Becoming an Outdoors-Woman Workshop to Celebrate Silver Anniversary in 2019

The Becoming an Outdoors-Woman (BOW) Workshop is set to celebrate its silver anniversary. The 2019 workshop will be held May 31-June 2 near Crossville at the Clyde M. York 4-H Center.

The popular annual event is hosted by the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency is conducted in a relaxed atmosphere. The BOW workshop is an opportunity for those 18 or older to learn outdoor skills usually associated with hunting and fishing.

However, the workshop provides useful for other outdoor pursuits and interests. Workshop participants will have a chance to select from a variety of courses over the three days and the classes are taught by experts in their respective fields.

The silver anniversary workshop is scheduled to offer classes in the following:

*firearms and firearms safety
*basic fishing skills
*advanced fishing techniques
*all-terrain vehicle operation
* basic archery
* boating safety education
* outdoor cooking
* wild edible foray
* beginning fly fishing
* nature photography basics
* basic canoeing
*paddleboarding
* basic shotgun
* backyard habitat, map/compass
* introduction to muzzleloading
* introduction to turkey hunting

TWRA's Rob Klippel instructs a BOW participant during the firearms and firearms safety class.

* introduction to deer hunting
* reading the woods
* discover scuba
* stream ecology

(Classes are subject to change)

The workshop fee is $225 and includes lodging at the Clyde M York 4-H Center, meals, T-shirt, and a 2019-20 Tennessee Hunting and Fishing License. Registration is taken on a first-come, first-serve basis. Applications may be obtained from the TWRA website at www.tnwildlife.org, or any TWRA regional office. For more information contact Donald Hosse, Wildlife Education Program Coordinator, at don.hosse@tn.gov or telephone (615) 781-6541.

TWRA Supplies Commercial Fishermen with Gillnets Through ACHIP

As part of a larger concerted effort by multiple state and federal agencies in the Ohio River Basin, the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency has developed an Asian Carp Harvest Incentive Program (ACHIP).

As part of the new ACHIP program and while supplies last, commercial fisherman enrolled in ACHIP shall receive a one-time distribution of 15 TWRA-supplied gillnets from a contracted Wholesale Fish Dealer. A subsequent offering of TWRA-supplied gillnets will be distributed to commercial fisherman enrolled in ACHIP who harvest no less than 60,000 pounds in a six-month period.

The ACHIP program was implemented in September 2018 and already after two-plus months had reimbursed ACHIP-contracted wholesale fish dealers for 262,333 pounds of Asian carp.

Commercial fishermen Ray Self and Billy Roberson receive their 15 TWRA-supplied gillnets.

The Ninth Annual Tennessee Outdoors Youth Summit will be held for the third year at the Clyde York 4-H Center near Crossville. The 2019 event is scheduled for July 15-20.

The summit was established for high school students from across Tennessee. During the week, students are introduced to many outdoor activities. It was held at the Montgomery County Shooting Complex near Clarksville before moving to the 4-H Center in 2017.

The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency and the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Foundation are partner to host the event. Among the different outdoor activities that the students will have an opportunity to become introduced to include boating, hunting, trapping, archery, photography, marksmanship, plant identification, forestry, camping, water quality, trap shooting, skeet shooting, wildlife identification, and several classes with wildlife and fish biology as topics.

Students will participate in hands-on classes that teach the importance of the natural resources and their management. Instructors will be wildlife and fisheries biologists, wildlife officers, college professors, professional shooting coaches and experts from specific fields of interest. Students can plan on each class they sign up for to be two to four hours in length and will include hands-on application in that subject.

Once students are accepted to the program, they will be able to attend at least 10 classes during the week. During this week, the students will have the opportunity to gain certification in many different programs. Students, who are interested in a career in the natural resources field, will also enjoy the experiences that normally are not learned until they are members of the work force.

The cost to attend the summit is $350 for the week-long experience which includes lodging and meals. Scholarships are available and based on financial need.

TOYS participants are involved in a wide-range of activities during the week-long summit.
***Top:** TWRA Region Matt Clarey, Region III Hunter Ed/Boating Safety Coordinator, makes a point during an archery class.*
Right: Region III Fisheries Program Manager Mark Thurman helps a student on choosing the correct tackle in a fishing session.

