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# NJ FEDERATED SPORTSMEN NEWS



Assoc. of Field Trial Clubs of NJ - NJ Bass Federation - Jersey Coast Anglers Assoc. - NJ Beach Buggy Assoc. - NJ Chap. of Nat. Wild Turkey Fed. - NJ Ducks Unlimited - NJ State Council Trout Unlimited - NJ Trappers Assoc. - NJ Waterfowlers Assoc. - United Bow Hunters of NJ

## How to Wade a River

by Vin T. Sparano

Trout fishermen love to wade pristine streams or rivers, casting flies to deep pools and undercut banks. As we get older, however, wading becomes more difficult.

I can recall a situation years ago that got me into a little trouble. I entered a stream at an easy access point and started to wade downstream. It was a beautiful day and I was catching trout. I guess I waded a couple of hundred yards when I suddenly realized that I couldn't climb out of the stream. The banks were just too high. I now had to wade back upstream in crotch-deep water against the current. When I was finally able to climb out of that stream, I was totally exhausted. If I'd fallen or lost my balance in the current, I could have been in real trouble.

Wading looks easy, but it can turn into a dangerous situation if you are swept off your feet in a swift current. This is especially true for us senior fishermen. Fortunately, the rules for safe wading are simple.

First, never take a step in any direction unless your rear or anchor foot is firmly planted. Next, slide your foot forward until it is secure. When your lead foot is firmly planted, then slide your anchor foot ahead. Never try to wade by lifting your feet. If sufficiently strong (and it often is), the current will swing your leg out from under you and throw you off balance. Avoid wading big, wide stretches of river. It is safer to wade from pool to pool, taking advantage of the slower current to rest.

Losing your balance in a fast current can be frightening, but you can always use your fishing rod to keep from going down in the current. When you feel yourself falling, lower your fishing rod into the river and push it underwater. Its buoyancy will often be enough to help you regain your balance. (Don't worry; you won't break your rod. I've used my Orvis fly rod many times to regain my balance and it's still in one piece.)

If you should fall, don't panic. Always wear a wader belt. The belt will trap air in your waders and help keep you afloat. In fact, I would never wade in any water without a belt. A wading belt can literally be a lifesaver in any stream. This rule also applies, by the way, to waterfowl hunters.

If you fall, always ride downstream feet first until you can grab a rock or branch and get yourself back on your feet. Never ride the current headfirst, to avoid the danger of striking your head. Make the current work for you. Use your arms and pick a course toward shore and safe ground.

see Wading, p. 7

## Spinnerbaits in the Chop

by Bruce Edward Litton

Many years ago, my son and I began fishing Lake Musconetcong to make amazing summer topwater catches. Before the ruination of the lake in 2010 with chemical weed killer to reduce water chestnuts, turning clear water into a turbid mess, we also experienced great post-spawn action in May. Weeds not fully grown allowed us to retrieve spinnerbaits near the surface, and the reactions of both bass and pickerel were startling.

Virtually any lake, pond, or reservoir in New Jersey with largemouths and/or pickerel offers the same sort of action before summer doldrums set in.

Largemouths typically spawn in May. Pickerel, on the other hand, usually spawn early in April, without bedding, but we find that in May through early June, both species behave aggressively with water temperatures optimal for feeding.

Combined sunlight and wind create surface chop, scattering sunlight in shallows of about five to 12 feet deep, stirring subaquatic environment and riling predators and prey. We usually think of cloudy conditions as best, but will take advantage of this exception. Clear water allows full play of the sun's rays and accentuates the allure of a beckoning spinnerbait blade.

Here's how this works. Light below the surface chop gets scattered at myriad angles, and a blade in turn reflects these at a faster rate than the surface chop does. Watch a Colorado blade turn and flicker in clear water; you will see the rapid broken effect of pulsating light. Try reflecting scattered light rays with a hammered blade, and you get an even crazier effect than with a smooth finish. Bass and pickerel see a beacon amidst the relatively slow-pulsing chaos of light and shadow. Shallows activated by chop commotion set forage fish and their foes alike on the move, fishes' lateral line sensory organs registering the disturbance chaotically, but fish also see the shifting shadow and light, sort of like a constant illusion of baitfish fleeing that they can't target, while baitfish themselves tend to blend in and escape direct detection. Not that spinning blade.

## The Benefits of Balsa

by Pete Robbins

Lure manufacturers have made great strides in producing plastic crankbaits that mimic the best characteristics of buoyant wooden lures, but when money's on the line, many top anglers still depend on hand-crafted balsa baits to get the job done.

The benefits of balsa were first introduced to an American fishing audience in 1962, when Life magazine wrote about the Rapala minnow, deeming it "the lure fish can't pass up." Later that decade, Fred Young's "Big O" crankbait, the first so-called "alphabet bait," became all the rage. It was a shallow-diving crankbait that could be run through heavy cover like a four-wheel-drive vehicle, with the balsa construction contributing to its valued



deflection characteristics. Over time, though, more and more lures came to be made of plastic. The material is more durable, less expensive, and less likely to be subject to fluctuations in availability, and while over time the materials' differences in performance have been narrowed, a well-made balsa plug still has certain advantages. Whereas plastic square bills are likely to run consistently, some balsa lures have what is known as a "hunting" action whereby the lure veers off unpredictably to the side before eventually tracking back to center. Often it is these kick-outs that trigger strikes.

Accordingly, eight-time Bassmaster Classic qualifier Bill Lowen often still depends on balsa baits made by PH Custom Lures of Indiana, and Arkansas pro Kevin Short used balsa baits from

Shore-bound anglers have plenty of springtime opportunity for good-sized bass on a spinnerbait. Bruce Litton photo.

sive shallows of five feet or so allow the widest range of water coverage, since you don't have to wait for the lure to sink. And the deeper the fish, the less surface chop means anything to them.

Weedy shallows call for large Colorado blades with the most lift, producing more vibration and light reflection and sending a loud message through the commotion. Willowleaf blades work best in calm water. Keep the skirts in good condition, flexible and ready to dance. They need to wriggle and pulsate, just as any plastic trailer should have a vibrating paddle, twister, or tandem twisters. The lure doesn't merely conform to churning shallows but stands out. A clatter-

ing, light-reflecting, wriggling wrangle of madness coming the way of bass and pickerel can provoke aggressive reactions, and the hits are often wrenching.

Especially for bass, a spinnerbait doesn't always fit the usual bright colors/bright light rule of a sunny day, but bass do seem to be more color selective than pickerel. I like to use black on sunny, windy days in clear water. The recesses of weeds and bottom appear dark enough. Black suggests something trying to hide in them or against the mud. In any event, black is often productive, and when mixed with yellow or chartreuse, can be even better. In one case I recall, white was com-

see Spinnerbaits, p.11

WEC (carved by Zoom Lures founder Ed Chambers) for the majority of the bass he caught in five Bassmaster wins. Balsa's quickness of action, buoyancy, and fast deflection rate means that it's less likely to snag than plastic, and on many occasions will trigger more strikes.

Lowen utilizes both the balsa baits and his signature plastic Square Bill from Ima Lures in similar situations, noting that plastic can also do some things that balsa can't. For example, if he's dredging gnarly riprap, a balsa bait will get torn up more quickly. They're simply not as durable. Also, if you're fishing around vegetation, you can't simply slap a balsa lure against the water to get the grass off of it - it'll often break. Finally, particularly with flat-sided lures and topwaters, balsa baits are typically lighter than their plastic counterparts, meaning that in a heavy wind you'll have less control over where you cast them. Sometimes that mandates a wind-

see Balsa, p. 11



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Is your club holding a special event? Celebrating a landmark anniversary? Let the rest of the Federation know! Send your news to the Editor of this paper (contact information on this page).

**Memberships Available**  
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**County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs Information Directory**

County	Meeting Date & Time	Location	Contact	Phone Number
Atlantic	2nd Thursday of month, 8:00 PM except July and August	Germania Gun Club Moss Mill Rd., Egg Harbor, NJ	Eric Gaupp	609-513-8542
Bergen	1st Thursday of month, 8:00 PM except July and August	Fairlawn Athletic Club 14 Parmaless Avenue, Fairlawn, NJ	Frank Dara	973-523-2640
Burlington	2nd Thursday of month, 7:30 PM except July and August	The American Legion 39 Pemberton-Julistown Rd., Pemberton, NJ	Bill Schultz	856-235-3344
Camden	3rd Wednesday of month, 7:30 PM except July and August	Square Circle Sportsmen Club 97 Clementon Rd., Gibbsboro, NJ	Bill Schemel	856-931-5009
Cape May	<i>(please call for up-to-date information)</i>		Ken McDermott III	609-412-3811
Cumberland	2nd Thursday of month, 7:30 PM except July and August	Menantico Gun Club Union Rd., Maurice River Twp., NJ	Ken Whildin	856-785-8062
Essex	2nd Thursday of month, 8:15 PM except July and August	Bloomfield Civic Center 84 Broad St., Bloomfield, NJ	Carmine Minichini	908-964-5713
Gloucester	2nd Tuesday of month, 7:45 PM except July and August	George Ruch Building 14 St. and Highland Ave., Williamstown, NJ	Thomas Weeast	609-313-7727
Hunterdon	2nd Thursday of month, 8:00 PM	Northern Region Office of Fish & Wildlife, Clinton WMA, 26 RT 173 W, Hampton, NJ	Loren Robinson	908-782-1076
Mercer	3rd Monday of month, 7:00 PM except July and August	Sportsmen's Center US Highway 130 N., Bordentown, NJ	Rick Moore	609-882-2202
Middlesex	1st Wednesday of month, 7:30 PM except July and August	Polish American Citizen's Club 66 Adirondack Ave., Spotswood, NJ	John Messeroll	732-828-8543
Monmouth	4th Wednesday of month, 7:30 PM except July and August	4 F's Gun Club Burke Rd, Freehold, NJ	Ken Ganson	732-566-0841
Morris	1st Tuesday of month, 8:00 PM	Dover Fire Department 37 North Sussex Street, Dover, NJ	John Rogalo	973-570-2359
Ocean	3rd Wednesday of month, 7:00 PM except July and August	Jamesburg Field and Stream 1131 Route 70, Whiting, NJ	Larry Cella	908-839-0193
Passaic	Last Monday of month, 7:30 PM except June and July	The Wayne Civic Center, Room 3 1006 Hamburg Tpk., Wayne, NJ	Richard Weber	973-697-1814
Salem	1st Tuesday of month, 7:00 PM except July and August	Salem County Sportsmen's Club 273 Wiley Road, Carneys Point, NJ 08069	Dave Cesarano	856-223-0409
Somerset	2nd Wednesday of month, 8:00 PM except July and August	Somerset Fish & Game Protective Assoc. 445 Milltown Rd., Bridgewater, NJ 08807	Dave MacCready	732-221-9611
Sussex	2nd Wednesday of month, 8:00 PM	Sparta Ambulance Building 14 Sparta Ave., Sparta, NJ	Dick Strobel	973-697-3989
Union	1st Monday of month, 8:00 PM except July and August	Union County Engineering Building, 1st Floor 2335 South Avenue, Scotch Plains, NJ	Ray Szpond	908-403-5798
Warren	1st Wednesday of month, 7:30 PM except July and August	Pequest Trout Hatchery RT 46, Liberty Twp, NJ	Tony Wonsala	908-879-6321

# AT THE OUTSET:

## This One Grabbed – and Kept – My Attention



Tim C. Smith photo

This particular column has its genesis in an email that I received at the end of March. As any “advocacy” writer or editor well knows, the mailbox – both physical and digital – is generally crammed with all manner of promotional stuff from this or that company. New product, new program, new incentive, new marketing manager... they all want some attention, and most important, they all want some free ink.

I don’t blame them in the least. They’re all doing their jobs, and in fact the partnerships and relationships that we build with these folks has always been of great value on both sides.

This one in particular was a bit different. “I wanted to send you this video we just released highlighting Blaser’s newest shotgun, the F16 in all its glory,” wrote the company representative. “The video is a cinematic masterpiece – nothing like this has been done before in the clays world. I thought your readers might enjoy the video and learning more about the F16.”

Uh, another promo that they want me to watch, was my initial thought. Well, I figured I’d give it a try. One never knows when one will see something truly worthwhile, and at the very least if or when I speak with this guy again I need to have some talking points on it.

Now, understand that in today’s world of the Internet, YouTube, email, and the like, all of us have so many sources of, well, stuff vying and screaming for our attention, that most of us have kind of lost patience. Translation: If that piece of promotional footage, YouTube video, or what have you doesn’t grab me within less than

a minute (yes, I’m talking 60 seconds, and in truth it may really be substantially less than that), it isn’t going to be playing on my computer screen long at all.

