

Fall/Winter OUTDOOR HUNTING GUIDE

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MDC shares CWD info for upcoming deer season

Gasconade County slated for CWD sampling opening weekend of deer season

JOE JEREK
MISSOURI DEPT. CONSERVATION

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. – With deer hunting opening for archery season on Sept. 15 and firearms portions in the coming months, the Missouri Department of Conser-

vation (MDC) wants hunters, landowners, and others to know key information about chronic wasting disease, or CWD. MDC is continuing its efforts this fall and winter to limit the spread of CWD in Missouri deer by finding new cases and slowing its spread to more deer or more areas.

CWD is a deadly, infectious disease in white-tailed deer and other members of the deer family that eventually kills all animals it infects. There is no vaccine or cure. CWD is spread from deer to deer and through the environment. MDC has found 116 cases of CWD in Missouri since 2012 out of more than 100,000 deer sampled so the disease remains relatively rare in the state. Learn more at mdc.mo.gov/cwd under “CWD in Missouri.”

There have been no reported cases of CWD infecting people, but the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) strongly recommends having deer tested for CWD if harvested in an area known to have the disease. The CDC also recommends not eating meat from animals that test positive for CWD. For more information, visit mdc.mo.gov/cwd under “Human Health Risks.”

Barry, Cedar, Chariton, Christian, Crawford, Franklin, Gasconade, Hickory, Howell, Jefferson, Knox, Linn, Macon, Mercer, Oregon, Ozark, Perry, Polk, Putnam, St. Charles, St. Clair, St. Francois, Ste. Genevieve, Stone, Sullivan, Taney, Warren, and Washington. Learn more at mdc.mo.gov/cwd.

VOLUNTARY CWD SAMPLING ALL SEASON STATEWIDE

MDC is offering free voluntary CWD sampling and testing of deer harvested anywhere in Missouri throughout the entire deer hunting season (Sept. 15 through Jan. 15, 2020) at MDC regional offices during regular business hours and through participating taxidermists and meat processors within the CWD Management Zone. Get locations and more information at mdc.mo.gov/cwd under “Voluntary Sampling.”

CWD MANAGEMENT ZONE

MDC has a CWD Management Zone of counties in or near where CWD has been found. The 29 counties of the CWD Management Zone for this season are: Adair,

MANDATORY CWD SAMPLING NOV. 16 and 17

Hunters who harvest deer in any counties See **CWD** page 3B

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THE LAST time the Missouri Department of Conservation checked deer in Gasconade County was 2016 (above). Gasconade County hunters are once again required to take their harvested deer (or the head with at least six inches of neck attached) to Hermann City Park, Drake MoDOT facility or Owensville Memorial Park on Nov. 16 and 17.

CWD • from page 2B

of the CWD Management Zone during the opening weekend of the November portion of the fall firearms deer season (Nov. 16 and 17) are required to take their harvested deer (or the head with at least six inches of neck attached) on the day of harvest to one of MDC's numerous CWD sampling stations throughout the zone.

The sampling stations will be open from 7:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. The sampling stations for Gasconade County are: Hermann City Park, Drake MoDOT facility and Owensville Memorial Park.

Sampling and test results are free. Hunters who harvest deer in counties no longer part of the zone are not required to participate in sampling. Learn more at mdc.mo.gov/cwd under "Mandatory CWD Sampling," or from MDC's "2019 Fall Deer & Turkey Hunting Regulations and Information" booklet, available where permits are sold and online at huntfish.mdc.mo.gov/sites/default/files/downloads/2019FDT.pdf.

BEFORE HAVING DEER SAMPLED FOR CWD

- Field dress and Telecheck deer before arrival at a sampling station.
- Bring the carcass or just the head with at least six inches of the neck attached.
- Capes may be removed in preparation for taxidermy before going to a sampling station.
- The person who harvested the deer must be present.
- The hunter's conservation number will be required, along with specific location of harvest.
- If using a paper permit, have it detached from the deer for easy access.
- If using the MO Hunting app, have permit and Telecheck information available.
- Position deer in vehicles with heads

and necks easily accessible.

CWD TEST RESULTS

Get test results for CWD-sampled deer online at mdc.mo.gov/CWDTestResults. Results are free and will be available within four weeks after the sampling date.

CARCASS DISPOSAL

Carcasses or remains of CWD-infected deer can expose other deer to the disease. Process deer as close as possible to where harvested. Place remaining carcass parts in trash bags and properly dispose of them in the trash or a landfill. If necessary, bury or leave remains at the harvest site. Learn more at mdc.mo.gov/cwd under "Carcass Disposal."