Students interested in attending should log on to www.tnwildlife.org and submit an application by May 17. Students wishing to receive a scholarship only need to submit an application form indicating that they want a scholarship. Applications can be downloaded from www.tnwildlife.org or www.twrf.net.

Enrollment is limited to 120 students and if an application is not accepted, refunds will be returned in full. If an application is chosen, the successful applicant will be sent a password and web address to the location of the scheduling packet. Students will select their classes of interest and pay the balance of the cost of the program.

For questions or additional information, contact Lacey Lane at the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Foundation at (615) 831-9311, ext. 114, (731) 415-0641 or by email at llane@twrf.net.

Jenifer Wisniewski Named TWRA Chief, Communications and Outreach

Jenifer Wisniewski has been named Chief, Communications and Outreach for the TWRA. She comes to the TWRA after serving as the Marketing and Communications Manager for the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Resources Division.

In her new position, Jenifer will be leading a new division which comes after a reorganization of the Information and Education Division. Among her duties, she will be responsible for all of TWRA's marketing efforts, social media, and R3 (recruitment, retention, reactivation) efforts. She will also oversee the agency's magazine, all other publications, and supervise the staff of four regional information and education coordinators.

"I look forward to hitting the ground running and serving Tennessee hunters, anglers, boaters and all those who love wildlife and the great outdoors," she said. "I am excited about the opportunity and the future of TWRA."

Her role will be similar to the one she had for the Georgia DNR over the past five years. She helped develop and implement marketing strategies that helped Georgia become one of the few states see an increase in hunting and fishing license sales, an accomplishment that occurred every year since 2013. Tennessee has followed a trend of many states across the country where license sales have declined.

"I am very pleased that Jenifer will be joining the TWRA," said Executive Director Ed Carter. "I have seen the great work she has been doing for the state of Georgia and several national organizations. One of the most important tasks we provide is to talk with our current hunters, anglers, and boaters and to recruit new ones who are yet to know the thrill of the outdoors. Jenifer and Don King will work together to make sure we do just that through all the electronic and hands-on methods available."

Jenifer is widely known across the country for her efforts. She is involved in several organizations, including the Association Conservation Information (ACI), where she currently serves as president. She wants to bring her focus on the importance of the national marketing effort of R3 to her position in Tennessee. It includes recruiting more hunters, fishermen, and

boaters, keep them involved, and stress the importance of continuing to buy hunting and fishing licenses.

Prior to her position in Georgia, Jenifer served as project coordinator at Miles College in suburban Birmingham. She has also worked in retail management in the past. She holds a degree in marketing from the University of Alabama.

She has been an avid hunter and angler throughout her life. She especially enjoys deer hunting.

TWRA Launches New Smartphone App with Enhanced Features

The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency has launched a new smartphone app, "TWRA on the Go," with enhanced features to make it easier to hunt, fish, boat and enjoy wildlife.

"We are always looking for ways to make it more convenient for those who enjoy the outdoors," said Michael May, TWRA Assistant Director. "The new app makes it easy to go paperless and report your deer or turkey harvest with or without cell service."

Android users can install the new app through Google Play. IPhone users may go through the regular Apple Store.

Users will have the ability to access a copy of their current license, store multiple licenses on one phone, buy licenses, check deer or turkey with or without cell phone service, see harvest data, access Tennessee rules and regulations, use geo-locating tools to enhance the recreational experience, and determine sunrise/sunset times based on GPS location.

Users will continue to have the opportunity to use features from the previous app. The "Stay Connected Page" provides easy access to TWRA's newsroom and social media.

There is also an interactive map to find TWRA wildlife management areas (WMAs), physical check station locations and duck blind locations. The "Hunter's Backpack" is where hunter education courses, a summary of hunting seasons, and full versions of the agency hunting guides are available.

For anglers, "Fisherman's Tacklebox" includes, fish identification, interactive maps to find boat ramp and fish access information, fish attractor locations, trout stocking locations, and trout stocking schedules.