I was well aware of this as I typed in the link that the Blaser guy provided for me, and I actually remember thinking, I hope I can give it at least a few minutes of viewing before I turn it off.

Link typed; click. It began. And started with a bang. Literally. Not too bad, I thought; I’ll give it a few more seconds to see what happens. And it continued, unfolding masterfully. Huh, I mused, well I can always end it when it gets dull or trite.

It didn’t. It was compelling and beautiful. Not only did I watch it to the end (and it isn’t all that long, for that matter), it’s set up on that website so that it continues to loop, and I found myself watching it a second time as well.

Almost despite myself, I went to the information link that the guy had provided, and I looked some more into the shotgun. I didn’t spend much time reading about its specs; after all, there’s no shortage of quality and good-looking shotguns on the market these days. But I did find myself admiring the photos of the gun, and – dare I say it – also found myself yearning for a field trial of the thing.

Any of you who may be interested, check it out at [www.BlaserF16.com](http://www.BlaserF16.com). Good job, Blaser guys.

Oliver Shapiro, Editor

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



### Middlesex County Federation Minutes

Dear Oliver,

The regular meeting of the Middlesex County Federation was called to order on April 6 at 7:40 pm by President Jeff Wren.

The minutes were approved as distributed.

Treasurer’s report was accepted as read.

The State Federation sent an invitation to Lieutenant Governor Kim Guadagno for this year’s banquet.

People have begun signing up for the Governors Surf Tournament which will be held on May 15 at Island Beach State Park.

It was reported that 30% of New Jersey’s population owns firearms.

Studies show that more NJ couples are hunting together than ever before.

197 coyotes were harvested this year with the majority coming from trappers.

The division is looking into a possible increase in the pheasant stamp.

Setting regulations for the use of trail cameras and drones for hunting is being talked about.

No complete figures were given of what it costs to operate the pheasant farm yearly as of this date.

The state convention will be held on April 15 and 16 at the Sheraton Hotel and the agenda has been set and programs are being finished.

Reports on striped bass are positive this year with many fish being caught early in the season.

The future archery park was discussed. Membership had concerns on how and with who would staff this park, the cost of running the park, and if this was even a fiscally sound project at this time.

Trout season opens April 9. There was discussion that improvements to the Pequest Hatchery have been currently put on hold.

The recommendations that came from UBNJ, of getting rid of earn-a-buck and closing the hunting season earlier for deer because of the decline in deer numbers, was discussed.

**Old Business.** All Middlesex County Federation officers were reelected for another term.

**New Business.** Green sheets were distributed to members and members were told to fill them out and return them at the next meeting.

A bill that was introduced to ban the importation of certain species of animal’s hides, horns, and parts into NJ was discussed. Some of these animals could include certain African game, grizzly bears, and mountain lions.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Ed Karecki, Sr.  
Spotswood, NJ

### Comments on Gun Laws

Dear Oliver,

Whenever a politician deserves to be condemned, I get right on it. I have to be ready also to commend a politician when they do the right thing.

When I read about the plight of Sgt. Raymond Charles Hughes on the NRA website, I couldn’t stay silent. Sergeant Hughes, who works at a prison in Philadelphia, drove over the Delaware Bridge into NJ. He was involved in a seri-

ous car accident. When the police arrived on the scene, the officer saw the Pennsylvania FOP bumper stickers and other identifying insignia that he was a police officer from Pennsylvania. The officer asked him if he had his service revolver with him. Sgt. Hughes replied that he did have it. The sergeant was sent to the hospital.

While he was in there getting the medical attention he needed, he was served a citation charging him with a second degree felony, unlawful possession of a firearm.

I had to write to my senator and both assemblymen regarding how ridiculous NJ gun laws are. I told them about the plight of Sgt. Hughes, and last year’s arrest of an 84-year-old man who was a gun collector and arrested for the possession of a 17th century pistol he’d recently bought at an auction, and last year’s plight of Shaneen Allen, a Philadelphia mom who had an CCW permit from Pennsylvania, was arrested, and put through our criminal justice system and lost her job, her home, and who knows how much money.

I demanded our politicians sign a national firearms reciprocity act, which will make NJ recognize the firearms owner’s permits from other states, just like we recognize the driver’s licenses of other states.

The only one of my political representatives that has gotten back to me was Assemblyman Ron Dancer. He wrote back stating three bills he is sponsoring: A3385 (provides courts with sentencing discretion for certain convictions concerning possession of a firearm), A3221 (revises definition of "antique firearm" to include handguns), and A2732 (requires State to recognize permits to carry handguns issued to certain New Jersey residents by other states).

According to that last one, if enacted, “Any person who holds a valid permit to carry a handgun issued by this State pursuant to this section, or a valid permit to carry a handgun issued by 11 another state and recognized by this State, pursuant to

[appropriate section] shall be authorized to carry a handgun in all parts of this State.”

I called Assemblyman Dancer’s office and thanked him for his prompt reply, and added he was the only one of my representatives who got back to me.

Charles Breitweiser  
Old Bridge, NJ

### Big Trout Breaks Knee Deep Club Record

Dear Oliver,

The Knee Deep Club brown trout record was broken this month.

Alan Tuorinsky of Mount Arlington, NJ caught a 28-inch, 12-pound, 9-ounce brown trout off the Mount Arlington pier on Monday April 11, 2016. He caught it with a 6-foot ultralight rod spooled with 6-pound-test line, using a #3 Krocodile.

Another fisherman caught a 35-pound, 49-inch musky which was weighed in at Dow’s Boat Rental.

This spring has been the best early fishing on Lake Hopatcong in years, the lake has been "alive" since we had ice out.

The Knee Deep Club stocked about 1300 trout on Sunday April 10, 2016; 70 were 2.5-3.5 pounds, 19 - 21 inches to celebrate the 70th year of the Knee Deep Club history.

Rich Everett  
via email



# Op-Ed: Report on Sandy Hook Bay Natural Marine Sanctuary

by John Toth

On behalf of various outdoors organizations including the Jersey Coast Anglers Association (JCAA), I attended a presentation given by Mr. Rik van Hemmen who is proposing to implement a Sandy Hook Bay Natural Marine Sanctuary. It would stretch roughly from Sandy Hook to the Earle Naval pier, and to parts of the Navesink and the Shrewsbury rivers. This presentation was given at the Red Bank library at 7:00 pm on March 16 and it was attended by approximately 200-250 angry recreational anglers, commercial fishermen, oyster harvesters, clambers, and waterfowlers. Only about 60 could fit in the conference room and the rest waited outside the library. This turnout was due to the threat that this sanctuary would have on one of our most productive fishing grounds for both recreational and commercial anglers.

Mr. Hemmen started his presentation by showing us a bunch of pictures of this area with boats and birds, but nothing concrete about why it should be a sanctuary. He did not stress any positive results we would expect to receive by having this sanctuary. He seems to love the area in question, but is oblivious to the repercussions that would result by turning it into a sanctuary.

In fact, Mr. Dan Ferrigno, a former and retired staff member of our NJ DEP with 30 years of experience, remarked that the sanctuaries we now have around our



Map courtesy google.com/maps.

country (about five of them) all end up with tough restrictions on fishing, boating, and jet skis, and diminish the enjoyment people should receive by having them. Others in the audience voiced over and over again that this sanctuary status would lead to more fishing restrictions and that we do not need more regulations! Hemmen responded that he is not trying to impose these regulations, but he seemed oblivious to this major concern voiced by

the audience.

When one person asked why he is doing this, incredibly he responded at length that he was a Boy Scout leader and always picked up trash. Audience members volunteered to pick up trash in the rivers, and the discussion strangely turned to trash pickup!

One audience member said "this juice is not worth the squeeze" and walked out of the room in disgust. Obviously,

Hemmen did not expect, or did not know how to respond to, this question, and strangely came up with the trash issue.

One person told him that he lives by the affected area and that the waters are more clean than they have ever been and have more fish and that he did not see a need for this sanctuary, but Hemmen just blew off this remark.

Building on this lack of need for a sanctuary, I remarked that "you obviously love the sanctuary concept to keep things the way they are for you, but you have not made a case why we should have it."

He responded that "we will have more fish." One person yelled out, "do you have the data to prove it?" and he said that he did not. His answer to me, like the one he made earlier about a trash problem, seems to be made up as he goes along with his presentation, since he has no real answers to the important questions raised about his sanctuary proposal.

My take on this sanctuary issue is that Hemmen does not understand the negative implications that a sanctuary has, but worse is that he is not accepting the comments that were mostly made by anglers in the room. If I were he, I would have been shaken up by the comments made by angry anglers, but it did not seem to faze him that much. The danger I see is that in spite of what was conveyed to him about restrictions, he will still go forward with this sanctuary, and, of course, like-minded organizations may back him and this can gain traction to move it further.

For this sanctuary to go to higher levels in our federal government, it has to be first approved by our state government and that is our best hope to stop it. I will track the sanctuary issue and try to keep you updated. We all need to stay on top of this important issue and all be united against it.

## NJ DFW Law Enforcement Bureau Reports: November '15

Conservation Officers reported a total of 6786.8 hours of duty. During patrols, officers performed 3883 field inspections of hunters, fishermen or trappers, with 339 summonses issued. Estimated penalties collected during this report period by Conservation Officers came to \$18,379.00.

### Northern Region Highlights

Officer Paey was patrolling Bethlehem Township, Hunterdon County, for compliance with deer hunting regulations, when he observed a truck parked in an area where deer hunting occurs. An inspection of the vehicle revealed hunting equipment, and shortly after that Officer Paey located a bow and arrow hunter in a treestand.

The hunter did not have a valid Bow and Arrow Hunting License nor any valid Deer Hunting Permits. The hunter claimed that "money was kind of tight, so he did not purchase it this year." Further questioning revealed that he also had not ever completed a hunter education course for bow and arrow.

Summonses were issued for "hunting without a license" and "hunting during Permit Archery deer season without a valid permit."

Officer Ocampo was reviewing the Automated Deer Harvest Report System and came across an entry for a four point deer that caught his attention. No information had been provided by the hunter for County, Township, or Management Unit. Officer Ocampo contacted the hunter who agreed to meet with him and discuss the deer and the report.

When the hunter met Officer Ocampo, the former was unwilling to produce the head of the deer as required, claimed that he had never actually recovered the deer, and was unwilling to provide a location of where the incident had occurred. The hunter also provided very misleading accounts of the incident which changed multiple times during the course of the conversation.

Ultimately, the hunter stopped cooperating altogether and Officer Ocampo issued summonses for "falsifying a deer transportation tag," "falsifying a deer harvest report," "failure to provide a registered deer's head within 48 of registration upon request," and "did provide false information to a Conservation Officer to deter apprehension."

### Central Region Highlights

On an evening in October, CO's McManus and Riviello were patrolling Colliers Mills WMA when they received information that a vehicle was stuck in the sand on the WMA. During a patrol of the area, the vehicle was located and 17 individuals were inspected. A total of 22 WMA summonses were issued: four for after hours, 10 for maintaining a campfire, six for operating a vehicle off road, and two for possession of alcohol on a State WMA.

During the early coastal waterfowl season, Lt. Szulecki conducted a patrol of the Manasquan WMA. While inspecting two waterfowl hunters he received information from them that an individual may have begun waterfowl hunting before legal hours that morning. They reported that the hunter had fired his gun while it was still dark out.

A vehicle was present at the location, so Lt. Szulecki conducted a foot patrol of the area but could not track down the occupant. When he returned to the parking lot the vehicle was gone. Lt. Szulecki advised CO McManus about the complaint.

CO McManus returned to the location later that afternoon and found the suspect's vehicle parked in the same place as that morning. During an inspection of the two waterfowl hunters later that evening it was found that they had failed to sign their Federal Waterfowl Stamps. They were issued summonses for the violation.

Lt. Lacroix received a call late one evening from Mansfield Police Dept.,

Burlington County, regarding a complaint they received about someone night hunting in their town. Lt. Lacroix passed on the information to CO Mascio who responded to the PD to assist.

Mansfield PD had responded to the spotlighting/shots fired complaint and made a motor vehicle stop on the suspected vehicle. They located a dead doe deer in the back of the truck.

The passenger, a NY state resident currently living on a farm in Springfield Twp., Burlington County, admitted under questioning that he had been holding a loaded, uncased Marlin .22 bolt action rifle, with a gun-mounted light as his friend was driving around the farm fields. The man admitted to shooting multiple times at the deer which had been in the fields.