New regulations on carcass movement and disposal will go into effect in 2020. Learn more at mdc.mo.gov/newsroom/mdc-has-new-rules-deer-carcasses-ongoing-fight-against-cwd.

FEEDING BAN IN CWD MANAGEMENT ZONE

Feeding deer or placing minerals for deer unnaturally concentrates the animals and can help spread CWD. The Wildlife Code of Missouri prohibits the placement of grain, salt products, minerals, and other consumable natural and manufactured products used to attract deer year-round within counties of the CWD Management Zone. Exceptions are feed placed within 100 feet of any residence or occupied building, feed placed in such a manner to reasonably exclude access by deer, and feed and minerals present solely as a result of normal agricultural or forest management, or crop and wildlife food production practices. The feeding ban does not apply to food plots or other agricultural practices. The feeding ban no longer applies to counties removed from the CWD Management Zone.

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View autumn foliage with MDC's fall color forecast

JILL PRITCHARD
MISSOURI DEPT. OF CONSERVATION

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — After a wet and sweltering summer, most are breathing a sigh of relief as temperatures cool down and trees begin to change color — a sure sign that fall has arrived. The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) encourages people to enjoy fall foliage through camping, driving tours, hiking, or even canoeing or floating. To help, MDC offers weekly online fall color updates from agency foresters all over the state at mdc.mo.gov/fallcolor.

“Our fall color reports not only show users where trees are beginning to turn, but even suggests the best places to see changing leaves,” said MDC Forestry Field Programs Supervisor Russell Hinnah.

Predicting fall color can be difficult, especially with the severe weather Missouri has experienced this past spring and summer.

“Weather patterns this year have been unusual,” explained Hinnah. “We’ve had lots of rain and flooding in spring and early summer, followed by some parts of the state experiencing a dry spell combined with warmer temperatures. That combination

may have stressed some trees, resulting in them dropping leaves early.”

Hinnah said chilly nights are key to leaves changing color.

“Sugars produced by photosynthesis are trapped inside leaves by the chilly autumn nights,” he explained. “Those sugars are the building blocks for the rich red, yellow, orange, and purple pigments. Cool nights cause the breakdown of green pigments, allowing the fall colors to show through.”

Missouri trees first begin changing color in the northern part of the state, then move southward across the state. Sassafras, sumac, and Virginia creeper are some of the earliest to change in mid-September. In late September, black gum, bittersweet, and dogwood are turning. The peak of fall color is usually around mid-October.

“Trees such as maples, ashes, oaks, and hickories are at the peak of their fall display by the middle of October,” noted Hinnah. “Normally by the end of the month, colors are fading and leaves are falling.”

WHERE'S THE BEST PLACE?

Missouri's fall color can be viewed and enjoyed from almost anywhere. For spec-

tacular vistas, choose routes along rivers with views of forested bluffs, and along ridges with sweeping scenes of forested landscapes.

“We encourage the public to visit MDC's conservation areas or Missouri state parks to enjoy a scenic drive,” said Hinnah.

Fall color isn't limited to trees. Prairies and roadsides display beautiful shades of gold, purple, olive, and auburn with autumn

wildflowers, shrubs, and grasses. In cities and towns, enjoy places with mature trees, such as older neighborhoods, parks, and even cemeteries.

MDC provides its annual fall color update at mdc.mo.gov/fallcolor. The weekly reports include what kinds of trees are turning and suggestions on the best places to view them. The updates run through November.

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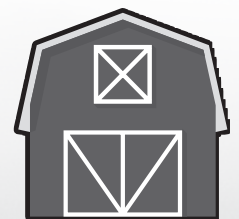
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Owensville High School FFA trap team

James Bruckerhoff (photo left) shows off his hat full of holes. It is a tradition to shoot that students are allowed to shoot their hat after they hit 25 clay birds in a row. Lining up after a successful shooting match in Hermann are (from left) Connor Lang, Wesley Kandlbinder, Justin Roethemeyer, Mackenzie Madonna, and Bruckerhoff.

