



Outdoor Oklahoma

JULY/AUGUST 2019 – ONLY \$10 A YEAR

In This Issue:

2019 Readers' Photography Showcase

A PUBLICATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION



Panoramas

“Who are you? Who, who, who, who?”
Just like The Who back in '78,
we really want to know.

Why? Because the better we know you — our Outdoor Oklahoma readers — the better we can serve you and provide you the best magazine possible. *More about this later in this column.*

But for now, allow me to introduce myself. I'm Betsey York, and I joined the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation in October 2018 as the Human Dimensions Specialist. My job for the Department is to concentrate on the “human side” of wildlife conservation, which is a large part of the decisions we make to fulfill our mission: to manage and protect fish and wildlife, along with their habitats, while also growing our community of hunters and anglers, partnering with those who love the outdoors, and fostering stewardship with those who care for the land.

Some of the things I do in my job:

- Incorporate public input into fish and wildlife management decisions.
- Provide information on demographic and economic trends of hunters and anglers.
- Coordinate or facilitate public meetings.
- Evaluate Wildlife Department programs.

But I probably spend most of my time working to gather the opinions of the people we serve: hunters, anglers and those who value wildlife.

When it comes to surveys, I often help determine methods for collecting social data, write survey questions, analyze data, and prepare reports about results. The Department might have two or three social research projects ongoing at one time.

There is an increasing disdain for surveys. Oftentimes commercially produced surveys may be designed to benefit those who are paying for the surveys. But when it comes to surveys by the Wildlife Department, the motives are quite different.

Wildlife Department surveys produce feedback that directly links sportsmen and sportswomen and the state agency that represents their interests through conservation efforts and game harvest laws. The data we collect are invaluable in helping the Wildlife Department, political leaders, conservation groups and even businesses understand issues, concerns, services and products related to fish and wildlife. Those natural resources belong to all of us, not just a certain few.



A major survey that we conduct each year is the Game Harvest Survey. It is a comprehensive effort to collect data from a randomly selected sample of hunting license holders about their harvest of game species in Oklahoma and their input about management issues.

Other public input opportunities the Department offers include the Oklahoma Angler Survey, conducted every five years; creel surveys of anglers, conducted randomly; public hearings on proposed new or changing regulations, held

annually usually in January; and focus groups on various important topics, held as needed.

But there's a survey coming up soon that will be of particular interest to you. It has been many years since we reached out to our Outdoor Oklahoma readers to seek their opinions on the magazine and what we can do to make it better.

So please be on the lookout in the next few weeks. You might receive a postcard or email message asking you to take a few minutes to go online and complete our **Outdoor Oklahoma Reader Survey**. We value your input. And as always, we thank you for your support of the magazine and the Wildlife Department!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Betsey York".

Betsey York,
Human Dimensions Specialist

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The American Bison by Justin Veach, Information Intern

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ON THE COVER: Dwarf American toad (Anaxyrus americanus) at Lake Stanley Draper in Oklahoma City. Photo by Tyler Albertson, Del City

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Off the Beaten Path

NOTES ON WILDLIFE • OUTDOOR TIPS • READERS' LETTERS • ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS
COMPILED BY DON P. BROWN

RICK HOLDER TAKES WILDLIFE COMMISSION SEAT

Southwestern Oklahoma bank executive Rick Holder, 60, of Creta begins serving an eight-year term in July 2019 as a member of the Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Oklahoma Gov. J. Kevin Stitt appointed Holder on April 26. Holder replaces Robert Dan Robbins of Altus, who served since 2011. District 7 includes the counties of Ellis, Dewey, Roger Mills, Custer, Beckham, Washita, Kiowa, Greer, Jackson, Harmon and Tillman.

"My family has always respected wildlife, and we've always had that reputation. We've always been outdoor-oriented, so maybe I can make a difference," Holder said. "I'm excited to get started, meet the other Commissioners and find out about all the different hunting and fishing opportunities across Oklahoma."

He was raised in Altus, and he recalls as a youngster toting his BB gun and tagging along with his father on quail hunts. "Bobwhite quail is my passion. In the '70s, all we had was quail hunting down here." But soon, Rio Grande turkeys and white-tailed deer populations increased in southwestern Oklahoma.

Holder is an Altus High School graduate. He earned a bachelor's degree in agricultural economics from Oklahoma State University in 1981, and entered the banking industry in 1982



with Stockmans Bank in Gould. He's worked in nearly every position at that bank during his career. Now he is chief financial officer and chairman of the board of Stockmans Bank, with headquarters in Altus and an additional five locations. He and his brother, Mark, also have a cow/calf business on their family's original ranchland first settled by their great-grandfather in 1898.

For many years, Holder has served as a director of the Western Oklahoma State College Foundation, where he works to secure scholarship funding. He is also a board member of the Harmon County Livestock Show and The Bankers Bank

of Oklahoma City, and he is a past member of the Salvation Army and Lions Club.

Holder's wife, Angie, is a physical therapist. They have three sons, a daughter and three grandsons.

The Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Commission is the eight-member governing board of the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation. The Commission establishes state hunting and fishing regulations, sets policy for the Wildlife Department and indirectly oversees all state fish and wildlife conservation activities. ♦♦✕

NEW REGULATIONS GUIDE ARRIVING SOON

One highlight of the summer — at least in our book — is the annual arrival of "our book": the new **Oklahoma Hunting and Fishing Regulations Guide**.