The shooter was charged with 11 summonses including untagged deer, unplugged firearm, hunting with the aid of a motor vehicle, loaded firearm in a motor vehicle, uncased firearm in a motor vehicle, taking a deer during the closed season, illegal possession of deer, taking a deer with an illegal firearm, illegal missile, taking a deer at time other than prescribed, and spotlighting from a motor vehicle with weapon in possession.

### Southern Region Highlights

CO Stites had received complaints about someone trespassing and causing damage to property while hunting was occurring on private property adjacent to the Mad Horse Creek Wildlife Management Area in Lower Alloways Creek Township, Salem County.

CO Stites located a vehicle hidden just off the road in a row of trees and conducted a foot patrol. He apprehended several hunters from the same family and conducted an inspection. Lt. Batten responded to the area to assist.

During the field interview, the owner of the vehicle admitted to operating the vehicle off roadway and along the edge of the field to hide it in the hedgerow because he did not want anyone to know

they were hunting at that location. CO Stites issued a summons for leaving the established roadway.

CO's Kille and Trembley were patrolling Gloucester County during the permit archery season when they received a call for assistance from the Logan Township Police Department.

The police had received a call about two suspicious vehicles in an area where trespassing for the purpose of hunting on posted property is prevalent. The police conducted a motor vehicle stop of one of the vehicles and the operator told them they were simply going hunting.

The officer asked if they had permission to hunt this property. The operator provided an identification card of an employee of the facility. Believing that something was not quite right, the police requested CO's Kille and Trembley respond to the area because CO Kille has intimate knowledge of this property and who legitimately has permission to hunt.

CO Kille conducted a foot patrol and apprehended two hunters. He was able to confirm that they did not have permission to hunt. Not to arouse suspicion, the hunters borrowed an employee's identification card and vehicle to gain access to the property. Both hunters were charged with criminal defiant trespassing and trespassing for the purpose of hunting.

The deer harvest data indicated that one of the hunters had harvested an eight-point buck the day before while trespassing. The deer was seized as evidence from a local butcher shop.

The company employee who lent his vehicle to his friend was subsequently investigated. He was charged with trespassing for the purpose of hunting after it was proven that he harvested an eight-point buck in early November on the same property which he did not have permission to hunt. The deer he harvested was seized from a local taxidermist.

Officer James responded to a complaint regarding vandalism to a vehicle on the Higbee Beach WMA (cont. next p.)

by Milt Rosko

# Signaling in the Party Boat Season

While normally there's some winter-time fun to be enjoyed aboard Jersey coast's party boat fleet, that wasn't the case in the first quarter of 2016. Indeed, there were many party boats sitting at dockside because of inclement weather, in which they couldn't sail at all, and many anglers lost interest.

Then spring arrived on March 20 and things began to look brighter. But then we ushered in April with disaster plaguing the coast, as I prepare this article. Temperatures dropped from the 70's to sub-freezing levels, with winds gusting across the state at 60 miles per hour; lightning and hail as well, with winter's white stuff making its presence known to the north and torrid rain elsewhere... and predictions equal or worse for several more days.

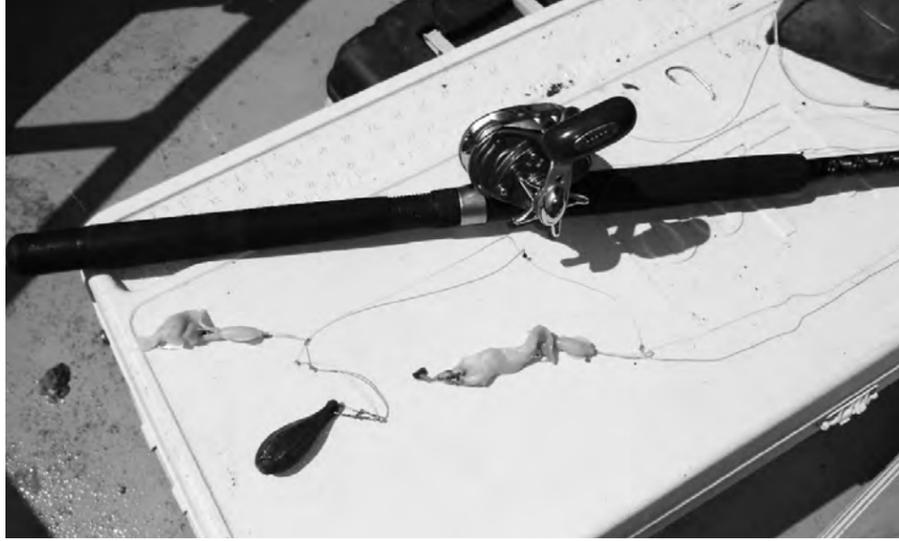
Yes, things will change, and I hope that as you read this article the sun will be shining, the temperatures rising to comfort levels, and those nasty winds and rains that battered us all will have subsided.

But along with the frustration of not having been able to go fishing, many anglers have failed to prepare for the season that is now upon us. Many anglers, out of habit alone, just head to the basement, gather up their gear, and head for the shore when the fishing reports roll in and the party boat schedules appear on the internet.

Bad move. From personal observation aboard countless party boats each season, I've found that many anglers are just not prepared, and it influences their ability to score and the enjoyment that comes with it. I'd like to share with you some thoughts that are well worth the effort on your part.

While I am in no way associated with the sale of fishing tackle, it never ceases to amaze me that many anglers simply use the same vintage gear each season, which essentially detracts from their ability to score. The heavy, stiff rods, with oversized and weighty reels loaded with 50-pound-test monofilament line, are not the way to go. You'd be well served to give consideration to improvements that have been made in recent years. Remember that you're investing in a trip to the shore, the fare for a day's fishing, and associated costs, so you'd be well served to upgrade your gear beforehand, which will give you a decided advantage over those using antiquated gear as the season gets underway.

A medium weight outfit, consisting of a fiberglass rod measuring six-and-a-half to seven feet in length with a matching levelwind reel with a high-rated retrieve ratio, loaded with 30- or 40-pound-test braided line, will certainly enhance your pleasure. Don't use lighter line, as it is



*The size of the bait you use is important. This high-low bottom rig has a pair of clam baits of a size that a ling can inhale it with ease and can be hooked in the process. The key is leaning more towards a small bait than too large a bait. Milt Rosko photo.*

more likely to break in the event of a bottom snag and result in a lost terminal rig.

Once you try an outfit such as this you'll be amazed at the number of improvements it has over vintage gear. You'll never tire, as the outfit weighs about half as much as those many of the anglers I've seen employ. Your ability to feel a strike and respond to set the hook will be enhanced, and the fine diameter braided line also will enable you to hold bottom with substantially less sinker weight – indeed, often half the weight you may have been using with mono. Finally, it's just more fun with an outfit such as this.

An outfit like this will serve you well when seeking the majority of species you're apt to encounter. Winter flounder will be out of the mud and feeding on sandworms and grass shrimp, while the spring mackerel run will also be underway as they wallop jigs and teasers. You can easily swing them aboard with a medium weight outfit. It's also perfect when targeting fluke and blackfish (asking for the net for big ones), as well as sea bass and porgies.

It'll also be an exciting and enjoyable experience when your targets are striped bass and bluefish, as the mates will assist in your landing as they use either a net or gaff to bring them aboard. I've even used the outfit on deepwater species such as ling, cod, and pollock with equally good results.

Personally, to ensure I can have uninterrupted fishing in the event I become

entangled or lose a rig by getting hung on the bottom, I carry a second or backup outfit. It's rigged and ready, and is placed in an out-of-the-way rod rack where I can immediately press it into service.

With respect to terminal rigging, it's always best to have at least three or four complete rigs ready to go; i.e., with a high-low rig and the snelled hooks of a size suited to the targeted species, and sinkers of appropriate weight for the conditions.

The subject of sinker weight is of paramount importance. The single biggest mistake I've observed on party boats is that anglers use too light a sinker. The best rule of thumb is that your line should always be as perpendicular to the bottom as possible, whether you're anchored or drifting.

Too often, anglers use too light a sinker, which doesn't hold. This results in tangles and bellies in the line as it drifts towards the stern when anchored. Often the strong current against the line actually lifts the bottom rig up several feet from the bottom out of range of most bottom feeders. Much the same is true when drifting. As an example, during the summer a slow drift may work fine when there is little wind in the morning. But on a hot day strong southeast winds often prevail, and the boat drifts faster. You've often got to double or even triple the sinker weight in order to hold bottom. I've seen times when the majority of anglers on board would just keep letting line out, often 100 feet or more, because they couldn't hold bottom,

The hunter was charged with taking a sub-legal buck in an APR zone, illegal possession of a deer, hunting in a zone without a valid permit, failing to tag a deer, and failure to register a deer.

## Marine Region Highlights

On November 21, 2015, CO Henderson and CO Woerner conducted a joint boat patrol with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. During the patrol CO Henderson and CO Woerner inspected a boat with nine anglers onboard.

Upon boarding the vessel, 13 striped bass measuring between 28 and 43 inches were located in two different coolers. After asking if they measured any of the fish, the vessel owner replied, "No, we didn't measure them. They looked like big fish."

Three summonses were issued to three anglers onboard for possession of undersized/over-limit striped bass. An additional at-sea boarding of a party boat out of Atlantic Highlands Marina resulted in three anglers receiving summonses for undersize striped bass and warnings for failure to tag bonus striped bass immediately upon retention.

On October 21, 2015, while inspecting a federally permitted Atlantic sea scallop vessel in Cape May, Conservation Officer Tom Swift found 80 pounds of sea scallops. The vessel was declared "out of the sea scallop fishery," as it was transiting from a port in Rhode Island. All permitted

not realizing their baits were several feet above bottom. In the meantime, those of us who were holding with 8 or 10 ounces or more were hooking up.

Perhaps the most economical tackle you use is an ordinary snelled hook of an appropriate size of the species being targeted. Today's manufacturers have excellent quality hook styles that require no additional sharpening and are snelled to appropriate lengths of leader. It's wise to clear out and discard any old rusted hooks that you may have accumulated.

Speaking in generalities, smaller size hooks are better than oversize hooks. Ditto when it comes to bait size, as I've seen times when the baits are cut too big. Whether using strips of squid, chunks of clam, seaworms, mussels, or crabs, cut the bait to a size so that the species you're targeting can inhale it with ease. A good practice is to always place the hook on the bait so the point and barb is exposed and ready to penetrate. With fluke fishing, many anglers employ too wide a squid or strip bait, and as a fluke inhales it the hook lays over onto the strip bait and fails to penetrate the jaw as you strike, as it's buried in the squid. I've watched anglers miss strike after strike from sea bass and porgies too, and come up with a baitless hook simply because the bait was too large and a fish couldn't get it into its mouth and just kept pecking away as it ripped the big bait from the hook.

Remember too that you're not giant tuna fishing and there's no need to repeatedly strike a fish. Keep your rod tip pointed from horizontal to 45 degrees towards the water, which lets you feel the bottom, and immediately telegraphs the strike as a fish takes the bait. This enables you to lift back smartly a foot or two of your rod tip to set the hook. But avoid the practice that I've seen so often where anglers repeatedly strike a fish, yanking the rod tip six feet into the air, literally ripping a hole in the fish's jaw, and enabling it to shake free as they attempt to reel it in. Set the hook once, with a moderately set drag, and just begin cranking away.

Yes, spring is already here, and with it comes summer heat. With a break in the weather and a pleasant day on the water you'll make a good catch. But don't let the heat spoil it. Remember to bring a cooler and ice in which to place those bottom feeders. It will ensure your fish will be in prime condition on your arrival home, and then it's just a matter of filleting the tasty scrappers and enjoying the first delicious catch of the year.

(from prev. p.) located in Lower Township, Cape May County. Previously, the Endangered and Non-Game Species Program and the NJ Park Police had received numerous complaints regarding a falconer illegally trapping falcons.

CO James had inspected the falconer and found that he was properly licensed with a permit to trap a peregrine falcon. The falconer reported that his tires had been slashed while he was afield. CO James investigated the incident, identified a person of interest, and conducted an interview. The person interviewed denied knowledge of the vandalism, but offered reimbursement for the tires to the sportsman. The investigation is still ongoing.

While on routine patrol CO Faith observed a large bait pile in the back yard of an Egg Harbor Township, Atlantic County resident. The bait was placed in close proximity to the safety zone of neighboring houses.

The CO located a deer harvest record in the ALS that had been registered to that address and conducted an interview of the suspected hunter. Upon arrival the bait had been removed and the leaves cleaned up in an attempt to hide physical evidence of the kill. The CO found the deer had been unlawfully registered in the automated harvest reporting system so the deer was seized and a summons was issued for the tagging violation.