On the app's boating page, the "Boating Locker" includes boat regula-

tions, safety checklists, boating education information, navigational aids, and recommended boating equipment.

For wildlife watchers, there is information about where to view wildlife across the state.

An agreement between the Tennessee Valley Authority and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will continue to provide funding for trout production and stocking in TVA dam tailwaters and reservoirs in Tennessee and Georgia.

The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources are included in the partnership which began in 2013. The agreement provides partnership funding through fiscal year 2021.

Since the partnership began, TVA has been funding trout production by the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service at three national fish hatcheries, Dale Hollow and Erwin in Tennessee, and Chattahoochee Forest in Georgia. The trout are then provided to the tailwaters Apalachia (Hiwassee River), Blue Ridge, Boone, Cherokee, Fort Patrick Henry, Normandy, Norris, South Holston, Tims Ford, and Wilbur. Trout-stocked reservoirs include Fort Patrick Henry, South Holston, Parksville, Watauga, and Wilbur.

"Thousands of trout anglers who fish TVA tailwaters and reservoirs can celebrate the renewed commitment from TVA to continue to help fund the federal trout hatcheries," Ed Carter, TWRA Executive Director. "Without their assistance, the production of trout for 17 different fishing locations would be in jeopardy. Between the TWRA hatcheries and the two federal hatcheries, the recreational opportunities and associated economic benefits provided through these fisheries will continue. This is a prime example of how, even without a mandate, federal, state, and private partnerships can come together for the betterment of all."

The partnership provided more than 1.1 million brook, brown, lake and rainbow trout to TVA waters in 2017. More than 256,000 anglers are estimated to fish for trout in Tennessee and Georgia waters each year, spending about $73 for every $1 invested in the hatchery program, and producing an economic impact of about $45 million.

The agreement to provide funding allows fish hatcheries, like Dale Hollow located near Celina in Clay County, to continue produce trout for Tennessee tailwaters, such as the Caney Fork River.

"This partnership is critical to TWRA's management of trout fisheries," said Frank Fiss, TWRA Fisheries Division Chief. "Each year up to 80 percent of the trout stocked at TVA projects come from federal hatcheries. These fisheries include some of the best in the Southeast."

"Tennessee fishermen already enjoy fishing on TVA lakes, and this announcement means that federal fish hatcheries in Erwin, Dale Hollow, and Georgia will stay open and continue to provide Tennessee rivers and lakes with millions of fish that make our trout fishing some of the best in the country," U.S. Sen. Lamar Alexander said. "This is good news for the 900,000 Tennesseans and visitors who have fishing and hunting licenses and for the businesses that create jobs and depend on fishing in Tennessee."

The federal trout raised in Tennessee and Georgia are provided to TWRA and GADNR for stocking in the colder water of the reservoirs and tailwaters of the TVA dams. TVA has worked to improve water quality and enhance aquatic habitat by adding dissolved oxygen, foregoing hydroelectric generation and maintaining minimum water flows through its dams. However, in most of the waters the trout cannot naturally reproduce, requiring regular stocking to maintain fishable populations.

Record Black Bear Harvest Recorded During 2018 Hunting Season

Hunters harvested a record 759 black bears in 2018, breaking the previous record of 589 set in 2011. TWRA Black Bear Program Leader Dan Gibbs points toward a growing black bear population, a sparse acorn crop and good weather to account for the record setting season.

The increasing harvest trend over the last three decades indicates the bear population is growing. In 1988, hunters harvested a total of 76 black bears. That number soared to 370 in 1997 due to a sparse hard mast crop sending bears on the move making them susceptible to hunters.

When 589 bears were taken in 2011, there was a mast failure of acorns in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park forcing bears to national forests and private lands where they could be hunted. Last year's sparse acorn crop sent bears moving again resulting in a new record harvest. Monroe County hunters led the state taking 131 bears in 2018, followed by Cocke (123), Blount (93), Sevier (70) and Carter (52) rounding out the top five.

Other signs of an increasing black bear population are evident through re-colonization into their former range, including the Cumberland Plateau. As a result, TWRA created a new Bear Hunting Zone in several Cumberland Plateau counties and has seen an increase in harvest since the first archery-only season opened in 2014.