PHOTOS SUBMITTED

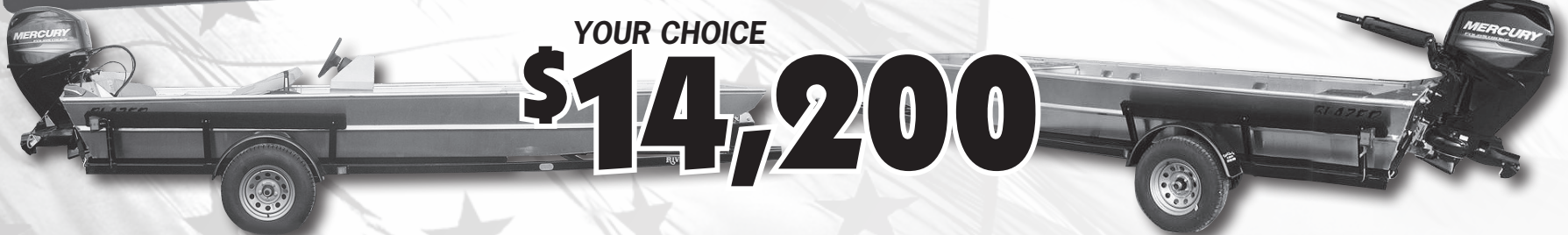
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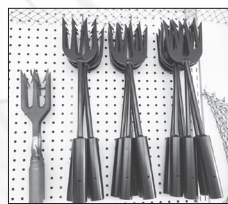
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Quail coveys are calling, biologists are counting

CANDICE DAVIS
MISSOURI DEPT. OF CONSERVATION

CAPE GIRARDEAU, Mo. – Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) wildlife biologists are spending time in the field tuning their ear to the sound of quail coveys. A group of quail is called a covey. Quail form their coveys, as few as five birds to as many as 50, in late summer and stay together through the fall and winter. By listening to the calls, biologists can estimate the quail population in a particular area.

“If you think you’ve got quail on your land, now’s the time to know for sure,” said Kara McSpadden, a MDC private land conservationist. “Step outside about thirty minutes before sunrise and if they’re there, you’ll hear them calling to other coveys.”

MDC monitors quail populations on both conservation areas and on private ground in quail restoration landscapes throughout the state. One reason to monitor is to see if concentrated conservation efforts are making a difference. Also, having population trends on quail and any bird species over long periods of time gives biologists insight on how the species is doing in Missouri. McSpadden said the population surveys

are used to set hunting limits and estimate hunting prospects on conservation areas. MDC takes the data from fall covey counts on conservation areas and private lands across the state to analyze population trends over time. Biologists can see where efforts are making a difference and where they may need to redirect funding and staff time to a better use.

“When I hear multiple coveys calling on a survey site just before daybreak, it gives me hope,” she said. “Hearing a healthy population of calling quail tells me that hours of conversations with landowners and



GOOD HABITAT management practices are key to keeping bobwhite quail populations healthy. Photo by MDC Staff, courtesy Missouri Department of Conservation.

all the behind the scenes work we’ve done together to sign up for cost-share programs are all worth it.”

Quail, like most grassland birds are on the decline nationwide, she said, adding that she hopes landowners are considering areas on their land where wildlife and native plant species can continue to exist.

“If you only own a yard or a patio, you may not be able to manage for quail, but growing native plants will truly help our native songbirds and pollinators that are also on the decline,” she said. “If you wish to get involved, there are several organizations

working to restore grassland bird habitat in Missouri including Quail Forever, the Audubon Society and the Missouri Prairie Foundation.”

McSpadden said as landowners get out to evaluate their resident quail, it’s helpful to know that it’s much easier to hear quail than to see quail. For their habitat, quail need plenty of areas that one might call ‘brushy and weedy’, she said, adding that she often asks landowners, “Do you have brushy and weedy areas on your property, or is your overall property neat and clean?”

Most of the time, areas that are neat and clean to the human eye are void of wildlife. Though quail are a “grassland” bird, grass is a bit of a misnomer.

“Missouri’s traditional grasslands would have been dominated by a diverse mix of broadleaf plants like ragweed and wildflowers, with patches of shrubs like blackberries,” McSpadden said.

However, if your land looks neat and clean, void of native Missouri grasses or wildflowers, there’s always time to turn some of it back to traditional habitat, McSpadden encouraged.

See **Quail** page 11B

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OHS Hunting and Fishing club

Members of the OHS Hunting and Fishing club traveled last spring to Maramec Springs for some trout fishing. Included on the trip were (above from left) Sam Sellers, Paul Jahnsen, Hunter Engelbrecht and Nathan Abel. Tyler perkins (right) shows off a largemouth bass he caught after school last October at a local farm pond. Michael Steinbeck (below) holds a rainbow trout from the trip to Maramec Springs.