CO James received a complaint from a bow hunter in Commercial Township, Cumberland County who, while hunting,

heard a crossbow being fired and a deer run in his direction. The hunter investigated the deer and found a freshly killed sub-legal buck, but could not locate the responsible hunter.

A short time later CO James responded and found the deer had been retrieved. CO James investigated the scene and found a blood trail to a nearby tree stand, recovered a bloody, broken arrow, and identified an area where he believed the hunter had been parking.

The following day the CO inspected several deer matching the description provided by the hunter that were checked in at adjacent non-APR zones, but could not locate the deer in question. With no success locating the deer or the hunter's ID, an alternative plan was developed.

CO James contacted Lt. Batten who placed a MMS game camera at the location where the hunter was believed to be parking. Without having to drive into the area and risk detection, Lt. Batten and CO James were able to remotely monitor the WMA for hunting activity.

Four days later CO's received a picture of the suspected hunter's vehicle at 5:30 am via text message. CO James responded a short time later and found a man hunting from the same stand without the correct zone permit. Although admitting to hunting from the stand on the morning in question, the man denied shooting the deer a week earlier. When confronted with the evidence of the recovered bolt, which matched the bolts in the hunter's quiver, CO James received a complete confession to the sub-legal deer.

vessels must lawfully be declared into the sea scallop fishery when landing, retaining or in possession of sea scallops because the fishery is managed through a 'days at sea' program designed to equitably distribute sea scallop quota to eligible vessels. The vessel was referred to the National Marine Fisheries Service for landing Atlantic sea scallops while declared out of the sea scallop fishery and for inaccurate completion of the associated fishing vessel trip report.

On November 17, 2015, four Atlantic County commercial fishermen plead guilty in Galloway Township Municipal Court to violations stemming from a two day investigation led by District 8 Conservation Officers in December 2014. The men were assessed a total of \$8,000 in penalties and forfeited crab dredges used to unlawfully harvest diamondback terrapins.

On October 25, 2015, Conservation Officers Swift and Tomlin apprehended a husband and wife team of repeat tautog poachers in North Wildwood. In addition to the possession of undersized tautog violations, the couple had warrants for failing to appear in the court of the same jurisdiction for prior tautog violations. The couple was taken into custody and transported to North Wildwood Police Department where they posted \$900 bail.

On November 17, 2015, the couple appeared before a judge in North Wildwood Municipal Court and pleaded guilty to all prior Fish and Wildlife offenses. They were assessed a total of \$600 in penalties and court fees.

by Robert Romano

Throughout our state, numerous small streams and brooks remain open to fishing throughout the year. Here in the northwest corner of New Jersey, I begin casting my flies to wild trout willing to play tag with a fly well before the hatchery trucks pull up to those better-known rivers marking the traditional opening day of trout season.

During March, I sometimes swing wet flies meant to imitate black stoneflies that may be on the water this time of year, ready to switch to a tiny Blue-Winged Olive if the fish are looking toward the surface for this diminutive early-season mayfly. More often than not, I drift one nymph pattern or another, hoping to locate a trout that has awakened from its winter doldrums.

The action can be slow unless the black stoneflies are laying their eggs, which on some days can occur for an hour or so later in the afternoon. Although the fish may be slow to take interest this early in the season, there is always something to catch my interest. It may be the bluebird returning to check out a nest site, or the sweet call of a white-throated sparrow. Along the bank, a ground hog may stick its head out of a hole or a chipmunk chatters its consternation from a nearby rock wall. There is always the rattle of a kingfisher, swinging from one naked branch to another as I advance up the stream.

Turn a bend, and a great blue heron may sweep up out of the shadows, where skunk cabbage whorls break through the damp soil. Although catkins appear on the tips of pussy willows, during March the hardwoods are showing only the slightest sign of foliage while streamside bushes and brambles remain starkly bare, making it easier to cast a fly.

By the middle of April, "the game is afoot," with trout looking toward the surface as the first major mayfly hatches unfold under dark and rainy skies. It's time to leave the stonefly imitations home, replaced by a box of Quill imitations — Blue Quills, Quill Gordons and Hendricksons — males and females, patterns to resemble the nymph, dun, emerger, and spinner phases.

At about the same time as these first

# Fly Fisher's Nirvana

major mayflies are hatching, caddis are beginning to appear, especially the Grannons that emerge in the middle of the month and Apple Caddis that appear near the end of April and extending into May.

There is now a hint of scarlet in the budding maple trees, while forsythia and roadside daffodils do their part to add color to the new season. Temperatures can swing from the 40s to the 60s with a hard, cold rain one day and the first warmth of spring the next. Violets bloom across the path down to the water, as do more delicate bluets. May apples, trilliums, bloodroot, and garlic mustard can be found in the shade of the forest. As the month progresses, colt's-foot spread their yellow dandelion-like flowers across stony shoals, while the flowering fruit trees add their pinks and whites to the landscape beyond the stream.

Although April certainly holds the promise of the new fishing season, it is no exaggeration to say that here in New Jersey May is the fly fisher's Nirvana. For this is a time of sunshine and mild temperatures. There might be the occasional warm rain (what the Irish might call a soft day), but then there is that sustained warmth on the back of the neck marking this month when forest, field, and stream are bursting with life. It is a time when brightly colored birds swing across the current, their songs filling the thickets while newly born fawns accompany their mothers to sip from the stream's edge and



Oliver Shapiro photo.

black bear cubs roll in the grass under the protective eyes of their mothers. Field mice, moles, and voles scurry underfoot as toads stare up from the trail, the occasional frog plopping into the water as you tread along the bank.

Crabapple and dogwood are bursting with color, while the hardwoods, brambles, and bushes have all leafed out. The stream that had been open until now feels strangely claustrophobic, thorns grabbing at my sleeve, branches reaching out for my rod's fly, every other backcast ending in a tangle... but knowing that the shade is what cools the water and protects the trout,

I'm happy to adjust my tactics.

The first terrestrials are now falling from the newly sprouted leaves. In the new-found shade, bell-shaped flowers of lily-of-the-valley spring up while forget-me-nots' pale blue flowers can be found wherever the soil is moist.

As May progresses, warm breezes carry the scent of lilacs flowering beside the foundations of abandoned homesteads, followed by the sweet smell of barberries and wild honeysuckle, ending the month with the perfume of wild roses.

Larger sulphurs hatch during the afternoons, with different varieties of this pale yellow mayfly growing smaller in size while hatching later and later, until by the end of the month, their emergence does not occur until after dark.

There is also a progression of other mayflies imitated by patterns commonly known as March Browns, Light and Dark Cahills, and various Drake and Slate patterns. In-between, there is a cornucopia of other aquatic insects creating a life force that is now floating on, in, and below the stream's surface. These include any number of different caddis, blue-winged olives, and tiny midges, all of which may be hatching simultaneously, with each trout devoting its attention to a single phase of a single insect variety, driving many a fly fisher to utter despair as he or she desperately switches from one fly pattern to another.

What better way to spend an afternoon than matching wits with a few trout on your favorite stream? While there, don't forget to take the time to enjoy the sights, sounds, and smells of this sweet month. If you're lucky, you might solve that puzzle and bring a fat fish to your net.

Bob's latest novel, *Brook Trout Blues*, can be purchased through [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com) or by contacting his publisher, Birch Brook Press ([www.birchbrookpress.info](http://www.birchbrookpress.info)). You can read his blog at [forgottentroutr.wordpress.com](http://forgottentroutr.wordpress.com)

## NJ Fish and Game Council Meeting Highlights: April

by David Burke, Acting Chairman

The regular Council meeting was held April 12, 2016 at the Central Region Office in Robbinsville. All Council members were present. The following is a summary of select meeting highlights and Bureau reports. Minutes of the meeting will be posted on the Division website after approval in May.

Asst. Director Herrigty commented for the Director Dave Chanda who was away. He noted that the opening day of trout season was a success, despite varied weather conditions around the State. Asst. Director Nelson reported that Division revenue was similar to last year and that fishing license sales were up slightly.

Farmer representatives present indicated that there was concern regarding the impact of cold temperatures and snow on blueberries, peaches and apples. They also commented that deer numbers on green fields and pastures was increasing and similar to prior years with the exception of specific local areas where herds had been thinned via depredation permits and hunting.

The Legislative Committee and Assistant Director Nelson met before the regular meeting and reported on bills to the Council. S-977 prohibits the possession, transport, import, export, processing, or sale of certain animal species threatened with extinction, including "the big five African species" listed in the bill. The Council noted the many flaws in the bill and voted to oppose it. A letter will be sent to Legislators noting the Council's objections.

The Council voted to support A-2763 which enters NJ in the Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact. The Compact provides for the exchange of violator

information among states. The Council voted to oppose A-3527 which would remove black bear from the list of game species and prohibit hunting. The Council voted to oppose A-784 and S-1595 which would establish multi-species depredation permits. The Division already has the ability to issue depredation permits for more than one species.

The Council also voted to oppose A-432 which prohibits the use of snares for trapping and research. Several other bills were also discussed with positions to be taken at a later date.

Sportsmen Council representatives reported that fishermen comments regarding the opening day of trout season were generally favorable. The open house at Pequest was enjoyed by many and kids that fished the ponds did very well. Water levels on many northern streams and water bodies were down.

Sportsmen are looking forward to the turkey season. Several upcoming youth and adult sportsmen events were mentioned. Council members attended the Northern Region deer meeting and provided a written summary of State Federation recommendations to the game committee.

Bureau of Lands Management Chief Dave Golden reported that 3,500 comments had been received regarding the Sparta Mountain Management Plan. About 75% of the comments were in opposition to the plan which would involve cutting 20 acres of trees per year. Many of the opposing comments were "form" emails. A public meeting will be scheduled to review the comments and the final plan.

Golden reported on the status of the WMA user survey to be conducted by Stockton University. The survey objectives are to identify who uses the areas, what the users are doing, and if the users are license

buyers. He also mentioned that two stakeholder meetings will be scheduled regarding possible changes in the pheasant stocking formula.

Freshwater Bureau Chief Lisa Barno provided preliminary results from stream, lake, and pond trout angler surveys. Stream anglers caught an average of 1.99 trout per person. Lake and pond anglers caught an average of 0.56 trout per person. The highest stream angler success was noted on the upper Raritan River (4.32 trout per person). The highest lake/pond angler success was noted on Mac's Pond (Monmouth County; 1.78 fish per person). A few water bodies surveyed had no trout caught when the survey was taken.

Fish Hatchery Chief Jeff Matthews reported that 184,700 rainbow trout had been stocked for opening day. Most trout were 11 inches, but many breeder trout in the 6- to 7-pound range were also stocked. Only rainbow trout will be stocked for the next few years. More than 570,000 trout are scheduled to be stocked this season. Matthews also mentioned that the trout rearing process is an 18-month cycle which is already well underway for the 2017 stocking. He also reported on salmon stocking, northern pike and tiger muskellunge egg collection, and other activities at Pequest and Hackettstown hatcheries.

Information and Education Chief Al Ivany reported that there was good press coverage for the opening day of trout season. He estimated that between 4500 and 6000 people attended the open house at Pequest on April 3 and 4. The Outdoor Writers Workshop was held on March 31 with 18 writers in attendance. The 25th Annual Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament will be held on May 15 at Island Beach State Park.

Preparations are continuing for the Outdoor Expo which will be held at Colliers Mills on September 11 and 12. Councilwoman Brummer requested that the Division look into producing wildlife posters for sale to the public.

Acting Law Enforcement Chief Matt

Brown stated that compliance with fishing regulations on the opening day of trout season was 99 percent. Brown discussed several cases which were not included in the monthly report. In one case, an individual living in Union County was cited for trapping songbirds and having 10 in possession. Five dumping cases on WMAs were also investigated. One case involved a NY resident who dumped trash and other debris on two WMAs. The Hardyston Township Police Department, Utica NY Police Department and NYDEC Environmental Conservation Police assisted in apprehending the individual.

Other cases involved ATVs on WMAs, illegal possession of an alligator, fishing without a license, shooting of a dog, theft of snares, squatters on Millville WMA, and possession of 77 closed season marine finfish. During the March reporting period, Conservation Officers conducted 1,084 field inspections, and issued 160 summonses and 8 warnings. On April 21, the written test for Conservation Officer will be given to 90 applicants. Several positions are or will be open this year.