While it's hard to put an exact number on Tennessee's total bear population, it's estimated at about 7,000 animals. TWRA is conducting a black bear population study with the states of Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina and South Carolina to get a better estimate of bear numbers across the southern Appalachians.

"We are basically utilizing a mark/recapture method to identify and estimate black bear densities," says Gibbs. The study, which should be completed by next summer, involves DNA analysis of bear hair collected from study sites.

Gibbs goes on to say that while 2018's record harvest may stabilize bear numbers in certain areas, it will not stabilize the population as a whole and it will continue to grow, just at a slower rate. "Taking 759 bears out of a population of about 7,000 animals equates to approximately 11 percent of the total population," says Gibbs. "It would take a harvest of about 20 percent to stabilize the population at its current level."

Tennessee's 2019 Free Fishing Day to Be Observed June 8

The 2019 Free Fishing Day is Saturday, June 8 in Tennessee when all state residents and visitors may fish without a license.

The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency provides the free day each year in early June in hopes of increasing or rekindling an interest in fishing. Along with the opportunity to fish free, many special events are slated throughout the state on and around June 9. Additionally, June 10-14 is Free Fishing Week, when youth ages 15 or younger may fish without a license as well for the entire week.

The TWRA stocks thousands of pounds of catfish to help make Free Fishing Day events a quality experience for young anglers. For a list event updates throughout the spring, visit the TWRA website at www.tnwildlife.org. Events will be added throughout the spring.

These sisters had a successful outing at the Fairview Free Fishing event. Free Fishing events are held through the state each year

New 2019-20 Fishing Regulations Effective March 1

The 2019-20 Tennessee Fishing Guide is now available as provided by the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency. The guide features a wealth of information on fishing in Tennessee, including the regulations.

The guide may be obtained at any TWRA regional office and anywhere state hunting and fishing licenses are sold. Also, the guide is also available on TWRA's website (www.tnwildlife.org) and the TWRA app.

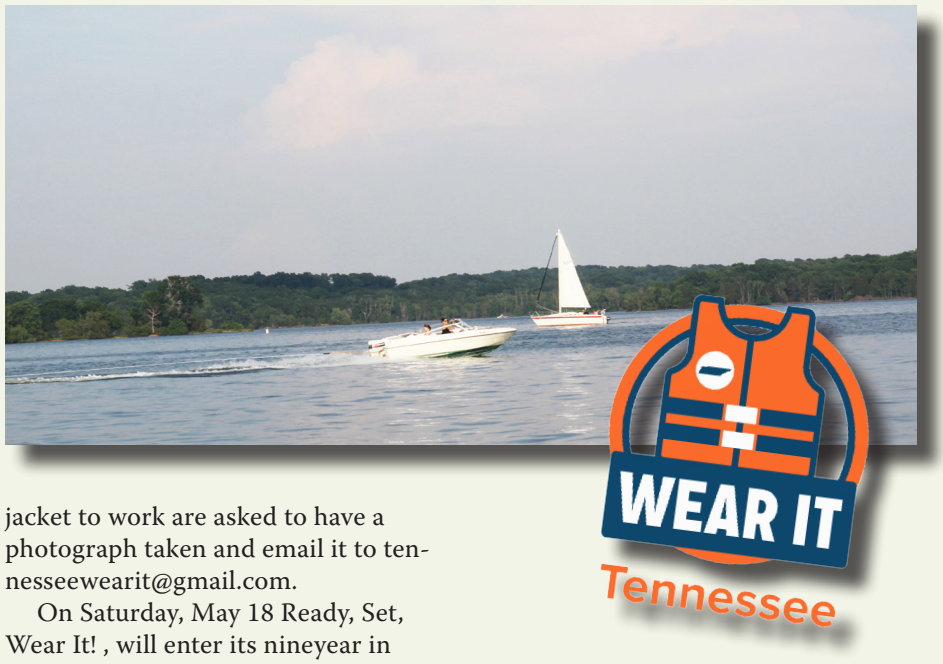
2019 National Safe Boating Week May 18-24

The 2019 National Safe Boating Week is May 18-24 and the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency will again be a participant in the annual event which promotes safe activity and the wear of life jackets as the summer boating season kicks off..

