to breathe air that came to me directly over open spaces, to face nature when she bared her soul."

Bergman said some of his best fishing experiences were on cold, windy days when other fishers stayed close to the warmth of the hearth and he had a stream to himself.

In cold weather, trout don't move around as much, nor do they feed as often. But on those winter days when the temperature rises and the sun breaks on a dreary, gray day, hatches come off, and when they do, trout will feed.

Bruce Hurang of Asheville, N.C., a founder of Smoky Mountain Fly Fishers, said the best times to fish in the winter are on sunny afternoons, from about noon to 3 or 4 p.m.

"I watch for midge and small black stone hatches," he said, "and I fish the deep holes. That's where you'll find trout. The shallow areas are usually too cold."

Hurang suggests working the bottom of a pool slowly and fishing it thoroughly, quartering and sectioning off areas. Sometimes, he said, "You have to put a nymph on a trout's nose to get it to hit."

Hurang prefers olive, black and dark-brown emerger patterns, small black stone wet flies, and midges with dark wings.

TAILRACE TROUT

Another good place to fish during the cold months are the tailwaters below dams. Most dams release water from the bottom of the upstream impoundment, and water temperature is constant, usually between 42 and 48 degrees.

Roger Lowe of Waynesville, N.C., a master fly-tier and veteran guide, said the mostly mild weather we've had the past few winters has prolonged topwater fishing. Attractor patterns such as the Royal Wulff, Thunderhead and male Adams are effective flies when trout are feeding at the surface.

"The time of the day actually is more important than the pattern you use," said Lowe, who suggests watching for temperature peaks that usually occur around mid-day and early afternoon.

For nymph fishing, Lowe recommends Secret Weapon, Woolly Booger, Hare's Ear, Pheasant Tail and Zug Bug patterns. The secret to successful nymph fishing, he said, is to get enough split shot on the



Bob Satterwhite has been writing about the outdoors, particularly trout fishing, for more than 25 years. A native of Morganton, N.C., he lives in Cullowhee, N.C., close to the Tuckasee River, Caney Fork, Moses Creek, and several other prime trout streams.

line to get the nymph down and let it bump along the bottom. For smaller nymphs, he said, a couple of split-shot — sizes B or BB — will work well. With Woolly Boogger and other large nymphs, Lowe uses five or six split-shot, especially if the stream has a heavy current.

BIGGER IS BETTER

Trout congregate in bigger pools in cold weather, usually toward the middle, where they wait for food to come to them. During cold weather, Lowe suggests fishing larger streams, especially valley streams such as the Oconaluftee, Tuckasegee, Nantahala and Watauga rivers, where water tends to be warmer. Streams with shaded banks, such as Big Creek, Deep Creek and Little Cataloochee, are less productive because the water doesn't warm as quickly.

The best overall winter patterns, Lowe said, are the Royal Coachman or Royal Wulff, Irresistible, Parachute, Thunderhead, Woolly Boogger and stonefly nymphs.

Ronnie Setzer of Sylva, a long-time fly fisher and guide, said a big advantage of winter fishing is that fish are not as spooky as they are in summer.

"You don't have to throw long lines, and it's much easier to keep out of a trout's vision," he said.

Setzer said winter is a particularly good time to fish wild-trout streams in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

"I especially like to fish Bradley Fork, Ravens Fork and Noland Creek. The trout are more concentrated, and you don't have to cover as much water as you do in the summer," he said. "I catch very few 4- and 5-inch trout in the winter. Most of them are 7 inches and longer."

Persistence is important for winter fishing, Setzer said.

"You may have to cast six or eight times in the same spot before you get a strike," he said. "Sometimes, they won't move more than a foot out of their regular feeding path."

CHECK THE TEMP

An invaluable angling tool to carry in the winter is a thermometer to check changes in water temperature. Trout are more active if the water temperature is 40 degrees or above.

One disadvantage of winter fishing is a shorter period of daylight, especially with daylight saving time in effect. Prime winter fishing hours are between 10:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. If you're on a stream after 4:30 p.m., you'll more than likely have to walk to your vehicle in the dark.

Delayed-harvest streams offer exceptional fishing during the winter. Streams were generously stocked in early October and the first week in November.