Actually it is the book for everyone who hunts, fishes or traps in Oklahoma. It is perhaps the most important book that every hunter and angler should reference for the following 12 months.

The free Guide will be available in print in mid-July at license vendors and Wildlife Department offices across the state. It is already online at wildlifedepartment.com, and on the GoOutdoorsOklahoma mobile app for Apple or Android devices.

Again this year, the Guide has a flip-book format, with hunting regulations on one side, and fishing regulations on the other side when the book is flipped over. A middle section contains Game Warden information and information related to chronic wasting disease.

Some notable changes this coming year include allowing raccoon harvest year-round; expanding the area open for bear hunting; and dropping the requirement to complete the "record of game" section on big game and turkey licenses, and the "record of harvest" section on paddlefish permits. Also, three new Wildlife Management Areas have been added to the Special Area Regulations section.

Hunters and anglers are reminded that the annual Guide is a summary of Oklahoma statutes in Titles 29 and 800 that pertain to fish and wildlife. It is not a legal document, and people are responsible for knowing and abiding by state statutes. ♦♦✕





The Six BearWise Basics



Never Feed or Approach Bears

Intentionally feeding bears or allowing them to find anything that smells or tastes like food teaches bears to approach homes and people looking for more. Bears will defend themselves if a person gets too close, so don't risk your safety and theirs!



Secure Food, Garbage and Recycling

Food and food odors attract bears, so don't reward them with easily available food, liquids or garbage.



Remove Bird Feeders When Bears Are Active

Birdseed and grains have lots of calories, so they're very attractive to bears. Removing feeders is the best way to avoid creating conflicts with bears.



Never Leave Pet Food Outdoors

Feed pets indoors when possible. If you must feed pets outside, feed in single portions and remove food and bowls after feeding. Store pet food where bears can't see or smell it.



Clean & Store Grills

Clean grills after each use and make sure that all grease, fat and food particles are removed. Store clean grills and smokers in a secure area that keeps bears out.



Alert Neighbors to Bear Activity

See bears in the area or evidence of bear activity? Tell your neighbors and share information on how to avoid bear conflicts. Bears have adapted to living near people; now it's up to us to adapt to living near bears.

© 2018

Learn More: BearWise.org

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*Helping People Live Responsibly
with Black Bears*



Game Warden's Journal

**ACCOUNTS FROM THE FIELD BY THE PUBLIC
SERVANTS WHO ENFORCE THE FISH AND
WILDLIFE LAWS OF OKLAHOMA**



In May, Game Wardens Justin Cornett, based in Le Flore County, and Andrew Potter, based in Choctaw County, attended Swift Water Rescue Operations Training on the Lower Mountain Fork River. This training was funded by the McCurtain County Firefighters Association and taught by Oklahoma State University Fire Service Training. Participants included firefighters, emergency medical personnel and law enforcement officers. Game Wardens train and work hard to support public safety. Game Wardens urge all sportsmen, sportswomen and outdoor enthusiasts to play it safe especially when on or around water.



In mid April, angler Zachary Sutterfield of Durant harvested this alligator gar while bowfishing on Lake Texoma. The fish was 6-foot-9-inches long and weighed about 170 pounds. Luckily Nic Sutterfield and Billy Sutterfield were there to help wrangle this big prehistoric fish into the boat!

Zachary prides himself in being a conservationist. He allowed Wildlife Department Fisheries Biologist Richard Snow to come and gather data from the gar for important research.

(Photo courtesy of Game Warden Trey Hale, based in Bryan County.)

Game Wardens Karlin Bailey, based in Creek County, and Carlos Gomez, based in Tulsa County, recently completed a lengthy investigation in conjunction with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Game Wardens received information about people staying in a hotel and bringing in unusual amounts of turtles. During the initial contact, the Game Wardens seized more than 180 turtles. They also learned that several shipments of turtles had already been made to buyers on the coast. The people were charged with illegal possession of wildlife and selling native wildlife.



They paid fines of \$900 apiece and \$10,000 in restitution. Illegal wildlife trade can be big business. Anyone who sees unusual activity is asked to report it to the local Game Warden. This case shows what one person who reports can accomplish in safeguarding Oklahoma's wildlife.

First Fish Alert! Jase, 5, landed this beautiful crappie for his first fish ever at Lake Altus-Lugert this spring. Game Warden Daniel Perkins, based in Jackson County, was lucky enough to meet Jase and get the whole story!



(Reports from the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation-Game Wardens Facebook page.)

EDITOR'S NOTE: Please help make a difference! When violators break the law, they steal fish and wildlife from you! Report violations anonymously by calling Operation Game Thief at (800) 522-8039. You could earn a cash reward.

