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Fisherman Takes State-Record Freshwater Drum

APRIL 14TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Fisherman Takes State-Record Freshwater Drum

Missouri - MDC congratulates Joshua Cole on breaking the state record by shooting 30-pound, 15-ounce freshwater drum with bow and arrow on Table Rock Lake.

REEDS SPRING, Mo. – The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) reports that Joshua Cole of Reeds Spring became the most recent record-breaking fisherman in Missouri when he shot a freshwater drum on Table Rock Lake using a bow and arrow. The new “alternative method” record drum taken by Cole on March 31 weighed 30-pounds, 15-ounces. It was 33 inches long and had a girth of 30 inches. He shot the fish around 10 p.m. about one mile from Point 10 on Table Rock Lake.

“I can’t believe I shot a state-record drum,” Cole said. “I knew I was shooting at a big drum, but I didn’t realize how big it was until we got it in the boat.”

Cole added that it took two arrows to get it in the boat.

“It really didn’t put up much of a fight with two arrows in it,” he said. “I’m just glad we got it in the boat with no problems.”

The new freshwater drum broke the previous alternative-method state record of 26-pounds, 8-ounces taken on the Lake of the Ozarks in 2008.

“March was a great month for catching record-breaking fish throughout the state,” said MDC Fisheries Programs Specialist Andrew Branson. “There were four new state records

set in March. This just goes to show you that conservation makes Missouri a great place to fish.”

MDC staff verified the new record-weight fish using a certified scale at MDC’s Shepherd of the Hills Hatchery in Branson.

“Once my friends and I got the fish in the boat, I knew that it was a state-record fish,” Cole said. “This is by far the one of biggest fish I have ever caught in my life, and I still can’t believe it!”

Cole hasn’t decided what to do with the fish just yet, but his hopes are high to shoot something bigger.

“This was my first time out bowfishing this year, and I can’t believe I shot a state-record fish,” Cole said. “I’m so ready to get back out on the water and find bigger fish.”

Missouri state-record fish are recognized in two categories: pole-and-line and alternative methods. Bowfishing is considered an alternative method and consist of a bow or crossbow that shoots arrows attached to a string so that the fish can be retrieved after they’re pierced. Other alternative methods include: throwlines, trotlines, limb lines, bank lines, jug lines, spearfishing, snagging, snaring, gigging, grabbing, and atlatl.

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Route K in Stoddard County Reduced for Repairs

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Route K in Stoddard County Reduced for Edge Rut Repairs

Route K in Stoddard County will be reduced to one lane as Missouri Department of Transportation crews perform edge rut repairs.

This section of roadway is located from Route 51 to Route M.

Weather permitting, work will take place Thursday, April 14 through Tuesday, April 19 from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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OSHA 10 Hour Course Offered in Dexter

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[OSHA 10 Hour Course Offered in Dexter](#)

Dexter, Missouri - OSHA 10 Hour Class for contractors or anyone needing training can register by contacting Tish Gentry or Dave Ellinghouse at (573) 624-5540. the cost is \$100 per person.

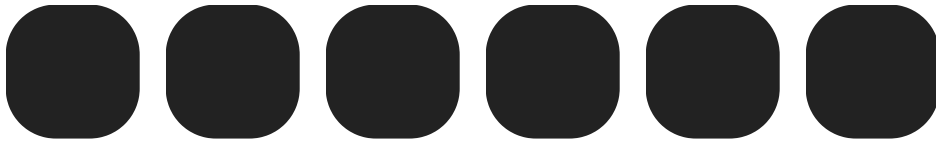
The class will be on Tuesday, April 12th from 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. and Wednesday, April 13th from 8:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. at County Wide Insurance Agency conference room.

Parking is available in the back parking lot at 140 S. Walnut St. in Dexter, Missouri.

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This Fox Says Please Don't Litter

APRIL 11TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

This Fox Says Please Don't Litter

Cape Girardeau, Missouri - The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) says there's always a price to pay when someone litters. In a case today, the price is a Red Fox's rear leg.

"It could be the price of a ticket for the person who litters, or something as serious as a limb in this case," said Bruce Henry, MDC's natural history biologist for the Southeast Region. "There's always a price for littering, it's just a matter of who pays."

Henry responded to a call today to a Cape Girardeau neighborhood, where a den of foxes had settled in under someone's porch. When he arrived, he and the residents found a young red fox, about six to eight weeks old, under a nearby bush with a plastic bag wrapped around one of its rear legs.

"The plastic bag had wrapped so tightly, it was wound like twine around that leg," Henry said.

Henry removed the bag from the leg and delivered the fox to Skyview Animal Clinic for treatment.

“In this case the leg must be amputated,” said Dr. Sean Byrd, a veterinarian at the clinic. “Because of the nature of the injury, it will heal very quickly.”