Even when the weather is cold and wet, trout fishing is always a fine winter escape. ■



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 2021 PrimeTimes Wall Calendar. \$13.95 (plus \$4 s&h). Know the best days, best times, and their relative strengths for all of 2021 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 2021, the year's best periods, a look ahead at 2022, and more. Comes with FREE 2021 Astro Tables pocket calendar, which sells separately for \$8.95, 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.

2021 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....** \$47.95 (plus \$6 s&h).
- #3: **Same as #2, minus book....** \$38.95 (plus \$5 s&h).

Send to: PrimeTimes 2021 • Dept. LS • 2487 NW 75th Ave., Ste. 100 • Ankeny, IA 50023

For credit/debit card orders, call 515-964-5516, or go online to primetimes2.com and click **Catalog**.

2020 BEST DAYS NOV

	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCL	VALUE
Sun 1	██	██	██	██	55
Mon 2	██	██	██	██	49
Tue 3	██	██	██	██	42
Wed 4	██	██	██	██	39
Thu 5	██	██	██	██	39
Fri 6	██	██	██	██	39
Sat 7	██	██	██	██	46
Sun 8	██	██	██	██	55
Mon 9	██	██	██	██	44
Tue 10	██	██	██	██	37
Wed 11	██	██	██	██	45
Thu 12	██	██	██	██	52
Fri 13	██	██	██	██	59
Sat 14	██	██	██	██	62
Sun 15	██	██	██	██	49
Mon 16	██	██	██	██	36
Tue 17	██	██	██	██	24
Wed 18	██	██	██	██	18
Thu 19	██	██	██	██	17
Fri 20	██	██	██	██	22
Sat 21	██	██	██	██	33
Sun 22	██	██	██	██	24
Mon 23	██	██	██	██	21
Tue 24	██	██	██	██	22
Wed 25	██	██	██	██	24
Thu 26	██	██	██	██	24
Fri 27	██	██	██	██	36
Sat 28	██	██	██	██	48
Sun 29	██	██	██	██	60
Mon 30	██	██	██	██	67

25 50 75
AVERAGE

LUNAR PERIODS

TIMES OCCURRING AT NIGHT ARE SHADED

MOON RISE	PRIMARY MOON OVERHEAD	MOON SET	PRIMARY MOON UNDERFOOT	
6:10 pm	10:57 pm - 1:57 am	7:22 am	11:22 am - 2:22 pm	☉ End DST
6:44 pm	11:35 pm - 2:47 am	8:20 am	12:00 pm - 3:12 pm	☉
7:24 pm	12:15 am - 3:41 am	9:17 am	12:40 pm - 4:06 pm	☉
8:09 pm	1:01 am - 4:33 am	10:14 am	1:26 pm - 4:58 pm	☉
9:01 pm	1:50 am - 5:26 am	11:09 am	2:15 pm - 5:51 pm	☉ HIGH
9:58 pm	2:43 am - 6:19 am	12:00 pm	3:08 pm - 6:44 pm	☉
11:00 pm	3:39 am - 7:11 am	12:47 pm	4:04 pm - 7:36 pm	☉
	4:37 am - 7:59 am	1:29 pm	5:02 pm - 8:24 pm	☉ HALF
12:05 am	5:37 am - 8:43 am	2:06 pm	6:02 pm - 9:08 pm	☉
1:13 am	6:36 am - 9:26 am	2:41 pm	7:01 pm - 9:51 pm	☉
2:21 am	7:38 am - 10:08 am	3:14 pm	8:03 pm - 10:33 pm	☉
3:31 am	8:40 am - 10:48 am	3:48 pm	9:05 pm - 11:13 pm	☉
4:43 am	9:44 am - 11:30 am	4:23 pm	10:09 pm - 11:55 pm	☉ NEW & PERIGEE
5:56 am	10:49 am - 12:15 pm	5:01 pm	11:14 pm - Midnight	☉
7:11 am	11:57 am - 1:05 pm	5:44 pm	Midnight - 12:40 am	☉
8:25 am	1:03 pm - 1:59 pm	6:33 pm	12:22 am - 1:30 am	☉
9:35 am	2:09 pm - 2:57 pm	7:29 pm	1:28 am - 2:24 am	☉
10:38 am	3:10 pm - 3:58 pm	8:30 pm	2:34 am - 3:22 am	☉ LOW
11:32 am	4:03 pm - 4:59 pm	9:33 pm	3:35 am - 4:23 am	☉
12:18 pm	4:54 pm - 5:56 pm	10:36 pm	4:28 am - 5:24 am	☉
12:56 pm	5:36 pm - 6:52 pm	11:38 pm	5:19 am - 6:21 am	☉ HALF
1:28 pm	6:13 pm - 7:45 pm		6:01 am - 7:17 am	☉
1:57 pm	6:48 pm - 8:36 pm	12:37 am	6:38 am - 8:10 am	☉
2:24 pm	7:20 pm - 9:26 pm	1:34 am	7:13 am - 9:01 am	☉
2:49 pm	7:52 pm - 10:14 pm	2:29 am	7:45 am - 9:51 am	☉
3:15 pm	8:23 pm - 11:03 pm	3:24 am	8:17 am - 10:39 am	☉ Apogee
3:42 pm	8:57 pm - 11:53 pm	4:19 am	8:48 am - 11:28 am	☉
4:12 pm	9:33 pm - 12:43 am	5:15 am	9:22 am - 12:18 pm	☉
4:45 pm	10:14 pm - 1:36 am	6:13 am	9:58 am - 1:08 pm	☉
5:23 pm	10:58 pm - 2:28 am	7:11 am	10:39 am - 2:01 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.