Wildlife Management Chief Carole Stanko reported that the first pheasant hatch at the Rockport Game Farm was scheduled for later in the month. A sow with six cubs was processed for research purposes in Butler, NJ. CWD was found in fice deer in Maryland. Fifty-six deer were found to have CWD in Arkansas, and the first case of CWD in Europe was detected (Norway).

The Bureau is seeking a hiring exemption due to retirements on the bear project and wildlife control units which would leave only two people to handle problem bear and wildlife depredation problems. The reported coyote harvest to date was 248 compared to 260 in FY 2015. 671 beaver and 51 otter were harvested this year compared to 660 beaver and 45 otter last year.

Barbara Stoff (administration/licensing section) reported that fishing license sales were up slightly and (cont. next p.)

# When Ants Are the Thing

by Bob Brunisholz

Many moons ago, way back when I was young and stupid (compared to now when I'm no longer young), I read a piece by some long-forgotten outdoor writer who penned a story about fishing for trout with ants. But the ants of which he wrote at the start of the story hailed from somewhere in the Amazon.

The author painted a grisly, albeit verbal, portrait of ants that taped four to six inches in length with a girth of somewhere between one and two inches. A single sting from one of these ants, claimed the author, would at best send a grown man to the hospital, and in some instances cause one to assume room temperature. Then the author described how these mega-ants would try to cross a stream whereupon a feeding frenzy of piranha would ensue; the panicked ants attacking themselves within the swarm while also trying to sting the toothy, scaly critters that were ripping them apart.

He then went on to make a point about the fact that trout do, in fact, feed on ants. What those ants on steroids of the Amazon had to do with ants on the Flat Brook still boggles my mind.

But he did say that trout feed on ants. Really? Who'd ever have thunk it?

Actually, some anglers this season may be headed astream with fly boxes that do not contain imitation ants. If you're one of them, might I suggest you lay in a supply of various sizes and colors in the event that you may stumble across what I've come to call an aquatic version of an ant invasion.

It's a given that trout always prefer the real insect when they are feeding on a particular species of bug. (Yeah, I know, fly fishermen refer to them as "insects," and with annoying frequency many use the Latin name of a particular "bug" when a hatch is on. Sorry, not impressed.)

Next, the sight of a single ant on a stream is not necessarily a signal to get all giddy and lost in the anticipation that there will, in the next few moments, be a feeding frenzy that will whip the water to a froth. Hardly, these are single ants that lost their footing while pirouetting on a maple leaf or twig and ended up in the drink. Trout do not get all nervous and jerky about a single ant floating past their feeding stations.

But there are times when trout do feed on ants and I for one cannot explain how or why the ants got there, but they do, though the occasions are rare.

I had the pleasure of fishing with the late, great trout angler Red Ward who, I



think, was part trout. To say Red was an avid fly fisherman is like calling the Grand Canyon a ditch. On a couple of occasions when out with Red, we'd discuss this pattern of the 'coming of the ants,' and even he didn't know what to make of it.

"It doesn't happen often. In fact, in all the years I've been fly fishing, I've seen it occur perhaps five or six times, tops," he'd explain, but he'd always add, "when it does occur, you'd better have a good selection of ants on hand."

And here I'm going to wade into waters that are particularly hazardous, not only to my reputation with a fly rod (which is dubious to start with), but also my status as an essayist of things outdoors. Thus I hesitate to speculate, lest a few in the audience may question what all the fuss is about since this ant invasion is old hat. Nonetheless, I believe it is one of the ant species commonly found living around rotted wood or on the outside of damp earth at the juncture of basements and cellars. They are winged, and the wings don't last long until the little buggers shed them, after which they look for all the world like any of the hundreds of species of non-winged ants.

I recall once attempting to research these ants, and the best I find was an advertisement for Orkin, the pest control company. The firm claimed winged ants belong to family Hymenoptera, which literally means "to mate in flight." The brochure also said flying ants are not good fliers, and "cannot fly more than a half-mile." In addition, "...its wings usually break off during its mating flight."

That's as close as I ever came to a positive identification, for two reasons. One, I wasn't looking to make a career out

of identifying this bug, but secondly, the description detailing the fact that they were not good fliers and the wings usually break off, would account for hordes of these insects ending up in the drink.

Good 'nuff for me. The important part is, as the Orkin Company noted, these winged ants are incredibly terrible fliers and are only marginally equipped to deal with anything stronger than a slight breeze. Consequently, the swarm often ends up as trout table fare, and when it does, the fishing can go from so-so to incredibly fantastic in just a few moments.

So what happens once a swarm of these pesky pests crash lands on that tail-race you happen to be fishing? Well, they get eaten. But here's why the winged ant is worth the white space it has taken up thus far, and also why they are worth the few quid needed to purchase a good selection of varying size, shape, and color.

I've experienced the "swarm of the winged ants," at most, two or three times. The first time was when a bunch of ne'er-do-well and unwashed fly fishermen were camped along the Battenkill River. This was in the lower beats where the river enters New York, and at the time it offered some really fantastic fishing, albeit over exceptionally choosy trout. Red was with us that day. I remember seeing him standing bankside, grinning like a jackass eating briars through a barbed-wire fence, as I got into a few slab-sided trout, courtesy of a floating mat of what a few moments ago, I'd guess, had been flying ants. I distinctly recall telling him to wade in and join the fun since I'd already released several nice 'bows. He did, while I waded out to get some photos of the action. Which, incidentally, continued for perhaps another five to

10 minutes, and then it was over, caput. The swarm of what had once been winged ants had pretty much dispersed, and the hot action died as quickly as it started.

The last time I experienced this phenomenon was while fishing the South Branch of the Raritan, upstream from the bridge in Califon. Many know the spot to which I'm referring; just behind the ball park where there are two sharp bends in the river forming pools that run deep, clear, and cold. The folks who took over Shannon's Fly Shop, located right in the center or town, sometimes stock that section of the river for whatever kind of promotional contest they may be conducting. That's what enticed me to walk back there, figuring I might just luck into one of the big trout they may have recently stocked.

I was working a nymph at mid-level depths in one of the pools, when this little mat of ants floated by. I swapped the nymph for a tiny ant and although I honestly cannot claim the same fast action enjoyed by Red and me on the Battenkill, the fly switch resulted in two nice, fat rainbows, plus two additional strikes that I missed. Then, as quickly as it started, it was over.

It does happen... granted, not very often, but often enough that one should never get caught streamside without a good selection of imitation ants. Give them a try but only when you spot that infrequent rarity, a floating mass of ants. Singles or even doubles don't count. Trout will feed on a single ant or two, but solitary ants rarely, if ever, kick start a feeding frenzy.

The best way to fish an ant? Dry fly enthusiasts aren't going to applaud this, but here goes. It would seem at first blush that given the conditions (large numbers of ants caught in the wash) it should be fished dry. And it should be. That's the way we had success that first time on the Battenkill. But it's equally safe to say that if trout are taking ants on the surface, they are probably also taking some that are submerged. The method I found successful is by allowing your dry fly to sink. Now you're using a wet fly, of sorts. Allow it to drift downward with the current, until it begins the drag. That's when you must watch it carefully.

Allow the ant to drag against the tug of the current, and a note to the wise: Do not control it. Do not twitch it, or twitch it upstream, as you would a streamer, even for a few inches. I've found that trying to control the dragging fly in any way is the best way to send a trout to bottom, where it will sulk for the rest of the day.

Why a trout would be enticed to grab a fly dragging in the current is beyond me, but they do. I and a few others can attest to it.

My best advice? Don't leave home without a few imitation ants in your fly box.

(from prev. p.) fielded questions regarding problems with sales at several license agents.

Deer Project Leader Dan Roberts presented the final 2015-16 deer season results. The total harvest was 41,439 compared to 52,704 taken in 2015 (-21.4%).

(Note: The reduced harvest does not necessarily reflect a 21% reduction in the deer population. Warm weather conditions through December and a super abundant acorn crop affected deer behavior, distribution, and hunter success. A similar situation in West Virginia and North Carolina in 2015 caused a major decrease in harvest that year in those states. In 2016, the deer harvest and number of trophy bucks rebounded to record levels. A similar rebound is anticipated for NJ in 2016-17 - my comments).

Breakdowns by season, antlered vs. antlerless, zone, and weapon type were reviewed and are too much to list here. The detailed season results will be presented at the State Federation Convention on April 15 and 16. The Game Committee of the Council will continue to review the results and the Federation comments/proposals regarding deer in preparation for its next meeting in May.

Public Comment: A representative from the South Jersey Quail Project urged the Division to increase planting and other habitat management practices for quail and other upland game. He also requested that the Division encourage field trials which benefit local economies. Comments opposing the Sparta Mountain management plan, archery park, survey of WMA user and deer management were also made by two individuals.

The next Council Meeting: Tuesday, May 10, 2016 (10:00 am) at the Central Region Office.

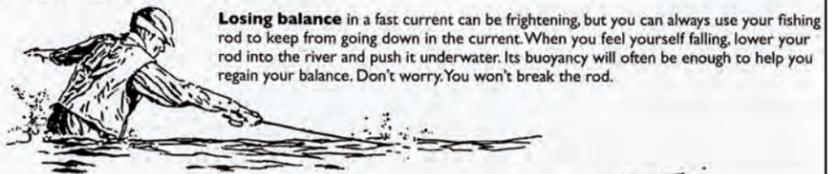
## from Wading, p. 1

You should always plan a route before you step in any stream. Always wade at an angle, quartering upstream as much as possible. When you stop to fish, stand sideways to the current, which is safer than taking the full force of the current against your front or back. Finally, always use a wading staff as a third leg to keep your balance and check depth.

Always follow these guidelines to ensure that your wading expedition doesn't spill over into, well, spilling over. You'll avoid at least an inconvenient and uncomfortable dunking, and at most an outcome far worse.

## How to Wade a River

Wading looks easy enough, but it can turn into a dangerous situation if you are swept off your feet in the swift current. The rules for safe wading are simple. First, never take a step in any direction unless your rear or anchor foot is firmly planted. Next, slide your lead foot forward until it is secure. When your lead foot is firmly planted, then slide your anchor foot ahead. Never try to wade by lifting your feet. The current will swing your leg out from under you and throw you off balance. Avoid wading big, wide stretches of river. It is safer to wade from pool to pool, taking advantage of slower current to rest.



**Losing balance** in a fast current can be frightening, but you can always use your fishing rod to keep from going down in the current. When you feel yourself falling, lower your rod into the river and push it underwater. Its buoyancy will often be enough to help you regain your balance. Don't worry. You won't break the rod.

**If you fall**, don't panic. Always ride downstream feetfirst until you can grab a branch or rock and get yourself back on your feet. Never ride the current headfirst. There is always the danger of striking your head. Make the current work for you. Use your arms and pick a course toward shore and safe ground.



**Plan a route** before you step into any stream. Always wade at an angle, quartering upstream as much as possible. When you stop to fish, stand sideways to the current, which is safer than taking the full force of the current against your front or back. Use a wading staff as a third leg to keep your balance and check depth. A wader belt is literally a lifesaver in streams and rivers. If you fall, the belt will trap air in your waders and give you buoyancy.



Images from Vin Sparano's book Complete Guide to Fresh and Saltwater Fishing. Reprinted with permission.

# Try Midnight Fishing to Beat the Heat

by Lou Martinez

"I've Got One, I've Got One" hissed my buddy Dave Vollenweider, as he set the hook and reeled the fighting fish towards the port side of his Crestliner Fish Hawk.

Flipping on my brim-mounted headlight, I grabbed the medium-sized, rubber-coated net, and after the second attempt was able to sweep up the lunker walleye from Greenwood Lake's pitch-black waters.

"Whoa, nice fish," I whispered. "Gotta be pushing seven pounds," was Captain Dave's response. A few quick photos and this toad was on his way to the livewell, destined to be my birthday dinner.

When the dog days of summer shepherd in the dreaded triple-H days (hazy, hot, and humid), many astute fisherman throw in the towel and either enjoy air-conditioned endeavors, or maybe make a few trips out and come back sunburned, dehydrated, and fishless. But savvy anglers stay at home completing all of the "Honey-do" projects, and then they load up their equipment and head for their favorite waters after the sun goes down.

When fishing ponds or lakes, first make sure that it's legal to be there after dark. Many reservoirs prohibit fishing after dusk and before dawn, so check regulations prior to trekking out. Once you know that you're good to go, follow a few simple rules.