PHOTOS SUBMITTED



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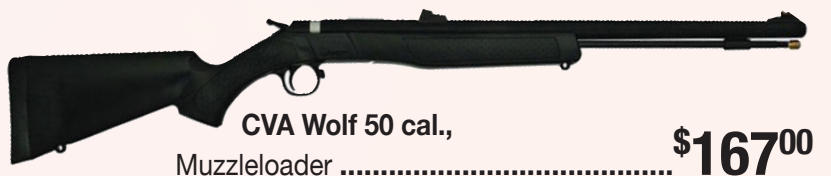
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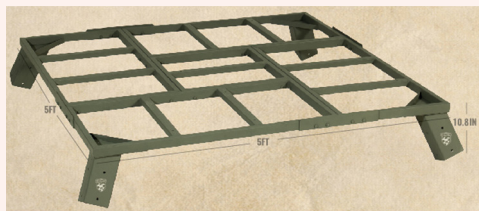
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Fall Outdoors

WED., OCT. 30, 2019 ■ PAGE 8B

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DRIFTWOOD OUTDOORS

River bottom deer drives are effective



by **BRANDON BUTLER**

River bottoms hold whitetails, especially in agricultural lands. Once the crops come down, whitetails flock to the cover of river bottoms during daylight hours to bed and browse. There might not be a more effective way for a couple of hunters to tag a buck during daylight hours than conducting a two man river bottom deer drive.

River bottoms are typically long, narrow strips of cover sandwiched between wide-open space and water. These woodland or brushy strips serve as key bedding areas. When deer are bumped or pushed in a river bottom, they'll usually try to remain within the cover to avoid exposing themselves by running across open ground or swimming the river. This makes river bottoms especially productive locations for pushing deer in the direction you want them to move.

An ideal location is a relatively rectangular strip of cover no more than a couple of hundred yards wide with a river on one side too large for deer to easily cross and a large expanse of open space, like a picked agricultural field or large pasture on the other. It

See **River bottom** page 9B

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River bottom • from page 8B

really doesn't matter how long the strip of cover is, because you can break it up into manageable sections. You can start the driver at any point, and he'll push the woods towards the stander.

Since you expect the deer to stay in the cover, river bottom drives are one of the more effective ways for bowhunters to conduct a deer drive. To up the odds of pushing deer within bow range, select strips of cover to drive that are relatively narrow. With adequate shooting lanes, a bowhunter on stand should be able to cover a strip of timber 100-yards wide.

To set up for the drive, first drop your stander off where they intend to stay on stand. Then the driver goes back to where he plans to begin the push. Once the driver reaches the stander, assuming the drive didn't produce, you can repeat the process. This also makes it simple for switching up drivers and standers.

During the drive, you want the wind at the back of the driver. Ideally, the scent of the driver will push the deer towards the stander without ever actually seeing the driver. You don't want to spook the deer into a panic that causes a full speed run. You want the deer moving slow when they reach the stander.

The driver should slowly but steadily move through the cover towards the stander. Avoid walking in a straight line and stay of well-worn trails. Deer don't bed right next to the most heavily used trails. They'll be in

the thick briar tangles, next to large blown down trees and on top of any little rise that gives them a better view. Just proceed with a nice slow, steady zig-zag pattern through the cover, making sure to stop and stand still every few minutes. While you're moving, many deer will hold tight to cover hoping you pass right on by without noticing them. But their nerves will likely get the best of them if you stop. That's when they'll bolt.

Since most river bottoms are typically flat and the deer will be coming towards the stander from the direction of the driver, it is of the utmost importance that no firearms are fired back towards the driver. The stander must wait for the deer to clear them or be beyond them before shooting.

Using portable treestands to elevate the stander affords a greater view, allowing the stander to see more deer. Use portable stands that set up and come down quickly. Climbing stands often work well in river bottoms where oaks, cottonwoods and other trees with few low limbs are found.

Hanging out at camp or taking a nap during the mid-day might be nice, but if you really want to punch your tag, a river bottom deer drive is a productive way to take a midday buck.

See you down the trail...

For more Driftwood Outdoors, check out the podcast on www.driftwoodoutdoors.com or anywhere podcasts are streamed.

Firearm Safety



With fall firearms season approaching, now is an ideal time to spend some time with your hunting weapons at the rifle range getting reacquainted with them.