2018 CREATIVE WRITING COMPETITION

"BEING OUT IN THE WOODS TAUGHT ME PATIENCE"

EDITOR'S NOTE: Each year, the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation and Oklahoma Station Chapter Safari Club International join to sponsor a creative writing competition for Oklahoma middle and high school students. A boy and a girl from two age divisions are selected winners. Students were required to write essays using the theme "Hunting: Sharing the Heritage" or "Archery: What I Like About Archery in the Schools and Bowhunting." Winners in the age 15-17 category receive a guided antelope hunt in the Texas Panhandle, and winners in the 11-14 age category receive a hunting trip at the Chain Ranch and a scholarship to the Outdoor Texas Camp. In this issue, Outdoor Oklahoma honors senior category female winner Kaylee Rodriguez, 17, from Ninnekah High School.



OKLAHOMASTATIONSCL.ORG

HUNTING: SHARING THE HERITAGE

By Kaylee Rodriguez

Imagine sitting in a pile of giant red and yellow leaves, observing a white sack filled with a heavy substance to anchor it to the ground. A bright red, yellow and blue target painted on it shines brightly through the dead grass. The smell of fall fills the air. It is still and quiet. All of a sudden, the silence is broken by the whipping sound of an arrow slicing through the air. The arrow eventually stops with a thud into the target. I can picture this exact scene, as I have lived through it many times. As a young child, I would often watch my uncle shoot his bow and arrow in my grandparents' backyard. I was a quiet child who spent much of my time practicing sports, while across the yard my uncle would also be practicing his archery skills. At the time I took no particular interest in hunting. The only thing I knew was my uncle would often bring a deer home to show off to our family.

As I got older, my uncle decided to take my sister and me out to one of his hunting spots. Of course, at the time we just carried the light equipment and walked heavy-footed,



crashing through the fallen leaves and scaring off any potential wildlife in the area. Finally, after what seemed to be a million miles of walking, we reached a small clearing full of grasses as tall as my head, and trees taller than most buildings. My sister and I sat in the camouflage blind for what seemed like hours, but it was peaceful and relaxing. After my first hunting trip, I grew to have a better appreciation for the outdoors and found myself wanting to spend even more time watching nature. So, I went with my uncle and sister on many more hunting trips and often took in the scenery and admired the beauty of nature. Sometimes I tried to capture what I saw by taking pictures, but I often found myself not wanting to see my surroundings through a lens, but rather see it with my eyes.

As I got into my teens, I grew too busy with my schoolwork and sports to take time to go out on hunting trips. I slowly started to fade away from my hunting heritage and how it brought me closer to nature. However, that changed for me this past year. I did not realize how much I missed being out in nature until my boyfriend forced me out to the woods just a couple of weeks ago. His hunting heritage is what helped him connect with family members; it also helped me relate to them, as well. As I have gotten older, I have realized I often forgot about what made me into the person I am today. Being out in the woods taught me patience and gave me a real appreciation for nature. My hunting heritage helped connect me to my family and other people around me. --X

BROKEN BOW YIELDS STATE-RECORD SMALLMOUTH BUFFALO

New state- or lake-record fish have been added to the Wildlife Department's official database in recent weeks. Here is a snapshot of the big ones that didn't get away!



Oklahoma Record Smallmouth Buffalo

Weight:
66 pounds, 13 ounces.
Length:
39.96 inches.
Girth:
38.34 inches.
Angler:
Hugh Newman of Broken Bow.
Method of Catch:
Rod and reel.
Date Caught:
May 3, 2019.
Area Caught:
Broken Bow Lake, Cedar Creek.



Canton Lake Record Flathead Catfish (Unrestricted)

Weight:
61.4 pounds.
Length:
46 inches.
Girth:
29 inches.
Angler:
Casandra Key of Stigler.
Method of Catch:
Jugline.
Date Caught:
May 18, 2019.
Area Caught:
Near the dam.



What's the biggest fish you've ever caught? A 7-pound largemouth, a 2-pound crappie or a 45-pound blue catfish? While your fish might not be a new state record, it possibly could be the biggest fish ever caught from your favorite lake. Thanks to a network of record-keepers at lakes across the state, your next trophy could qualify as a lake record.

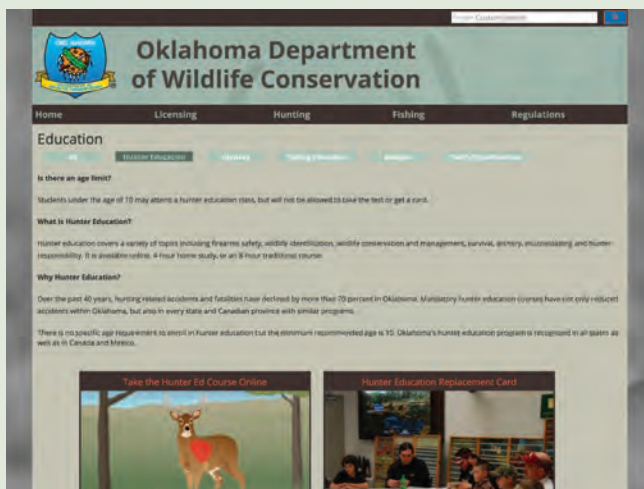
The Lake Record Fish Program was established as a way to serve anglers and recognize big fish and the lakes they come from. To find out more, go online to www.wildlifedepartment.com/lake_records2. --X



HUNTER EDUCATION CLASS SCHEDULE ONLINE

This is a great time of the year to think about whether you or someone you know will require Hunter Education certification before this fall. Hunter Education certification is required before anyone ages 10 to 30 can buy a regular hunting license. However, anyone 30 or younger may buy an apprentice-designated hunting license, which requires a licensed hunter to be present with the apprentice.