First, always strive to go with a buddy, as a simple tumble in the dark can become disastrous if you don't have some-

*Beating the heat pays off big for the author. And a cool morning ride home doesn't hurt either. Lou Martinez photo.*



one to help you. Make sure you have all essentials: carry a cell phone, camera, lantern/head lamp, net, change of clothes in your vehicle (in case of an unexpected dunking), bug repellent (a Thermocell personal unit or lantern will keep you and your companion bug-free), beverages (non-alcoholic), and something to eat. After a night of fishing, take a short nap before driving home, and I personally always carry a large Thermos of coffee to help keep me alert and awake. Finally, be sure to wear a wide brimmed hat, as you don't need an errantly cast lure ending your night prematurely.

Upon arriving at the lake, listen for fish feeding activity; sucking and moderate "blooshing" sounds can denote predators feeding on the surface. You should

have a few old standbys tied onto your rods, and nothing beats a slowly retrieved black Jitterbug or slowly twitched Hula Popper to locate both largemouth and smallmouth bass. Rods should be 6- to 7-foot medium to medium heavy, with 10-pound mono for topwater bassing and 4- to 6-pound flouro for panfishing.

Spinning reels tend to work best in the dark; just make sure to have a head lamp and nail clippers available for getting out bird's nests or switching lures. A sturdy net is necessary for large bass or catfish

that may test your mettle. Some lakes like Woodcliff Lake have lamp posts every 50 or so yards, and you can utilize these lit areas to drag a small jig/grub combo past them and you'll be amazed at how many panfish and crappies will take the bait. I've had many 50-fish nights there (you have to be out by 10 pm)... pretty good, considering that a day trip to the same water would likely convince you that the lake was devoid of any aquatic life.

Vollenweider, of the Live to Fish Guide Service, excels at catching really big walleye after dark. The best feeding window normally occurs after midnight, and the constant "bloosh bloosh" of the walleye herding herring up against the wall can make it confusing as to where one should cast. Capt. Dave advises that you cast as close to the wall/bank as possible, and begin a slow steady retrieve back to the boat. I've found that a 6-foot baitcaster with a low-profile reel spooled with 10- to 12-pound flouro enables me to place the lure in the zone with minimal hang ups. Being able to stop your heavy Rapala F-18s or Suspending Rouges just short of the target is the ticket to success.

One party, a father and son, had an unbelievable night recently and boated 19 walleye in one outing. They actually tired of reeling them in. Another night produced a limit of lunkers and a 20-pound muskie to boot, for another fortunate pair of anglers. My recent trip produced walleye, and my favorite - smallmouth bass.

So don't curse any blasted heat wave we're sure to experience, and use the next one to your advantage and take a midnight stroll... or troll. Be quiet, be safe, stay cool, and have yourself some fun. Good luck and tight lines.

## State AG Takes Action on Christie's Directive to Address Gun Laws

Acting on Governor Chris Christie's commitment to ensure fair and consistent application of the state's gun laws that respects individual's Second Amendment rights and protects public safety, the Office of Attorney General announced a directive and guideline issued by Acting Attorney General Robert Lougy, and a regulatory change to align the regulations governing the issuance of a carry permit with New Jersey Supreme Court precedent interpreting the statutory standard of justifiable need. Taken together, the changes will help ensure all applicants receive efficient and uniform consideration in the processing of firearm permit applications.

"The terrible tragedy involving Berlin resident Carol Bowne last summer was a jarring example of a permitting system that had failed and needed to be reexamined and fixed," said Christie. "Likewise, I have seen far too many instances in my time as governor of otherwise lawful gun owners facing severe criminal penalties when they have no intent to violate the law in the routine transport of their lawfully owned firearms.

"Building on the work of the Study Commission, my Administration is taking important, concrete steps today to address those loopholes and inequities and deliver relief and assurance to New Jerseyans exercising their Second Amendment rights that their constitutional rights will be protected and respected in New Jersey."

"We are always looking for ways to improve the permitting process and to provide uniformity across the state," said Acting Attorney General Robert Lougy. "And our guideline on reasonably necessary deviation in transporting a firearm provides additional clarity to police, prosecutors, and law abiding gun owners."

Last year, Governor Christie signed Executive Order No. 180, calling for expedited treatment of applications in cases of domestic violence and creating the New Jersey Firearm Purchase and Permitting Study Commission, following the tragic murder of Carol Bowne, a Camden County resident. Bowne had secured a restraining order against her ex-boyfriend and filed an application for a firearm permit in April 2015. Less than two months later, and with her application delayed beyond the 30-day statutory deadline for its process-

ing, she was stabbed to death in her front yard by her ex-boyfriend.

The Study Commission was charged with the specific task of reviewing the state's laws, regulations and procedures pertaining to the ownership and possession of firearms and make recommendations to enhance the lawful exercise of New Jerseyans' Second Amendment rights.

The Study Commission issued its report in December, noting multiple complaints from firearm permit applicants that statutory permitting requirements were being applied unevenly across the state, specifically, that there were unnecessary delays in processing applications and the imposition of unauthorized requirements for permit applications, in violation of

state law.

The directive, guideline, and regulatory change announced in early April include:

A Regulatory Change For A Handgun Carry Permit To Align And Harmonize The Definition Of "Justifiable Need" With New Jersey Supreme Court Standards:

- Published in the New Jersey Register on March 7, 2016, the regulatory amendment will provide greater objectivity, consistency, and clarity in the application of this standard.

- The regulation adds "serious threats" to the circumstances that could demonstrate a special danger to the applicant's life - including evidence of serious threats that are not directed specifically at an individual but which establish more than mere generalized fears or concerns - that a private citizen may specify in a written certification of justifiable need submitted with an application for a permit to carry a hand-

gun.

- The amendment also clarifies that the issuance of a permit to carry a handgun can be based on a special danger to the applicant's life that cannot be avoided by other "reasonable" means, rather than by "any" means, as the regulation currently provides.

A Guideline On The Reasonably Necessary Deviations In The Course Of Travel Exception For Transporting Firearms In New Jersey:

- Currently, the law allows a limited degree of deviation in the course of travel when an individual is lawfully transporting a firearm. People may transport a firearm that is unloaded and properly stored and in prescribed circumstances without a carry permit: to and from their home and business, hunting, shooting ranges and while moving between residences. New Jersey law allows, but does not define, "reasonably necessary" deviations (**cont. next p.**)

## Events for May, 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Run/Walk for the Musconetcong River musconetcong.org	2	3	4	5	6	7 RVTA tournament fishrvta.com Hunter Ed, Millville & Newton (NJDFW)
8	9	10 Fish & Game Council meeting	11	12	13	14 Hunter Ed, Oxford, Forked River, & Atco (NJDFW)
15 Governor's Surf Tournament	16	17	18	19 RVTA meeting fishrvta.com	20 NJSFSC State Meeting	21 RVTA Welgoss Memorial Tournament fishrvta.com
22 Hunter Ed, Highland Lakes & Greenbank (NJDFW)	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

# Watch Your Woodsy Step this Summer

Drat, I missed it. Again. That would be the annual Rattlesnake Roundup in Noxen, PA held each June. I pass the signs en route to my Susquehanna County camp, but have never made the event, settling for the other social highlight of the year in the boonies – the Wyoming County Fair at summer’s end. Country music and a tractor pull, the Zenith of culture and entertainment in that neck of the woods. When in Rome, etc.

You want Broadway? Hop on a bus to New York City, about three hours down the road.

Last year I was en route to the little lakefront camp to square the place away for my wife and sister-in-law who were coming up for the 4th of July holiday week.

I would rather clean the gutters and have my teeth ground than be at the lake for the 4th. Bottle rockets set off by mindless yahoos at 9 in the morning? No, thank you. The best time at the lake is after Labor Day when the summer loonies have gone home.

Meanwhile, I’m heading up the two-lane when I spot the rattlesnake roundup signs. Forget a Trenton pork roll festival, a wussie event with the main attraction tasting like overrated Spam. These are snakes, baby, that can kill you.

But then, so can pork roll. It just takes longer.

The Rattlesnake Roundup is front page news in the local weekly, with color photos to boot. It is, after all, farm country. Tomato blight is front page news.

Meanwhile, fried snake meat tastes like chicken, as I recall from some good ‘ol boy cookouts down South. Pork roll tastes like grilled inner tube.

I will brace myself for hate emails

from true Trentonians. But cut me some slack; at least I didn’t call it “Taylor Ham.”

A recent roundup, now heavily regulated like anything else a government agency has its grungy paws into, resulted in 71 snakes captured. This included 28 rattlesnakes and six copperheads. They were displayed, and released.

I have no problem with that. I have a problem with the state telling me I have to set free slithering death that can kill me or my children. I don’t like snakes and will shoot one on sight. Sue me.

What drives me nuts is some clueless reporter labeling rattlesnakes and copperheads as “poisonous” snakes. Folks, let it be known to all in the land that snakes that can inflict bodily harm and even death with their bite are “venomous” snakes. “Poisonous” means you could die if you eat them.

Did I mention “tastes like chicken?” They do. But this is the summer travel and camping season, and rattlesnake on the grill is not what you’re thinking about. Fresh-caught bass or trout, perhaps, or just hot dogs or burgers.

A hike in the woods to add to the outdoor experience? Fine, bring the bug repellent; Zika is the virus du jour, and perhaps an air horn to ward off pesky bears. The latter is at least big and visible. Snakes are not.

There are some 20 species of creepy crawlers in New Jersey. Two can kill you. So can bears, but there are still lunatics out there who think they just sing and dance in the woods and are our friends. They, like snakes, inhabit woods and field for a living and don’t much appreciate humans intruding on their turf.

The two kinds of snakes here in New Jersey that should concern you if hiking



## On The Road

by Rick Methot

about our fine state parks or local trails are the northern copperhead and the timber rattler. Chances are you will never see either, if you watch where you’re putting your feet or hands while climbing over woodsy and rocky terrain, or perhaps a woodland stream.

According to a story by my friend and colleague Vin Sparano, some 6,500 people are bitten by venomous snakes annually. Only 15 of them die, which is a comforting statistic unless you’re one of the 15.

What to do if bitten by a rattler or copperhead? First, don’t panic. This would not apply to me whose first reaction would be “OMG, I’m going to die!”

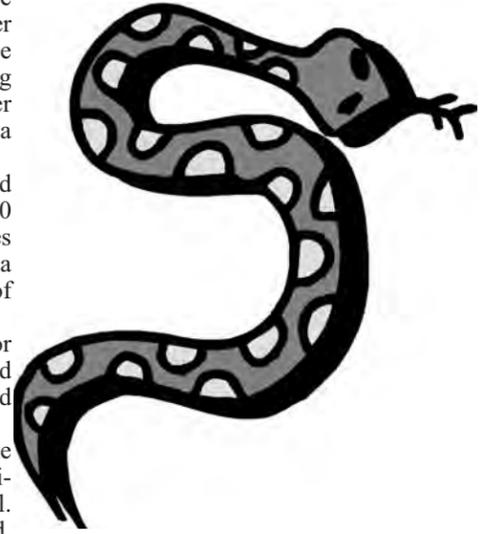
But the real path to survival is to take it easy, walk out of the woods to your vehicle, and head off to the nearest hospital. Forget snake bite kits, cutting the wound, and sucking the venom out. Call 911.

If you can identify the snake that did you wrong (doubtful), all the better for the professionals trying to save your sorry skin. It helps to get to health care pros as soon as possible. Tie a bandage above the bite, but don’t cut off blood flow.

The main advice in the really remote chance you are bitten by a venomous snake is get professional help... and you have time to do so.

But don’t lollygag.

Two “On the Road” columns by Rick Methot recently earned honors at the Mason-Dixon Outdoor Writers Spring



Conference in Hagerstown, MD.

“Remembering Some Long-Ago Good Times,” a November, 2015 column about fishing with his father, won best article in the annual Herb Blackwell Memorial Award competition. (The late Herb Blackwell of Trenton was the outdoor writer for The Trentonian newspaper for more than 40 years.)

“Kid Stuff and Other Follies at the Lake,” which appeared in the NJ Federated Sportsmen News last September, won third place in the Bass Pro Shops “Pass-it-On” writing contest.

(from prev. p.) in the course of that direct travel.

- The Study Commission found a lack of clarity in the statute that creates a risk of disparate and inconsistent application by law enforcement.

- The Attorney General is providing guidance through this directive to law enforcement and prosecutors to ensure the law is administered uniformly throughout the state. The directive sets forth a balanced approach for law enforcement and prosecutors to employ to determine whether a deviation in the course of direct travel between two points with a lawfully-possessed firearm is “reasonably necessary,” considering the nature, purpose and extent of the deviation from the firearm owner’s direct route.

- While not an exclusive list, some examples of stops or detours in the course of travel to or between locations that would

qualify as reasonably necessary include: collecting and discharging passengers; purchasing fuel, food and beverages, medication, or other needed supplies; using a restroom; contending with an emergency situation; or driving around a traffic jam.