For more information and samples of PrimeTimes products, visit our web site: www.primetimes2.com

For more, visit primetimes2.com



Sportsman
**FISHING
HOTSPOTS**

Guide Dan Connolly targets flounder as they get ready to leave the Murrells Inlet estuary this month, when their food is plentiful.

MURRELLS INLET FLOUNDER ROLL OUT

Cooling water, abundance of bait push flatfish into putting on their feed bags

Fall is in full swing this month, with inshore and offshore targets firing off on all cylinders, and anglers searching for that ever-so-popular flaky, white flesh can still catch a limit of flounder in Murrells Inlet's famous waters.

Flounder are well known as an inshore delicacy that are often caught in the shallow lenses well back in the marsh. But they also venture into the ocean and feed at the jetties that line the entrance to the inlet, at inshore reefs, and they even cruise well offshore into deep water for the winter.

Flounder will typically evacuate the estuaries when water temperatures become too chilly inshore. November is usually the last chance for most anglers to catch a limit of these flatfish in the inshore and nearshore territories.

Dan Connolly of O-Fish-AI Fishing Expeditions out of Murrells Inlet hangs on until the last opportunity to catch flounder, and he said November can be a super time to connect with these brown beauties.

"When we have an extra-long and hot summer, the flounder bite will continue into November and will remain strong until the water temps drop out of the 60s," said Connolly (843-241-7022). "They can tolerate lower temps, but usually they will head offshore into 100 to 200 feet (of water) to spawn over the winter when it gets too cold."

Just like any creature preparing to make a long-distance move, flounder will fuel up on shrimp and small fish. This time of year, plenty of food will be available for flounder, and that often makes these fish less selective.

"Flounder stay in close as long as they can to take advantage of the plethora of food provided to them from the mullet migration," he said.

Flounder can be found in about any spots where food is concentrated. Connolly fishes around structure with good currents available to make the ambushing process seamless.

"Nearshore reefs, the jetties at Murrells

Inlet, docks, and any of the oyster mounds in the creeks and flats with current will be good places to find flounder," he said.

Since flounder are eating finger mullet by the truckload, live finger mullet on a Carolina rig or jighead is hard to beat and is truly matching the hatch. But the mullet run will dissipate over time, and as the water gets cooler towards the end of the month, Connolly will switch over to artificial options such as scented soft plastics or Vudu shrimp. A live shrimp will never get passed over, either.

"A live shrimp drifted under a slip float at the proper depth is a killer for flounder of any size," he said.

In November, the redfish and trout are also devouring finger mullet and live shrimp. Live bait or artificial lures that mimic shrimp or small minnows can be a deadly option to pick up a cooler full of tasty fillets in November in the Murrells Inlet area. ■

— Jeff Bureson

STRIPERS ON STAGE

Albemarle Sound fills up in November

Before striped bass flood Weldon, N.C., next spring to spawn, these same fish will begin the first stage of their migration this month, filling North Carolina's Albemarle Sound.