Hunter Education certification is available two ways: an online course through www.wildlifedepartment.com, and a classroom course taught at various times and locations statewide.



Oklahoma does not charge a fee for taking either the online course or the classroom course. Children 9 or younger may go through the Hunter Education course to learn about hunting safety, but they are not eligible to test for certification until they reach age 10. Also, anyone 31 and older is not required to have Hunter Education certification to buy a regular hunting license.

Those who want to attend a classroom session for Hunter Education must go online to

www.GoOutdoorsOklahoma.com and click on "Events" to search through available classes. Students are required to register using their GoOutdoorsOklahoma account. --X

Outdoor Calendar

FOR NEW UPDATES TO THE OUTDOOR CALENDAR, PLEASE VISIT THE DEPARTMENT'S
WEBSITE: WWW.WILDLIFEDEPARTMENT.COM/CALENDAR.HTM

JULY 2019

1	Okla. Wildlife Conservation Commission meeting, 9 a.m., OKC.
2	Controlled Hunts results posted online.
6	Oklahoma City free fishing day, no city permit required.
7	"Outdoor Oklahoma" TV, Fishing Basics, 8 a.m., OETA.
9	Family fishing clinic, Jenks-Zebco pond, https://license.gooutdoorsoklahoma.com/Event/Events.aspx . Family fishing clinic, Mustang-Wildhorse Park, https://license.gooutdoorsoklahoma.com/Event/Events.aspx .
13	Boat safety class, 10 a.m., Bass Pro Broken Arrow, okboated@gmail.com . Hooked on Fishing clinic, OKC-Edwards Park, https://license.gooutdoorsoklahoma.com/Event/Events.aspx .
14	"Outdoor Oklahoma" TV, Dripping Springs Bass, 8 a.m., OETA.
16	Okla. Striped Bass Assn. meeting, 7 p.m., Zebco, Tulsa, (918) 639-8114. Family fishing clinic, Mustang-Wildhorse Park, https://license.gooutdoorsoklahoma.com/Event/Events.aspx . Family fishing clinic, Jenks-Zebco pond, https://license.gooutdoorsoklahoma.com/Event/Events.aspx .
20	Hooked on Fishing clinic, OKC-MetroTech Springlake, https://license.gooutdoorsoklahoma.com/Event/Events.aspx
21	"Outdoor Oklahoma" TV, Eufaula Crappie, 8 a.m., OETA.
27	Boat safety class, 10 a.m., Bass Pro Broken Arrow, okboated@gmail.com .
28	"Outdoor Oklahoma" TV, 9-year-old Nate, 8 a.m., OETA. Hooked on Fishing clinic, OKC-Crystal Lake, https://license.gooutdoorsoklahoma.com/Event/Events.aspx .

- **Ducks Unlimited** event set in Oklahoma City, July 12-13. Info: www.ducks.org/Oklahoma/events.
- **Friends of NRA** event set in Ardmore, July 27. Info: www.FriendsOfNRA.org.
- **National Wild Turkey Federation** events set in Wilburton, July 13; Stigler, July 20. Info: www.nwtf.org/events.

AUGUST 2019

1	Entry deadline, Oklahoma Waterfowl Stamp Design Contest.
3	Oklahoma City free fishing day, no city permit required.
4	"Outdoor Oklahoma" TV, Underwater Lights, 8 a.m., OETA.
10	Boat safety class, 10 a.m., Bass Pro Broken Arrow, okboated@gmail.com .
11	"Outdoor Oklahoma" TV, Soft Baits/Pine Creek Bass, 8 a.m., OETA.
12	Okla. Wildlife Conservation Commission meeting, 9 a.m., Oklahoma City.
18	"Outdoor Oklahoma" TV, Making Monsters, 8 a.m., OETA.
20	Okla. Striped Bass Assn. meeting, 7 p.m., Zebco, Tulsa, (918) 639-8114.
24	Boat safety class, 10 a.m., Bass Pro Broken Arrow, okboated@gmail.com .
25	"Outdoor Oklahoma" TV, Duck and Fletcher, 8 a.m., OETA.

- **ODWC Classroom Hunter Education** set in Dewey, Aug. 18; Altus, Aug. 24; Laverne, Aug. 24; Marlow, Aug. 24; Owasso, Aug. 24; Bristow, Aug. 24; Stillwater, Aug. 31. Must pre-register: <https://license.gooutdoorsoklahoma.com/Event/Events.aspx>.
- **Ducks Unlimited** events set in Coweta, Aug. 3; Bartlesville, Aug. 3; Sand Springs, Aug. 10; Perry, Aug. 10; Broken Arrow, Aug. 17; Idabel, Aug. 24; Guthrie (Silverleaf), Aug. 24. Info: www.ducks.org/Oklahoma/events.
- **Friends of NRA** events set in Altus, Aug. 2; Oklahoma City, Aug. 8; Enid, Aug. 10; Newcastle, Aug. 15; Elk City, Aug. 17; Tulsa, Aug. 22. Info: www.FriendsOfNRA.org.
- **National Wild Turkey Federation** events set in Eufaula, Aug. 3; Holdenville, Aug. 10; Grove, Aug. 17. Info: www.nwtf.org/events.