A Directive For Uniform Statewide Practices And Procedures For Issuing Firearms Purchaser Identification Cards, Handgun Purchase Permits, And Permits To Carry Handguns:

- The Study Commission’s report noted complaints by firearm permit applicants about variations in the practices and procedures used by licensing authorities issuing Firearms Purchaser Identification Cards, Handgun Permits, and Carry Permits, including processing delays well beyond the 30 days prescribed by law and the imposition by some licensing authorities of application requirements that exceed the state permitting statute.

- The Attorney General directive requires licensing authorities simply to follow the law by processing permit applications in a timely fashion and limiting application requirements to those prescribed by statute.

- To increase transparency in the permitting process, the Directive requires licensing authorities to submit, annually, data on the number of ID cards and handgun purchase permit applications filed and processed per month over the year, and the length of time it took to process those applications. These statistics will be posted annually on the Division of State Police web site.

- The directive also envisions a more efficient and consistent application process, requiring the State Police, within nine months, to develop and disseminate to licensing authorities standard protocols promoting best practices for reviewing,

investigating and acting on applications for firearms purchaser identification cards, purchase permits, and handgun carry permits.

- Finally, the Attorney General will consider how new technology might streamline the processing of permit applications by directing the Superintendent of State Police, within 45 days, to convene a study group and report its findings to the Attorney General within 180 days of the group’s first meeting.

## Classified Ads

FOR SALE: Browning Shotgun Model BT-99; 12-ga., 34-inch barrel. Brand New, never used, still in original box and packaging. \$1375.00. TEXT 732-674-3115 if interested.

All classified ads are limited to 6 lines; there are approximately 42 characters per line (including spaces). No photos or graphics, please. Only items that can legally be sold are allowed. The Federation and all personnel associated with this publication assume no responsibility for ad content or condition of any goods, or quality of any services, offered for sale. Appearance of an ad in this publication does not indicate that the Federation endorses, guarantees or approves of any goods or services offered in the ad. The Federation and all personnel associated with this publication are in no way responsible for conditions of sale. All responsibilities are those of the person advertising the goods or services and/or the purchaser. The charge is \$15 for a two-month insertion, payable in advance by check or money order to the NJ State Federation of Sportsmen’s Clubs. Ad submissions should be forwarded to Oliver Shapiro, 155 Roseland Avenue, Caldwell, NJ 07006; questions may be directed to 973-953-1492 or emailed to olshapiroinnj@gmail.com.

# Events for June, 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4 Hunter Ed, Highland Lakes (NJDFW)
5 RVTA Tournament fishrvta.com	6	7	8	9	10	11 Fishing Derby, Monte Irvin Orange Park, 973-735-6229
12 Hunter Ed, Greenbank (NJDFW)	13	14 Fish & Game Council meeting	15	16 RVTA meeting fishrvta.com	17	18 RVTA Open Tournament fishrvta.org
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

## BLACK POWDER NOTES

by Joe Bilby

### Williamsburg Flintlock News, the “Stupids,” Uberti’s Commemorative 1866, and a Video Teaching Caution

Colonial Williamsburg, perhaps the most well-known historical venue in the United States, opened an “educational musket range” on March 19, 2016. The range offers guests an opportunity to learn about and actually operate the types of firearms that were used in the American Revolution, and for long afterward.

In the opening days of the Civil War, flintlocks were often issued to volunteers, and state armories were full of them. Workers at New Jersey’s state arsenal in Trenton and contractors in Newark spent months converting the state’s flintlocks to percussion ignition in 1861. While conversion to percussion ignition was expedited wherever possible, some soldiers in the Confederate army actually carried flintlocks into the war’s early battles.

At the new Williamsburg range, living history interpreters will inform guests about the history of flintlock guns, their mechanical operation, their use in hunting and war, as well as proper and safe handling.

Noting that the range provides a “new level” for engaging history, Peter Seibert, Colonial Williamsburg’s director of historic trades and skills, said, “For decades our guests could learn about these pieces and watch them being operated. Now they can really experience them – the weight, the smell, and the sound – not to mention how challenging their operation was for people whose lives often depended on it.”

Guests, under direct supervision of staff, will be able to prime and fire reproduction British short land pattern muskets and civilian fowling pieces. The range is accessible only by ticketed guests via a shuttle from the Williamsburg Lodge. Admission includes instruction, safety equipment, firearms, ammunition, and targets.

To participate, guests must reserve spaces in advance and present photo ID to purchase tickets on-site. Tickets are \$119 and are available to guests ages 14 and older. Children under 18 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Additional information is available at Colonial Williamsburg ticketing locations and hospitality properties, online at colonial-williamsburg.com, or by calling 855-296-6627.

#### Instructing the “Stupids”

In the early months of the Civil War, the basics of military life were often difficult to grasp for many volunteers, a situation that caused a Springfield, Massachusetts newspaper to complain that “(S)ome stupids down near Boston have been loading the United States rifle muskets with cartridges made of heavy paper, and finding that they do not work well, complain of the rifles as in fault.”

Apparently the “stupids” had been loading their rifle-muskets in the same manner as they had loaded smoothbore muskets in the past, pouring powder down the muzzle and then ramming down the rest of the cartridge, including the paper casing, unaware that with the rifle musket, the cartridge paper was supposed to be disposed of before inserting the Minie ball in the gun’s muzzle.

The newspaper went on to lecture the “stupids” that “no paper should be used in loading these arms. First the powder is poured in from the cartridge, and then the ball is dropped on top, and will go home of itself, but a gentle tap of the ramrod is useful to fill the cavity of the ball with powder, and leave no opportunity for the gas generated by the explosion to escape but behind the ball.”

Apparently there were “stupids” on the other side as well, since a Richmond

newspaper copied the article as an advisory to Virginians.

#### Uberti’s Commemorative 1866

Back in March I wrote about the limited production 150th anniversary Winchester Model 1866 commemorative carbine. Although a beautiful recreation of an iconic cartridge gun of the black powder era, it certainly wasn’t cheap at a suggested retail price of \$3,329.99. If you have a yen for a really nice re-creation of the original 1866 at a more manageable price, you might want to take a look at Uberti’s version of the famed “Yellowboy.”

The Uberti gun is lavishly engraved and hand chased in the original style and has the features of the early production flat-sided receiver, a transition design between the Model 1860 Henry and the 1866. The dark, case-hardened lever further enhances the overall aesthetics of the model as it contrasts with the brass receiver. The limited-edition model features a round, 20-inch barrel, which is encased with a satin walnut forend and finished with a brass forend cap and buttplate.

The Uberti gun is chambered in .45 Colt with a 10-round magazine capacity. Uberti’s “1866 Yellowboy Flatside 150th Anniversary Model” carries a suggested retail price of \$1,778, weighs 7.55 pounds, and has an overall length of 39 inches. For more information on the full line of A. Uberti products check out the company’s website at uberti.com.

#### Yet Another Caution on Powder Use

Just in case anyone has any remaining doubts as to what a charge of smokeless powder will do to a muzzle loader, I suggest they take a look at this “redneck science” video made by a couple of guys from Georgia. As they note, please do not try this at home. I have seen such experiments before, but I am still amazed at the complete destruction of a firearm using the wrong propellant can cause. Remember, not all powder that is black in color is not always “black powder.” Only use real black powder or a recognized substitute that is packaged in the original container when loading your muzzleloader. Link to it on Youtube at [youtube.com/watch?v=en384qVqrug](http://youtube.com/watch?v=en384qVqrug).

### Essex County Holds Fishing Derbies

The Essex County Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs invite the public to participate in Essex County’s 2016 Fishing Derbies. The free events will be held in seven locations in the Essex County Park System.

Each derby is free and open to children ages 15 and younger. All children must be accompanied by an adult and bring their own fishing pole, bait, bucket and chair. Prizes in various age categories for catching the first and most fish will be awarded at the conclusion of each derby. On-site registration begins an hour before the derby begins.

The fishing derbies will be held as follows:

May 7: Grover Cleveland Park Pond, Brookside Avenue and Runnymede Road, Caldwell/Essex Fells at 9 am.

May 14: Irvington Park Pond, Grove Street and Lyons Avenue, Irvington at 9 am.

May 19: Verona Park Boathouse, Bloomfield Avenue and Lakeside Avenue, Verona at 6 pm.

May 21: Weequahic Park Lake,



## The Sporting View

by Marty Boa



### New Book Promotes Different Approach To Gundog Training

Robert Milner knows how to get inside a dog’s head.

He’s been training retrievers since 1972, and has trained well over 2,000 retrievers using traditional compulsion methods. In 2002, Milner started training retriever gundogs using a positive training format and has since successfully trained hundreds of hunting retrievers using the positive model.

A retired USAF Lieutenant Colonel with 26 years of active and reserve service, Milner is an avid outdoorsman, who has owned and operated retriever-training kennels and has extensive experience in training gundogs, disaster search dogs, and explosive detection dogs. He has authored three books on retriever training, and has studied and used practices that he learned from working with some of the best training techniques that have been developed and used in the United Kingdom, along with an adaptation of B.F. Skinner’s principles of operant conditioning.

In short, Robert Milner has developed a training philosophy and regimen that he believes American dogs “deserve and merit.” Basically it emphasizes positive conditioning and reward, while minimizing or eliminating compulsion and force.

In his new book *Absolutely Positively Gundog Training* (paperback, 135 pages), Milner thoroughly explains the philosophy of positive training and how to implement it by describing the various procedures and techniques that not only put science in training, but make it fun for both dog and trainer.

The book’s 19 concise chapters are loaded with information on the positive training method. Robert Milner’s writing style makes for easy pleasant reading that is all information with no filler. Unlike traditional “how-to” writings, here the facts flow smoothly from the text to the reader, without an overabundance of numbers, lists, graphs, or charts. Like the training methods it promotes, *Absolutely Positively Gundog Training* is user friendly and once started is hard to put down.

The short chapter format of the book was most interesting to this columnist, as it allows the reader to move from one informative chapter to the next without getting bogged down and becoming bored or falling asleep. A sampling of chapters includes: “Pick a Dog That Fits,” “Gundog Behaviors: Innate and Trained,” “Punishment and Unwanted Behaviors,” “Cues, Commands and Prompts,” “Hunger Games,” “Frequency and Duration of Training Sessions,” “The Trainer’s Behavior,” and “A History of Labradors and Field Trails.”

*Absolutely Positively Gundog Training* is sure to become a must-have addition to the library of any hunter who wants to employ an easy-to-learn and less stressful training regimen.

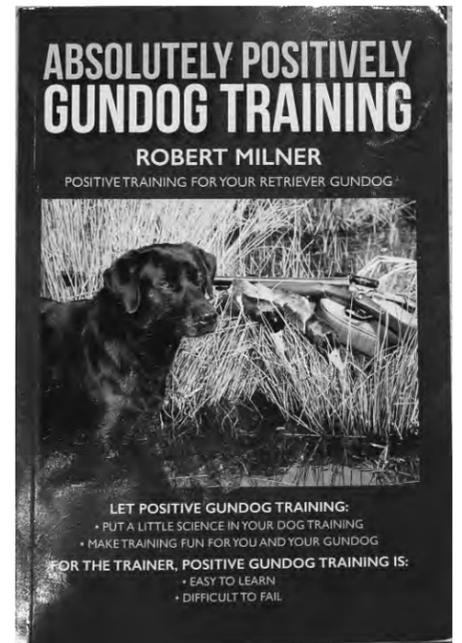
For current book pricing and ordering information contact Robert Milner, Duckhill Kennels, 350 Bailey Morrison Drive, Somerville, TN 38068; he can also be reached at [rmilner@fetchpup.com](mailto:rmilner@fetchpup.com) or 901-428-6694.

Elizabeth Avenue and Meeker Avenue, Newark at 9 am.

June 11: Monte Irvin Orange Park Pond, Center Street and Harrison Street, Orange at 9 am.

June 18: South Mountain Recreation Complex, Orange Reservoir, Paddle Boat area at 9 am.

For additional information, please call 973-735-6229. The fishing derbies will be held rain or shine.



Marketing research experts at Southwick Associates recently released through the digital news service The Outdoor Wire a list of what they have determined to be the 2015 top brands for many angling products. The list has been compiled from internet-based surveys completed during 2015 by AnglerSurvey.com panelists.

The list is outlined below and is only a fraction of all fishing categories tracked by Southwick Associates. Southwick Associates specializes in tracking and otherwise researching the percentage of sales occurring across different retail channels, total spending per category, average prices, and demographics for anglers buying specific products. Additional tracking information includes tracking related to total days spent fishing, type of fishing (fresh, salt, and other), preferred species, and where anglers fish.