The TWRA and other organizations campaign to spread the message of safe and responsible boating. It is a time for boaters to focus on the simple and effective steps that can make any boating activity safer, for both boaters and the people around them.

The TWRA and the organizations continue to strive in their efforts in educating the boating community about life jacket wear and the options available when it comes to comfortable and lightweight life jackets.

The Wear Your Life Jacket to Work Day is Friday, May 17 with the goal of demonstrating how easy it is to wear a life jacket. Wear Your Life Jacket to Work Day is celebrated each year just prior to National Safe Boating Week. This is a fun, educational way to heighten awareness of different life jacket styles, including inflatable life jackets, and demonstrate their comfort and versatility by wearing them to work. Those who wear a life jacket to work are asked to have a photograph taken and email it to tennesseewearit@gmail.com.



On Saturday, May 18 Ready, Set, Wear It! , will enter its nineyear in trying to bring awareness on the importance of life jacket wear by holding a world record day.

The worldwide event kicks off the start of National Safe Boating Week. Participants will be part of the attempt to break a world record for the most life jackets worn at one time.

Both events help usher in National Safe Boating Week which is annually held the week prior to Memorial Day Weekend. Boating partners with the TWRA from across the United States and Canada are teaming to promote safe boating practices throughout the 2019 boating season.

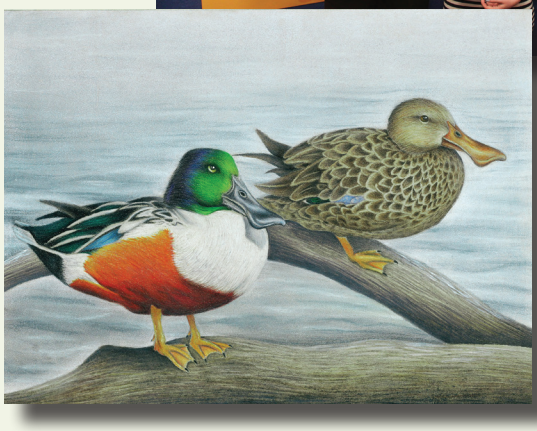
The TWRA Wear It! Boat will be back on the water during the summer. The Wear It! campaign also promotes boating safety and life jacket safety by encouraging boaters to wear life jackets.

New Collectible Waterfowl Stamp Now Available Through TWRA

The Best of Show drawing from the 2018 Tennessee Annual Junior Duck Stamp Art Contest is now a collectible waterfowl stamp.

Orders are being taken for the collectible stamp that is produced annually and sold for conservation education the through the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency.

Brienna Miller from Lafollette was honored as the 2018 state winner. As a senior at Campbell County High School, Brienna's winning artwork in pencil and pastel depicted a pair of northern shovelers. She received the Jeanette Rudy $1,000 scholarship and other prizes for her effort.



Since 1999, a collectible stamp has been created from the annual Tennessee Junior Duck Stamp program contest's Best of Show. The program is an art contest managed by the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service designed to teach the importance of conserving wetlands habitat and waterfowl to students. It pairs science, the arts, and other core subjects to creatively teach greater awareness of our natural resources.

As part of the program, students are invited to participate in an annual art competition. Creating an entry is a valuable experience. It helps students tie together lessons on animal form and function, plant science, observation, wetland habitats, and more. In the visual arts, students practice sketching, drawing, painting, and composition.

The public is invited to purchase the collectible stamp. Each state stamp is numbered and printed in full color, measuring 1 2/8 by 2 inches. In addition to this year's stamp, all previous stamps since 1999 are available.

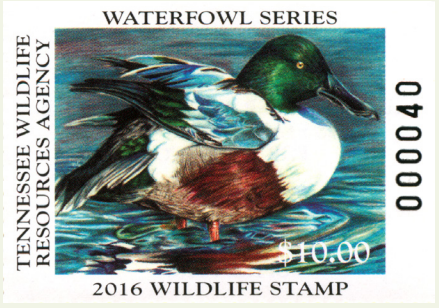
Fund from the sale of the stamp will be used for habitat improvement. Stamps are $10 each and there is a $1 processing per order and they may be ordered by completing the Wildlife Stamp order form located in the Watchable Wildlife Information under Wildlife Enthusiasts on the TWRA website at www.tnwildlife.org.