**** FOR HUNTING SEASON DATES, GO TO
WWW.WILDLIFEDEPARTMENT.COM/HUNTING/SEASONS ****

THE OKLAHOMA WILDLIFE CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

Your tax-deductible donation helps support the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation and its activities in managing the state's fish and wildlife resources and habitat.

The Wildlife Department receives no general state tax appropriations, with its operations funded mainly by license sales and federal grants. The Foundation will provide additional financial support for ODWC's mission.



www.OKwildlifeconservation.org

[www.Facebook.com/OKWildlifeFoundation](https://www.facebook.com/OKWildlifeFoundation)

Game Bag

A COLLECTION OF LETTERS TO THE WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT

We'd like to hear from you! Send your letters to Outdoor Oklahoma Letters, P.O. Box 53465, Oklahoma City, OK 73152, or send e-mail to donald.brown@odwc.ok.gov.

Dear Director J.D. Strong,

Yesterday I had an encounter with an injured hawk, a Coopers hawk I believe, and thanks to ODWC Game Warden Tim Campbell, it was a delightful and rewarding one.

My next-door neighbors first had the hawk in their yard, and in an effort to get it to hop—its wing was hurt—up to and over their back fence to the creek, they sent it to my yard. I have two dogs. One, a 15-pound doxie, and so I kind of wanted the hawk gone, but safely gone!

For a while it was about 12 feet up in a tree, and during that time a nice animal control officer came to contemplate possible action to recover it, but it was too high up. After she left, the bird eventually fluttered to the ground. I called animal control again, but they were closing. They suggested I call Game Warden Campbell, which I did.

I live up near Penn Square Mall, and Game Warden Campbell was in Norman. Still, after 6 p.m. on a Friday evening, he came to help. After admiring the handsome bird for a time, trying to figure out how to capture it, Game Warden Campbell devised a method, and it worked beautifully. He transferred the bird into a box with holes in it, and it is now at the vet. I pray that it will heal and survive. If it does not, I know that we tried.

Truly, Game Warden Tim Campbell went the extra mile in caring about and for this beautiful hawk. And incidentally, he was exceedingly professional, courteous and pleasant. I am so appreciative and wanted you to know what a fine employee you have. Thanks so much to Tim Campbell and the ODWC!

Margaret Cox, Oklahoma City

.....

Dear Wildlife Department,

I want to send a huge thanks to Richard Beagles and Eric Suttles, Wildlife Biologists, for their assistance and involvement at the Wildlife Outreach Meeting at the Veterans War Community south of Wilburton. Both of their comments and input were perceived very well, so thanks for their knowledge and willingness to share. I have received some comments back from a couple of the members and they are also very thankful and wanted me to pass the message along. Thanks.

Dustin Lamoreaux
Oklahoma Coordinating Wildlife Biologist
Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever



Dear Information & Education Supervisor Colin Berg and I&E Specialist Shawn Gee,

We cannot thank you enough for a FANTASTIC night of fishing. Your program is so great, and we had a blast. I really appreciate you coordinating the night for us to film. Plus, the whole presentation was so fun and engaging! Bravo to the whole team!

I'm looking forward to sharing this story with our viewers all across the state. Thank you for all you do. I'm looking forward to doing many more stories with you all (and returning to a fishing clinic this summer, too!)

Thanks again!

Julie Chin, "Discover Oklahoma" TV show

EDITOR'S NOTE: Gee held a family fishing clinic in Jenks recently, with "Discover Oklahoma" featuring the event for TV (view it at <https://youtu.be/HuYU9rIJENG>). About 25 people participated, and they caught many fish. Chin said she would be signing up her family for one of the summer fishing clinics.

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Dear Outdoor Oklahoma,

Just wanted to pass on some good news. Last season, I had the privilege of helping Bobby Armstrong put on a "Learn to Turkey Hunt" workshop in the Elk City area. Well, this season I heard from multiple people who attended the workshop to let me know about their first turkey hunting season on their own and on public land. It was great to hear their stories of success and lessons learned in the field on their own. A weekend workshop turned out some lifelong turkey hunters and public land users.

Marcus Thibodeau, ODWC Wildlife Biologist



Fall 2019 - Spring 2020

OKLAHOMA

Hunting Seasons

DEER & ELK

Archery | Oct. 1 - Jan. 15
 Youth Gun | Oct. 18 - 20
 Muzzleloader | Oct. 26 - Nov. 3
 Gun | Nov. 23 - Dec. 8
 Holiday Antlerless | Dec. 20 - 29

TURKEY

Fall Archery | Oct. 1 - Jan. 15
 Fall Gun | Nov. 2 - 22
 Youth Spring | April 4 - 5
 Spring | April 6 - May 6
 Youth Spring (SE) | April 18 - 19
 Spring (SE) | April 20 - May 6