However, Dr. Byrd said the hard part for the young fox will be rehabilitation. It will transfer to Watkin’s Wildlife Rehab in Sedgewickville after surgery.

“We worry if it will be able to jump in order to catch its prey, because that’s an essential motion that a fox must be capable of,” Dr. Byrd said, adding that the young age of the fox is in the fox's favor, because it is still in the learning stage and it may be able to adapt.

“The chances of it being released back into the wild aren’t great, but that’s what we hope for,” Dr. Byrd said. “If not, it might be used as an education animal to serve as an example and educate people about the dangers of litter.”

Henry said the Cape Girardeau Conservation Nature Center needs volunteers this Saturday for a Riverfront Cleanup, which will directly help other local wildlife like the red fox. The cleanup is from nine to 11 a.m. at the Mississippi Riverfront in downtown Cape Girardeau, Cape Rock and Red Star Access. Another cleanup event is scheduled for Cape LaCroix Creek in Cape Girardeau April 23, from nine a.m. to noon.

“People don’t realize how important these cleanup events are until we look at an animal like this that gets caught in our mess,” Henry said. “He just paid an expensive price for someone else’s littering.”

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Spring Turkey Season Looks Good for Hunters

APRIL 07TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Spring Turkey Season Looks Good for Hunters](#)

Missouri turkey hunters can expect a good spring season overall according to the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC). The spring turkey hunting season starts with a youth-only weekend April 9-10. The regular spring season runs April 18 through May 8.

Although turkey abundance in most of the state remains below the peak that occurred in the late 1990s and early 2000s, turkey numbers in many areas have begun to rebound from the poor hatches that plagued the population from 2007-2010.

“Spring turkey harvest has increased each year in Missouri for the past four years and this year’s harvest is expected to continue this trend,” MDC Turkey Biologist Jason Isabelle said. “A good number of two-year-old gobblers from the 2014 hatch should result in good hunting opportunities for this year’s season.”

Isabelle noted that MDC offers turkey hunting opportunities on more than 500 conservation areas and the state's diverse landscapes mean turkey numbers often vary by region.

Regional Forecast

Northwest and northeast Missouri had the best turkey production in 2014, so hunters should encounter more two-year-old gobblers in both regions this spring.

“This year's spring turkey harvest should be up in northern Missouri compared to the 2015 harvest total,” Isabelle said. “Although turkey numbers in most of northern Missouri remain well below the population peak that occurred 10–15 years ago, turkey populations have begun to rebound in portions of the region during the last several years.”

Isabelle added that the spring season should be good for hunters in the Ozarks as well, especially in the eastern Ozarks where turkey production has been the highest in the state in three out of the last four years. For several counties in the central portion of the region, the 2016 spring harvest could be among the highest on record.

“Increasing turkey numbers throughout much of the Ozarks, coupled with an abundance of public land, make this region a great choice for hunters this year,” he said.

Turkey harvest should also be up in the Ozark Border and West Prairie regions of west-central and southwestern Missouri.

“Many of the counties in these regions typically rank among the highest in the state for spring turkey harvest, and this year should be no exception,” he said. “The turkey population in southwestern Missouri in particular has experienced considerable growth in recent years, and county-level spring harvests in 2016 are likely to meet or exceed previously-established records.”

Prospects are also good for the River Breaks regions of central and east-central Missouri.

“Similar to counties in the Ozark Border and West Prairie regions, many of the counties in the Union Breaks region from Osage east and south to Ste. Genevieve typically rank among the highest in the state in spring harvest, and these counties are likely to do so in 2016 as well,” Isabelle said.

Find detailed information on harvest limits, allowed hunting methods, hunter education

requirements, permits, MDC hunting areas, tagging and checking procedures, regulations and more in MDC’s 2016 Spring Turkey Hunting Regulations and Information booklet available from MDC offices and nature centers, other places where permits are sold, and online at <http://on.mo.gov/1R3JTbH>. For more information about spring turkey hunting visit MDC’s website at <http://huntfish.mdc.mo.gov/hunting-trapping/species/turkey>.

Hunter Safety

Isabelle stressed that hunters can avoid the main cause of turkey-hunting incidents—mistaking or being mistaken by another hunter for game.

“Most turkey hunting incidents typically involve hunters who fail to positively identify their targets,” said Isabelle. “Before pulling the trigger, be absolutely certain that what you are shooting at is not only a turkey, but a legal turkey, which would be a male turkey or a turkey with a visible beard during the spring season.”

He also advised hunters to wear some hunter-orange clothing when moving through the woods or fields, particularly when hunting public land, and to always know the locations of all members of a hunting party.

“Many turkey hunting incidents actually involve members of the same hunting party,” said Isabelle. “If you’re hunting with someone else and you split up, be certain you know where your hunting partner will be.”

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