Now is also the appropriate time to stress firearm safety and range etiquette. When handling firearms always remember the

10 Commandments of Gun Safety:

1. Always keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction.
2. Firearms should be unloaded when not in use.
3. Don't rely on your guns "safety". Treat every gun as though it can fire at any time, regardless of pressure on the trigger.
4. Be sure of your target and what is beyond it.
5. Always used correct ammunition.
6. If your gun fails to fire when the trigger is pulled, handle with care.
7. Always wear eye and ear protection when shooting.
8. Be sure the barrel is clear of obstructions before shooting.
9. Don't alter or modify your gun. Have it serviced regularly by a qualified gunsmith.
10. Learn the mechanical and handling characteristics of the firearm you are using before going afield with it. Not all guns are the same.

SHOOTING EVENTS INCLUDE:

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Application for Membership OWENSVILLE GUN CLUB

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Cost of membership is \$70 (\$50 membership fee and \$20 annual maintenance fee, due each Feb.). To join fill out the form below with check payable to Owensville Gun Club and mail to Owensville Gun Club, P.O. Box 518, Owensville, MO 65066.

I certify by signature that I am at least 18 years of age, and that I can legally own, and or possess firearms as specified in all Federal, State and Local Laws. I Further agree to abide by all club bylaws and range rules.

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OUTDOORS IN THE OZARKS

If Boone had only had a drone or a trail camera

If you know how to work a trail cam, you can start feeding deer corn in late September and see what bucks are using the area, and when they are passing through. Today's trophy hunters know all about that. Those are the people who start giving you antler numbers which tell you what buck is a trophy and what isn't. Even some of my close friends do that, and it is revolting to me, perhaps because of the way my dad raised me. He told me often that when a man hunts or fishes he should never look at a wild creature as a trophy.

Dad said that all living things we hunt or catch should be considered valuable as a creation of God. If it doesn't serve a purpose as such it should not be killed. Of course when I first started observing the ritual of deer hunting back in the 1950's deer hunting had not been allowed for several decades. But those old outdoorsmen who came in Dad's pool hall knew how to find and hunt bucks. No one would think of killing a doe!! Old Bill Stalder and Old Jim Splechter didn't hunt bucks only because they were wanting trophies, they were wanting to leave does to raise all the fawns they could.

Antlers were nailed to the barn or shed back then, the hides were tanned and used and every ounce of meat went on the table during the upcoming winter. Back then, no one was keeping records and no antlers were valuable, no matter what size they were. I remember talking to a city hunter just a few years back who told me how the Missouri Department of Conservation had "brought back the deer and turkey."

I told him the MDC had never stocked one deer or one turkey, and I know because I was there. It was the biologists, (who never called themselves that) of the Missouri Conservation Commission who did that. They started stocking whitetail deer well before I was born, and the men who started it and carried it out are forgotten people, most of them dead many years. Today's deer hunters owe them a debt of gratitude, but their names are long forgotten.

By 1960 they were still stocking wild turkey, and as a 12-year-old boy, I remember seeing some of that as they were stocked on the Big Piney and on a local landowner's forested land. The landowner who worked with those MCC people was Nolan Hutcheson. Landowners like Nolan made it happen and they respected the Missouri Conservation Commission and what

they were doing.

Today there are lots and lots of really big, measurable "Trophy Bucks" in the Ozarks and those game cameras and modern tree stands make them much, much easier to kill than those that Ol' Bill and Ol' Jim took every fall. Now we have another device that makes it even easier.



by **LARRY DABLEMONT**

I have a good friend from Wisconsin by the name of Al Narveson who hunted deer with a bow in cornfields where the corn was still standing. He told me once that big bucks in September would get in the middle of those cornfields and bed down in the afternoon and he would sneak down the rows with his bow, into the wind, and often walk right up on them. It took lots of walking but he killed a lot of bucks that way.

Today all that is simplified by using drones to fly over the corn and film what is in it. You can pinpoint bucks that way, then sneak up on them. I don't know if any Ozark hunters do that yet, but it is coming. Drones will make late-season hunting, after the leaves are gone, so much easier... especially with a skiff of snow. Bedded down deer in thickets will show up like an unpeeled potato in a platter of gravy. And you can figure out just how a buck will "score" and how to go after him. A Boone and Crockett set of antlers could be yours with such a drone. Knowing what kind of men Davy Crockett and Daniel Boone were, I'll bet they'd raise heck with their names being associated with many of the 'trophy hunters' of today.