BEAR

Archery | Oct. 1 - 20
 Muzzleloader | Oct. 26 - Nov. 3

ANTELOPE

Archery | Oct. 1 - 14

DUCKS

Youth Days
 Panhandle Zone
 Oct. 5 & Feb. 1
 Zone 1
 Oct. 5 & Feb. 1
 Zone 2
 Oct. 5 & Feb. 1
Regular Season
 Panhandle Zone
 Oct. 12 - Jan. 8
 Zone 1
 Oct. 26 - Dec. 1 &
 Dec. 14 - Jan. 19
 Zone 2
 Nov. 2 - Dec. 1 &
 Dec. 14 - Jan. 26

DOVE

Sept. 1 - Oct. 31 &
 Dec. 1 - 29

PHEASANT

Dec. 1 - Jan. 31

QUAIL

Nov. 9 - Feb. 15

SQUIRREL

May 15 - Jan. 31

FURBEARER

Dec. 1 - Feb. 29

RABBIT

Oct. 1 - March 15



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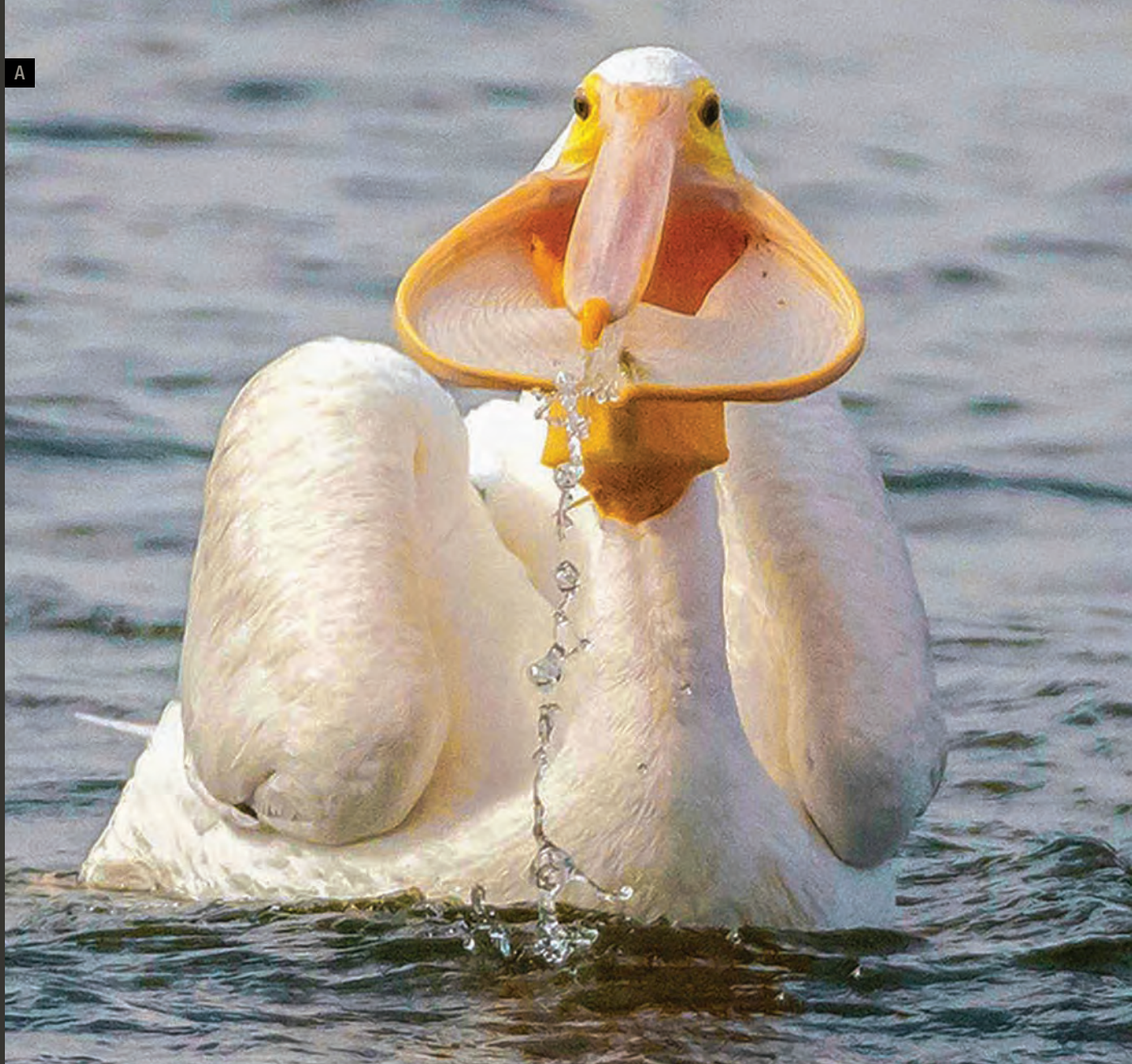
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 Go Outdoors Oklahoma



DISCLAIMER: This poster is not a legal document. The poster is an interpretive summary of the Title 21 and 22 of Oklahoma Statutes governing fur and wildlife laws as established by the Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Commission. For a complete listing of official regulations, you can obtain copies of current Oklahoma Statutes through your local library.

This program receives federal assistance from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and thus prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, disability age, and sex (gender), pursuant to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. To request an accommodation or information on this program, please contact the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, 4405 S.W. 10th, P.O. Box 1000, Oklahoma City, OK 73169. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or service, please contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office for Diversity and Workforce Management, 5275 Leesburg Plaza, Falls Church, Virginia 22041.