Knowing that these fish are hungry and eager to pack on weight before heading upriver, guide Jeff Onley of Elizabeth City, N.C., employs a variety of techniques, ranging from sight-fishing and vertical-jigging, casting to structure and trolling to fill his clients' limits.

According to Onley, who runs Albemarle Fishing Charters, the recipe for success is knowing when and where to use each tactic. Since mornings and evenings are typically the times when the wind is low and the water surface is glassy, they are most conducive for spotting schools of stripers feeding on the surface, likely under birds. Under these circumstances, an angler should cruise the mouths of the sound's tributaries — the Pasquotank, Perquimans, Little, North or outside mouth of the Roanoke River — to find birds dive bombing the baitfish left behind.

"I try to see which way the school is moving," said Onley (252-333-6524), "then I pull up in front of them and just let them go through me. I drop the lures down to the bottom and jig them vertically, keeping it near the bottom. I use a ¾-ounce Hopkins spoon or Gator spoon. I also use an Uncle Jessie's Lure; it's a silver lure with two blades and a hook. You can cast lures like Rat-L-Traps and try to catch them on top, but the bigger fish seem to be near the bottom."

Where Onley really likes a Rat-L-Trap is around the abandoned shipping piers that jut from the mouths of the rivers into the sound. These structures are baitfish magnets and provide a myriad of ambush points for striped bass. They are also the next logical choice after schooling activity dies down. Onley prefers a ¾-ounce Rat-L-Trap in blue/silver, green/silver or electric shad.

Trolling is another favorable follow-up to bird-watching, and it's a go-to tactic when windy conditions prevent sitting still. Anglers have a couple of choices here — the stump fields or the Albemarle Sound bridge.

"Along the shorelines of swamps and outside the mouths of the rivers are good places to find stump fields," Onley said. "I troll with the same Rat-L-Traps I use around the piers and pull them at just over idle. The best areas are in 8 to 10 feet of water.

"At the bridge, I troll around the pilings in about 20 feet of water. Because of the increased depth, I use Mann's Stretch-20s in blue/silver or chartreuse. I also like a 1-ounce chartreuse or white bucktail with a 3-inch Berkley swimming mullet attached." ■

— Dusty Wilson

The Albemarle Sound fills up with striped bass in November as they begin a long, staging activity before their spring spawning run up North Carolina's Roanoke River.



Jeff Onley

HELP WANTED

We are looking for drivers to deliver the Carolina SPORTSMAN Magazine in both North and South Carolina.

If You Love to Fish, Hunt and Meet People You Qualify!

Circulation experience helpful but not necessary. Dependable vehicle with insurance & a valid NC and / or SC drivers license a must. If you have 2-3 days a month to help spread the word I would like to hear from you!

Please Contact: Mitch Eby,

Circulation Manager @ 919-602-3862 -or- mitchebync@gmail.com

Carolina
SPORTSMAN®



BREAM-ING FULL

Lake Moultrie panfish eat from the deep

Bream fishing is over until spring, and it has been since early fall. At least that's a long-held myth among most anglers. But November is a great time for catching bluegills, especially on Santee-Cooper's lower lake, Moultrie.

Pro angler Matt Outlaw loves November bream fishing; he said the key to catching these panfish is to forget about the shallow water and fish deep — sometimes as deep as 60 feet.

Outlaw said he and guide Joseph Dennis of J Hook Charters first started catching November bream by accident.

"We were fishing deep for crappie with small minnows, and every now and then, we'd catch a bluegill," he said. "So we started bringing crickets and using them in the same spots we crappie fish. It worked like a charm. But on some days, you'll catch just as many bluegills as crappie, even when using only minnows."

Finding fish is a matter of watching your electronics; locating deep holes with clusters of fish is necessary before wetting a line.

"It will look like big schools of crappie or big bait balls; sometimes that is what it is," he said. "It's the only way to find them this time of year; bait balls will move much more quickly. We've found that bream and crappie are right there together in many holes. They may not be exactly on top of each other, but they are close enough that you'll catch some of both species," he said.