Students from across Tennessee participate each year in the contest. The TWRA The entry deadline is each March and winners are presented awards at a ceremony in the spring. (To obtain a copy of the free curriculum or for more information on the Junior Duck Stamp Program, contact the Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge at (731) 642-2091.

Winners from all 50 states compete with best-of-show winners each year. The winner of the national winners becomes the artwork used for the Federal Junior Duck Stamp each year.

The public is reminded that the State of Tennessee Waterfowl stamp is voluntary and not required to hunt. However, the Federal Duck stamp is required to hunt waterfowl in Tennessee.

The previous six Duck Stamp Art Contest winners



The Habitat Corner

Increasing Wildlife Habitat by Doing Less

Josh Tuner - Quail Forever Farm Bill Biologist

What if someone told you that you could increase wildlife habitat on your property by doing less? That sounds almost too good to be true, right? In most cases, a working farm and good wildlife habitat aren't that far apart. Think back 20-30 years when farmers and land managers didn't have GPS guided sprayers or bat-wing bushhogs, where odd corners, fence rows and ditches were just left to grow up. These unmaintained areas provided critical habitat for wildlife.

Most farmers can recall a time when quail numbers were much better than they are now. Those unmaintained areas provided the critical nesting and brooding cover for quail and turkeys, fawning cover for deer, great places to hide from predators, and food sources including browse, seeds and insects.

Today our management practices have changed. We have bigger equipment, bigger impact and we try to farm or graze every inch we can in hopes of making the farm finances work out. When we see a property with overgrown areas we think to ourselves, "They really need to clean up their property."

Most properties have unused areas that don't get planted to crops or grazed because of roadways, ditches, wet soils, poor access or other important reasons. In most cases, these areas get mowed a few times a year to keep them from becoming overgrown. Choosing not to mow or spray these areas each year can increase the quantity of available wildlife habitat. We may also want to work on the quality of the habitat. For instance, if your site only has tall fescue, this area may provide some cover but could be enhanced. Treating these areas with a grass selective herbicide could help reduce the amount of fescue and increase the abundance of beneficial forbs (broadleaf herbaceous weeds) available. Forbs (weeds) are the food source for most birds and produce good forage for deer. Another option is to plant a mix of native grasses and flowers. This can increase nesting success and fawn survival while increasing pollinator habitat. These unused areas of your property can go from very little production to unlimited habitat potential.

Now the question is, how should these areas be managed? Instead of mowing a couple times a year, only disturb these areas every 2-3 years to keep the grasses from becoming too thick for wildlife and to set back successional growth. There are several types of disturbance that can be used. Mowing, disking, herbicide or prescribed fire are all great ways to maintain these areas. Mowing should be done at a height of 8-10 inches to allow some cover to remain. Light disking can help reduce the amount of grass and increase the abundance of forbs. Prescribed fire can help set back the plant succession and reduce the amount of thatch on the ground. Only half of the unused areas of the property should be disturbed in a given year leaving the other half for cover. Disturbance should be done outside of nesting and fawning season; typically April-August. If saplings become a problem, use herbicide to treat the saplings.

Another way to find areas of your property to increase wildlife habitat is the use of precision agriculture. This allows managers to see instant yield and fertilizer requirements of their fields. By looking at the areas that you are losing money on; not planting and allowing these areas to grow up in grasses and forbs can help wildlife and save you money. In most cases, these areas are near wood lines, low wet areas in fields or areas with rocky outcrops. These areas, if allowed to grow up naturally or seeded to native plants, can create great habitat for wildlife.

Finally, cover crops are also a way to increase the organic matter in your soil, increase crop health and are great food sources for wildlife during throughout the winter.

"Helping Landowners and Wildlife Through Habitat Enhancement"

The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency has Private Lands Biologists that will assist you in developing a management plan for your property and a strategy to implement it. See www.TWRAprivatelands.org for who to contact for technical assistance and other useful information on habitat management and programs.