2019 READERS' PHOTOGRAPHY SHOWCASE

Among my favorite parts of putting together Outdoor Oklahoma magazine is the chance to see some visually stunning images. And there's no better time to see those images than during our annual Readers' Photography Showcase competition.

The photographic talent on display by this magazine's readers is no less than stunning. The best of these could easily capture any national award for the best nature photography of the year!

The RPS entries seem to keep getting better and better as the years go by. This year's crop is no exception. As usual, there are only so many pages in our special RPS issue in which to share this visual harvest. And so, we are forced to choose what we believe are the "best of the best" for inclusion.

The following pages feature 124 astounding views of nature's beauty and bounty, a result of the dedication of some 80 different artists who wielded a camera to capture a moment in time for all of us to enjoy. That means for every photo that earned its way into the magazine, there were six others that were left behind.

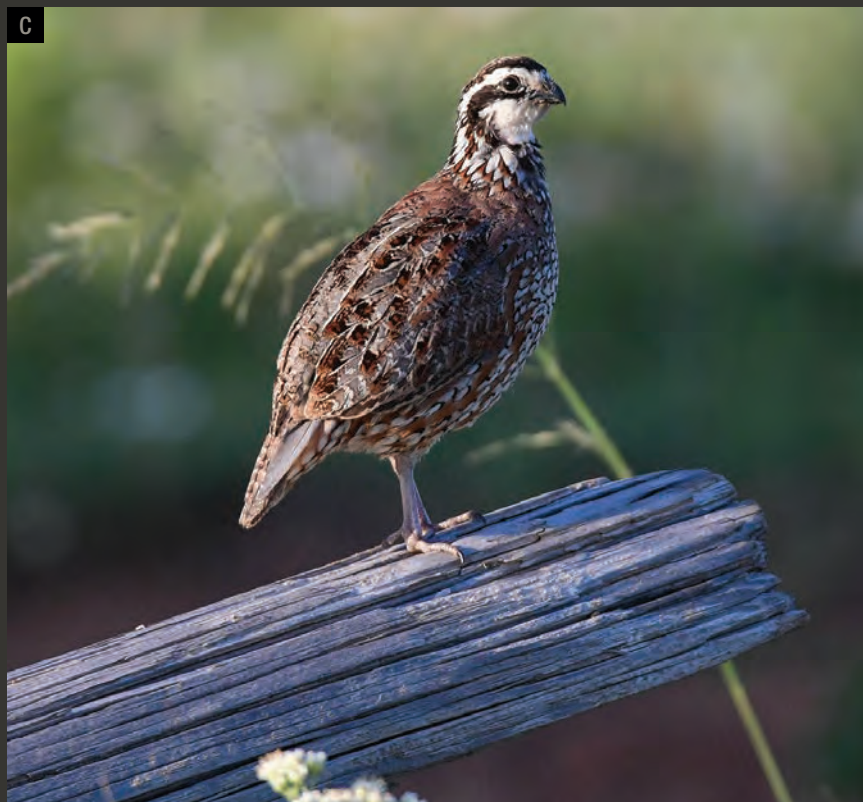
Regardless, I want each photographer who submitted to RPS to know that his or her efforts are seen and greatly appreciated. Without all of you, we couldn't adequately do justice to the striking sights that can be witnessed in Outdoor Oklahoma!

—Don P. Brown, Information & Education Specialist

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A. I was taking photos of American white pelicans feeding... I couldn't believe what I was seeing! Photo by Debbie Peck

B. An old buck in Osage County with a little tree tangled up in its antlers, taking camouflage to a whole new level! (The tree finally came loose the next day.) Photo by Carmon Briggs, Pawhuska

C. Northern bobwhite checking out the cattle one morning on the family farm in Caddo County. Photo by Debbie Peck, Fort Cobb

D. A young burrowing owl resting on a pasture fencepost in McClain County. Photo by Dee Carter, Newcastle



F



A. Male wood duck taking flight from Blackfork Creek in southeastern Oklahoma. Photo by Gene Blackwell, Heavener

C. Horned grebe at Lake Hefner in Oklahoma City. Photo by Chase Moxley, Oklahoma City

D. This photo of a northern pintail was taken in a flooded cornfield that bordered the Arkansas River in northern Oklahoma. Photo by Nick Spears, Ponca City

F. Photo by Caleb Emde

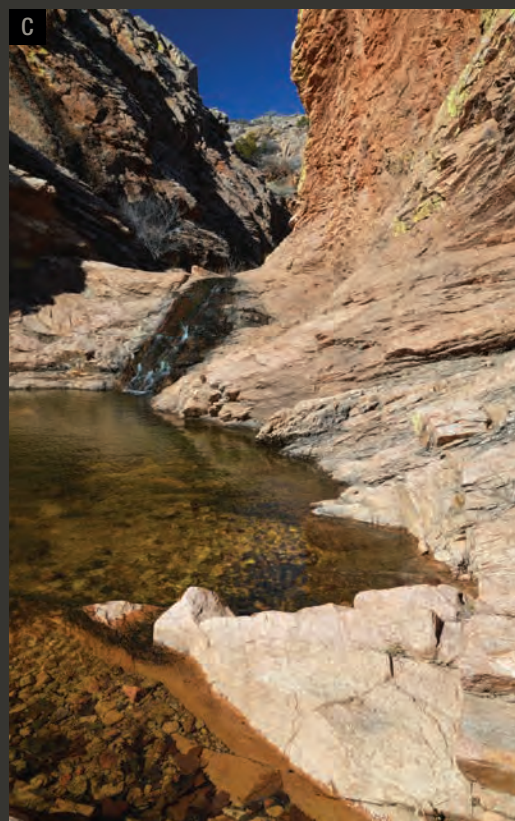
B. Hooded merganser photographed at Lake Hefner in Oklahoma City. Photo by Joe Stewart, Edmond