Once Outlaw finds a school of bream, he drops crickets threaded onto 1/6-ounce jigheads straight down on long panfish

poles. About 18 inches above the jig, he adds 1/2- to 1-ounce egg sinkers to get them down quickly. He often uses six to eight poles, placing them in rod holders on the bow of his boat. While waiting for a bite, he sometimes uses a small, ultralight rod to drop another bait down or to jig vertically for a reaction strike.

He said the first thing anglers notice about these bream is how healthy they are.

"These fish are thick-bodied. You won't catch any small fish out here this time of year. Even the shortest fish are very healthy, very thick," said Outlaw, who says November is just the start of things.

"They'll bite throughout the winter in these deep holes, and they are very predictable. Even when we have some warm spells, the cold water keeps these fish in deep holes. No matter how unstable the weather may be, you'll find them anywhere from 30 to 60 feet deep, and they are in big schools."

Outlaw said sometimes anglers can find a deep hole full of bream, but not get a bite.

"Sometimes that happens, so it's good to keep track of a number of different holes, and when you find a good spot but can't get a bite, leave it for another," Outlaw said. "But always come back to that hole later in the day. Thirty minutes, two hours — whatever it is, you'd be surprised at how hot the bite can turn on if you leave them alone and come back." ■

Matt Outlaw catches plenty of big bluegill in deep holes on Lake Moultrie as the water cools in November.

— Brian Cope

FRESHWATER

BLACK'S CAMP

Deer Water Access to Diversion Canal and Both Lakes... Boat Launch is Protected From Wind and Current

FOOD TO GO, ORDER ONLINE



Please Call Us For Campground, Lodging & Guide Service Availability

Cross, South Carolina 29436
(843) 753-2231
www.blackscamp.com

HUNTING

BACK CREEK

GUIDE SERVICE



DIVERS & PUDDLE DUCKS

Neuse River
Pamlico Sound
Core Banks



Capt. Glenn Grigg
(252) 515-2971

HUNTING

CHEROKEE RUN

Hunting Lodge

Hunt deer, wild boar & turkey in the wilds of South Carolina



Trophy Managed
Whitetail on the
Great Pee Dee River



HOME OF THE 600 LB
"GREY GHOST"

NIGHT HOG: JAN 1 - AUG 31
SC RIFLE DEER: SEP 1 - JAN 1
SC WILD BOAR: YEAR ROUND SEASON
SC TURKEY: MAR 22 - APR 30
DEER/BOAR OR TURKEY/BOAR COMBOS

Located on the border in beautiful Chesterfield County SC, one hour from Charlotte, NC. Comfortable lodging including satellite TV, pool table, bass ponds, rifle & 3-D archery range.

704-301-7950 • eatsleephunt.com

GUIDES & CHARTERS

Display Ads

1/16 Page BW\$70/mn*
1/8 Page BW..... \$120/mn*
*Based on Pre-Paid 12 Month Contract

To place an ad in Guides & Charters
John (NC) - 919.601.6966
or johnc@carolinasporthunter.com

Bret (SC) - 843.442.7250
or breth@carolinasporthunter.com

ADVERTISE

Your Charter Boat or Guide Service here!

Reach 1000's of potential customers each month starting at

\$70

Call for details at
252.299.2138

Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE (All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications)

Publication Title	ISSN	Issue Frequency	Number of Issues Annually	Annual Subscription Price	Year Began
Carolina Sportsman	1547-0000	Quarterly	4	\$35.00	1988
Issue Date for Circulation Data Below					
1. Total Number of Copies (Net Press Run)					
a. Total Number of Copies (Net Press Run)	1000				
b. Paid and Unpaid Distribution Outside the Mails					
(1) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails	0				
(2) Unpaid Distribution Outside the Mails	0				
c. Paid and Unpaid Distribution Through the Mails					
(1) Paid Distribution Through the Mails	820				
(2) Unpaid Distribution Through the Mails	180				
d. Total Paid and Unpaid Distribution Through the Mails	1000				
e. Total Paid and Unpaid Distribution (b + d)	1000				
f. Total Number of Copies (Net Press Run) (a + e)	2000				
g. Total Paid and Unpaid Distribution (e) as a Percent of Total Number of Copies (Net Press Run) (f)	50%				
h. Total Paid and Unpaid Distribution (e) as a Percent of Total Number of Copies (Net Press Run) (f) (98%)	98%				

Approved for mailing at Special Rate of \$35.00 per copy per issue provided that the publication meets the requirements of Section 3901, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized on 09/23/2020.