I have killed my share of the kind of bucks those kind of hunters want. I have long known that I could go up to northern



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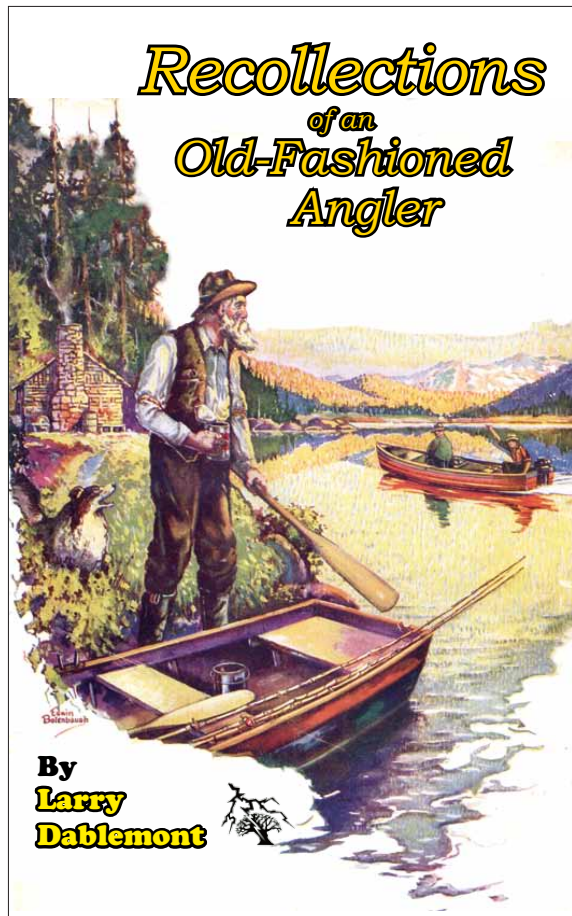
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Dablemont • from page 10B

Manitoba and take antlers in a habitat where no trees grow higher than 15 feet. There are bucks there like no one in the Ozarks has seen. What a hunting device a drone would be there. But when I am there the deer just do not interest me as much as the incoming ducks and geese.

I will hunt no more deer. I will hunt ducks while the woods is filled with blaze orange. Part of that is because I know a lot about the TSE disease spreading through deer herds. But too, sitting in a deer stand for hours and then working your butt off to dress and drag out a buck gets old as I get old. I would never ever take a deer to a processing plant, so I spend most of an afternoon cutting one up and grinding up what won't make steaks.

Deer season sometimes kept me from some great fishing in past years, or from pheasant hunts back in the days when southern Iowa still had some cover and some birds; and as to watching deer, or killing one, I can do that a hundred yards behind my house. I can tell you this; nothing in the woods in mid-November can compare to the sight of mallards on cupped wings over a block of decoys.

Finally I have finished the book I have worked on for so many years, entitled, "Recollections of an Old-Fashioned Angler." It is being printed this week. I am numbering and signing the first 100 of those books to come off the press, and will inscribe one to you if you'd like. The book is 40 chapters, 288 pages and dozens and dozens of old photos. To get your copy, call 417-777-5227 or email me at lightninridge47@gmail.com Write to me at Box 22, Bolivar, Mo. 65613 You can see the front and back covers of the book on your computer at larrydablemontoutdoors.com.

Quail • from page 6B

"Good quality habitat takes management, but you don't have to be a rocket scientist to manage for quail," she said. "You just need to first have or create those brushy and weedy areas on your property, then you can either burn or disk them every two to three years."

For cattle farmers, converting just ten percent of pasture to native warm season grasses and allowing patches of brush to grow will help quail. For most landowners in Missouri, a reduction of mowing and bush hogging will do tremendous things for wildlife habitat.

McSpadden said there are several conservation areas where people can see or hear quail and get a look at what quail habitat looks like, including Crowley's Ridge Conservation Area (CA), Maintz CA and Sand Prairie CA. Landowners can also learn habitat management techniques and find a private land conservationist to work with at www.mdc.mo.gov/property. Information on quail in Missouri can be found in MDC's on-line field guide at <https://nature.mdc.mo.gov/discover-nature/field-guide/northern-bobwhite-bobwhite-quail>.

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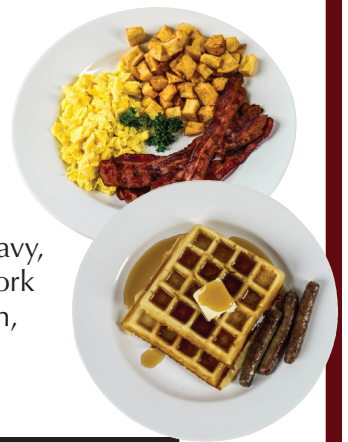


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