Southwick Associates also tracks and compiles marketing-related information on trends associated with hunting and shooting. Survey results obtained through research done by Southwick Associates are scientifically analyzed to reflect the attitudes and habits of anglers and hunters across the United States. Southwick Associates makes this information available to individuals, companies and agencies connected with the outdoor industry, fisheries and wildlife officials, and sportsmen’s organizations.

In 2015, sport fishing’s most frequently purchased brands included:

Top reel brand: Shimano  
 Top rod brand: Shakespeare (Ugly Stik, Sturdy Stik, etc.)  
 Top combo brand: Shakespeare  
 Top fishing line brand: PowerPro  
 Top hard bait brand: Rapala  
 Top spinner bait brand: Strike King  
 Top jig brand: Strike King  
 Top sinker brand: Lindys  
 Top swivel brand: Eagle Claw  
 Top leader brand: Suffix  
 Top fly line brand: Rio  
 Top fly leader brand: Rio  
 Top tippets brand: Rio  
 Top wader brand: Simms  
 Top clothing brand: Columbia  
 Top raingear brand: Frogg Toggs  
 Top landing net brand: Frabill  
 Top bait bucket/aerator brand: Frabill  
 Top fishing knife brand: Rapala  
 Top fish scale brand: Berkley  
 Top trolling motor brand: Minn Kota

## More Legislative... Stuff

You'll get no argument from me.

Should some ill-fated soul find himself involuntarily fashioning the latest style in canvas jackets with wrap-around arms I, for one, do not believe s/he should own or possess a firearm. In addition, we have another politically engineered Catch-22 involving firearm owners. It's designated S-805, a bill in the New Jersey state Senate that purportedly addresses domestic violence, and it reared its ugly head in Trenton recently.

The problem with measures that include sensitive personal medical or psychological information is, how does one deal with situations that may become – or are – dangerous, without violating the privacy rights of accused individuals or those who may be the complainant? Doubling down on an already touchy situation is the fact that the rule-making process involves politicians and the last time I looked, integrity isn't always one of their strong suits, especially when dealing with gun laws. In my humble opinion, many politicians view the term "gun law" as code for "let's throw everything we have against the wall and see how much sticks."

To that end, state Senator Fred Madden (D-Dist. 4) teamed with Sen. Linda Greenstein (D-Dist. 14) to author S-1165 which addresses those who have been adjudicated as having mental health problems. If they meet specified criteria, these folks could, after a rather lengthy process, petition the court to have their mental health record expunged.

So why the new law? And, is it true as the National Rifle Association's Institute for Legislative Action claims, that this current bill is redundant and could result in someone who has already gone through the process, being forced into an expensive do-over?

When I called Madden's office, a staff member who asked to remain anonymous because s/he wasn't authorized to publicly address the bill, said it (S-1165) applies only to persons who had been committed involuntarily to a mental health facility. In addition, a person who has already petitioned the court for an expungement of their mental health record need only complete the process once, "unless."

That is, if someone has completed the process and the courts have agreed to the expungement of mental health records, they need not do anything else, unless they had not had their records cleared by NCIS.

But how does one go about making certain they were cleared through NCIS? It's simple. Either the person or their attorney had to check a specific box on the form when they completed the original

petition for expungement. If they failed to do so, then yes, they would have to complete the entire process again, according to the staff member.

Readers wishing to view the latest version can go to [www.njleg.state.nj.us/2016/Bills/S1500/1165\\_R1.PDF](http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/2016/Bills/S1500/1165_R1.PDF) and click on the "new" pdf version of the bill, then go to page 6, paragraph 12 where you'll find two paragraph 12s, one of which is enclosed in brackets [thusly] and the second underlined. The section enclosed in brackets is intended to be deleted whereas the underlined section is proposed, or new.

Nevertheless, the staff member helping me through this mental maze said the measure was approved and moved out of the Senate Law and Public Safety Committee on March 3 but still had to have some minor revisions as well as a funding section added before it will be brought to the floor for a vote.

The wording of Madden's measure as it applies to a petitioner going through the entire process a second time reads: "... (expungement) pending before the courts shall relieve (read: remove) a federal firearms prohibition based on a New Jersey mental health adjudication submitted to the National Instant Background Check System only if relief was sought in the expungement petition and was granted by the court."

But the aforementioned wording doesn't mention anything about forms or checking boxes. I'm told by the staff member that that is precisely what it means. I'd suppose the legalese is one of the methods by which pols take advantage of those who may harbor a desire to lawfully own a gun and are abiding by the legal processes to do so. Refer to: "throwing a lot of that stuff against the wall."

There are only two things this bill does that are substantially different than the original. First, it makes things that are complicated even more complicated, and it has this tendency to dip into the pockets of unsuspecting people who are already dealing with expensive problems.

Focusing on the same type of scenario but on an entirely different front, domestic violence laws are also often written in a manner that includes the ensnarement of people at risk. Always keep a watchful eye on bills and their political sponsors when they claim the proposed law is "for the public good," or for the "protection of the public." Nine times out of 10 those words translate into "we're going to take one or two of your constitutional rights away from you, but hey, they're trivial and you'll never notice it. It won't hurt a bit." It's a given that victims

## Tight Lines and Straightaway Shots®

by Robert Brunisholz



of domestic violence must be protected. Still, gun-grabbers who write these bills often stray far afield from their original aims or intents.

A portion of that type of verbiage came into play in November when what was then a new domestic violence bill (A-4218), was conditionally vetoed by Gov. Chris Christie. Christie cited portions of the bill that were "redundant and lacked the requisite due process." In addition, Christie proposed increasing penalties for those found guilty of domestic violence, something the vetoed bill did not do.

He was spot on, and in this instance those "requisite due process" rights just happen to be your second amendment rights. That measure had a 48-11 approval of the state Assembly before winding up on Christie's desk. The lop-sided approval rate as well as the disregard for due process in the bill should tell you something about New Jersey's body politic.

But now the replacement bill is off the bench and on the playing field; this time its Jersey number is S-805 which happens to be under the sponsorship of state Senator Loretta Weinberg (D-Dist. 37). In the meantime, the nation's top watchdog for your second amendment rights isn't exactly enamored with Weinberg's effort.

According to a March 11 release from the ILA, S-805 is not only a "recycled version" of the bill that was vetoed by Christie, but it's also a "template bill (that is) part of a nationwide agenda being pushed by New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg's gun control group," said the release.

Additionally, the release said there are other glaring deficiencies in Weinberg's bill, the least of which concerns the second amendment rights of someone either wrongly accused or found not guilty, but even worse, it fails to punish those who are guilty, or at least doesn't punish them any more than the original bill did.

To make matters worse, this bill also vaguely takes into consideration certain conducts of the accused such as a verbal argument or annoying someone, and uses that conduct for consideration in determining the potential forfeiture of property

(guns) as well as the suspension of the constitutional rights (that would be the second amendment, folks) of the accused, according to ILA officials.

Additionally, S-805 also fails to empower victims, both the victim of real domestic abuse as well as those who are wrongly accused. And according to ILA officials, not only does the Weinberg bill fail in the aforementioned areas, but even goes so far as to require the surrender of all firearms even if one or more of those firearms had been recently sold.

How does one go about complying with that? "Hey ah, Joe? Remember that model 870 I sold to you last month? Would you please take it to the police station; I have to turn it in."

The aforementioned information comes from the ILA, but digging a bit deeper, I also found a section that seems specifically designed to pour a few more drops of venom into an already festering wound. Page 9, line 9 requires a person to pay police for the storage of their firearm(s) while the firearms are in police custody. Even if the court finds someone not guilty of domestic violence or if the complaint is withdrawn, should the court order the return of the gun(s) in question, the formerly accused still owes the cops a few quid. That's for the inconvenience of storing your guns, as if you had any choice in the matter.

There was a day when most folks revered the laws of our land. We felt they were there to protect us from ne'er-dowells that would do us harm or steal our property. But instead of shoring up democracy, it seems contemporary laws are often written to coincide with the whims, wishes, biases, and prejudices of the authoring legislator, and more often than not, they are written in a linguistic fog that can have serious ramifications for the accused as well as the plaintiff.

Gun owners are harassed enough already in New Jersey. May I be so bold as to suggest Garden State sportsmen and women contact their assembly and senatorial representatives and firmly but politely ask them to hit the nay button on both of these bills?

### from Balsa, p. 1

cutting plastic version as the best possible compromise.

While square-billed shallow divers get the lion's share of the attention, balsa continues to excel as a material for other lure categories, too. The original Rapala floating minnow catches fish just as it did over 50 years ago, and twin-propellered bream imitators like the PH Custom Lures Squeaky P or the Brian's Bee have loyal followings, particularly when the bluegill are spawning. PH has even replicated the old Devil's Horse in balsa, and their Twin Spin sits atop the water at slow speeds and reacts quickly to every quiver of the rod.

At the other end of the depth spectrum, Rapala's DT series of crankbaits, which can dive as deep as 20 feet, are still made of balsa. Crank then into a rockpile or brush pile, let up a bit, and they'll back off quickly, preventing them from getting hung up. If you want a lure that stays more stable on the pause, stick with plastic, but balsa's buoyancy and ability to deflect make it a killer, particular in the summertime when fish are ganged up offshore and need some triggering event to get them to eat.

Rapala's continued presence in this market with this material shows that it's not just the custom lure makers – many of whose lures retail in the \$12 to \$30 price range – who can deliver the goods with this material. You can get into the balsa



arena at a price approximately the same as that for mass-produced plastic lures.

Because many of the balsa lures are produced by hand, the luremakers consider themselves artisans, and the rediscovery of balsa has been accompanied by a renaissance in custom paint jobs. Phil Hunt of PH Custom Lures makes a variety of killer bluegill patterns, and craw patterns like those in the prized old Wiggle Warts are becoming mainstream again. It's hard to say how much difference these patterns make, but in an era of ever-pressured fisheries and educated bass, every little bit helps.

A color scheme that's on target, combined with a material that deflects more desirably, can result in a few extra bites over the course of the year. For the weekend angler, that means more enjoyment. For the tournament angler, that means more fish in the livewell and more money in the bank.

### from Spinnerbaits, p. 1

pletely ignored, and then a black spinnerbait cast to the same pads caught three bass in quick succession.

Bass move feverishly in pods under chop. A pad field isolated in milfoil, for example, allows you to slow down, experiment, and determine early in the outing which spinnerbait might work, if fish are there to tell you. Even better, combinations of weeds and fallen brush, timber, or docks are likely to produce.

Pickereel not always loners – a pad field combined with milfoil may hold a half dozen or so around the edges – but pickereel don't cruise about as bass do. One look at their form reveals them as shallow water ambush predators, and that means they tend to stay under cover. The largest may inhabit deeper depths than their smaller brethren, but plenty of good-sized fish stalk weeds three to five feet deep.

Again, it's best to fish combinations of different weed types, especially around docks, submerged brush, or stumps. Pickereel give chase like rockets. Get the spinnerbait close to cover and knock wood if you can; anything to jar a surging strike. Usually, they overtake the lure directly from behind, getting hooked in the upper jaw beneath the snout, sometimes slashing sideways to get hooked in the mouth's corner. You feel strikes hardest when the fish come across sideways, but a hit from behind is dramatic if the retrieve is close to

surface.

In some waters, the average-sized pickereel matches the average bass in weight, and is a fierce and worthy gamefish despite its poor reputation in some quarters. Contrary to some opinions, they are not always eager to strike, and on some occasions a pickereel can seem as playful as a mammal, rolling over a spinnerbait repeatedly cast back, rushing the lure without hitting. They've even nipped off the ends of double twister-tail plastic trailers.

Shallow water is teeming with activity in May. Add brush, timber, docks, and even rocks at the edges of drop-offs to the weedy equation, and have a blast. Remember that the right combination of wind, sun and optimal water temperatures can drive your quarry to perform outrageous stunts.

### Send In Your Pictures!

Assert your braggin' rights! The *NJFSN* is looking for readers' pictures of trophy, interesting, or simply noteworthy catches, kills, or sights seen while hunting, fishing, trapping, or shooting. Digital images are preferred (email to [olshapiroinnj@gmail.com](mailto:olshapiroinnj@gmail.com)), or send prints to the editor (along with return postage if you want them back). The *NJFSN* reserves the right to publish or not publish any picture it receives, at its discretion. Include your name, home town, contact information (in case we have questions) and details of the picture's contents.

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