Juanita O. Gurley, Controller

Top It Off!



sportsman gear
Fishing & Hunting Apparel
www.SPORTSMANGear.com

ADVERTISERS INDEX

BACK CREEK GUIDE SERVICE.....	75	COLLINS INC.	80	ROCK OUTDOORS	77
BAREFOOT ARCHERY, INC.....	63	CROSS CREEK OUTDOOR SUPPLIES, LLC	35	SANTEE COOPER COUNTRY	69
BIG LAKE OUTDOOR PRODUCTS.....	39	CWP PROSERIES.....	43	SARAH JUDY'S INSURANCE AGENCY	53
BLACK'S CAMP	44, 75	CZ-USA	29	SEA ARK BOATS	7
BLUE WAVE BOATS	5	L & S BAIT COMPANY.....	61	SOUTHERN LAND SOLUTIONS, LLC	33
BOND ARMS	23	LENOX AUCTION AND REALTY.....	24	SUZUKI MOTOR OF AMERICA, INC.....	46, 47
BOST ARGO.....	29	MARINE WAREHOUSE	54	TOON TIME, LLC.....	43
BQ GRILLS	55	MOREE'S SPORTSMAN'S PRESERVE.....	15	WHITETAIL PROPERTIES	21
CAPTAIN FROGGY'S CHARTERS.....	15	NICHOLS STORE, INC.	25	XPRESS BY ALUMA-WELD, INC.	2
CAROLINA COMPOSITES, LLC.....	3	O'BRIAN TARPING SYSTEMS	45		
CAROLINA OUTDOOR JOURNAL.....	44	PALMETTO STATE TRAINING.....	48		
CHATLEE BOAT AND MARINE	4, 76	PG & BOATGIRL SHOW	7		
CHEROKEE RUN HUNTING LODGE.....	35, 75	PROTHRO CHEVY- BUICK-GMC.....	31		
COASTAL PLAINS PROPERTIES, INC.	17	REALTREE OUTDOOR PRODUCTS	79		

Get decked out in the latest from the **SPORTSMAN** Store 53

Subscribe Today and SAVE26, 78

NEED CASH FAST?

CHATLEE BOAT & MARINE

Prefer 15' – 24' and 2005 Year Model or Newer
**SKIFF • PONTOON • BAY BOAT
 DECK BOAT • RUNABOUT
 FISH & SKI • CENTER CONSOLE
 ALUMINUM BASS BOAT**

Call for an Immediate Quote!

We Will Buy Your Boat!

CALL ROBBIE!
919-775-7259
www.chatleeboats.com

Powered by

SUZUKI MARINE

ROCK *Outdoors*

**YOUR CONNECTION TO
EVERYTHING OUTDOORS!**



**NEW at
Rock Outdoors!**
CAYMAS
BOATS



- Winterization & Storage Available
Call to set up your appointment!
- Service your fishing boat
before the season starts.
- Technicians on staff Mon-Sat.



TACKLE • CLOTHING • GEAR • KAYAKS



Shop retail at www.shoprockoutdoors.com

7440 NC Hwy 8, Lexington, NC
(336) 793-4690 | rockoutdoors.com



Hours
Monday - Saturday: 8:30am - 6:00pm
Sunday: 10:00am - 5:00pm

HOLIDAY SUBSCRIPTION SALE!



Buy 1 subscription for \$19.95 (12 issues), for yourself or a friend, and give additional gifts at half price - that's just \$9.98 per gift

Toll-free **1-855-224-1667**
or for faster service visit
CarolinaSPORTSMAN.com/holiday

*Savings % based on cover price. Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery of first issue.

Carolina
SPORTSMAN



CONCEALMENT IS OUR EDGE

©2019 Jordan Outdoor Enterprises, Ltd. 1820-198

#HUNTWITHANEDGE



EFFECTIVELY DOMINATE GEOGRAPHICAL ELEMENTS

EDGE.REALTREE.COM | @REALTREEOUTDOORS



INTRODUCING....

CREVALLE BOATS



Hwy. 70, Exit 337 • Smithfield, NC
919-934-3143

COLLINSBOATING.COM