G. Sunrise on the decoys in Delaware County. Photo by Eric Brown, Tulsa

E. Photo by Tyler Deaton, Bartlesville

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F



A. Bighorn sheep on Black Mesa near Kenton, Okla. Photo by Ronald Jones, Tucumcari, N.M.

B. Bison at Chickasaw National Recreation Area in Sulphur. Photo by Chris Coffey, Davis

C. Post Oak Creek at the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. Photo by Ted Nishimuta II, Cushing

D. Greater roadrunner standing on a boulder at the Wichita Mountains Wildlife

Refuge. I got the photo before it ran away. Photo by Sherman L. Barr, Edmond

E. Fossil plants at Lake Eufaula, about 350 million years old! Photo by Holly Lackey, Checotah

F. This is a composite of one of the bald eagles nesting on my property. Photo by Jana Thomason, Oklahoma City



A. Packing out a coyote in early spring in Garfield County. Photo by Sean Jackson, Edmond

B. This flock of jake wild turkeys was photographed at Kaw Wildlife Management Area in early March. Photo by Nick Spears, Ponca City

C. Coyote. Photo by Trish Luckie, Rosston

D. To get this shot I bedded down next to a hay bale in a ghillie suit. I had seen a scrape near this tree in McClain County a week before. Several does moved in, and one seemed to have scented me out. But within seconds the buck moved in with no fear. Photo by Ryan Brackett, Mustang

E. I was walking in Mitch Park when I saw this young bobcat walking toward me with a large rat in its mouth. I was able to get the shot before it went into the weeds. Photo by Sherman L. Barr, Edmond

F. This treeing feist dog is having a great day! After treeing a squirrel, she retrieves it also. Photo by John McCreight, Earlsboro

G. Ike is patiently waiting for birds. Photo by Matt Haines, Blanchard

H. A rare photo opportunity of a coyote in the snow near the prairie dog town at the Wichita Mountain Wildlife Refuge. Photo by Mark A. Conklin Sr., Meers



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A. Oklahoma's gray treefrogs are a common and welcome sight in Stillwater. Photo by Shane Lansdown, Stillwater

B. Juvenile yellow-crowned night heron in Bethany. Photo by Mark Bright, Oklahoma City

C. Ruby-throated hummingbird at Mohawk Park in Tulsa. Photo by Stephen Walker, Tulsa

D. A female widow skimmer in the gardens of the Butterfly Papilion in Muskogee. Photo by Carolyn Ehlers, Tulsa

E. This is a giant swallowtail found in the gardens of the Butterfly Papilion in Honor Heights Park in Muskogee. Photo by Jerry Ehlers, Tulsa

F. I captured this hummingbird sipping from a leopard lily in my garden near Owasso. Photo by Terry Brunholtz, Owasso

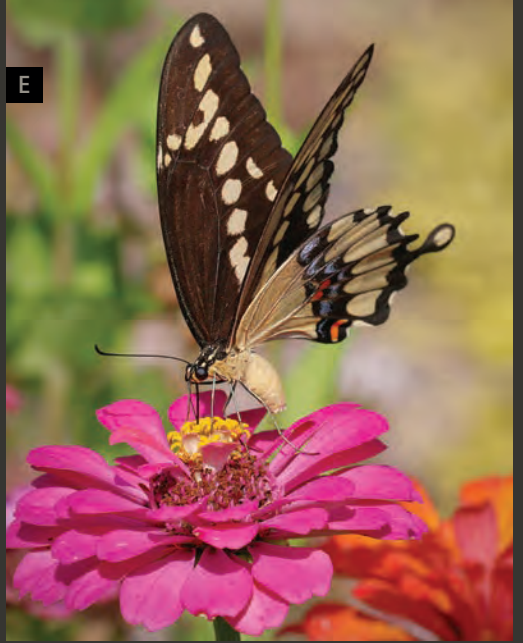
G. A gulf fritillary feeding on a liatris plant on the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. Photo by Jeremiah Zurenda, Indianoma

H. Variegated fritillary. Photo by Nancy Gassaway, Muskogee.

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A. Taking a break on a warm day, enjoying the view in the Wichita Mountains. Photo by Kristen Ryan, Bixby

B. This image is special to me because it was one of the first "good" images I ever took. Taken at the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. Photo by Ethan Hall, Yukon

C. White-tailed buck playing peek-a-boo during the fall rut at the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. Photo by David Strozdas, Edmond

D. White-tailed buck in the tall grass at the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. Photo by Larry Smith, Lawton

E. A coyote in the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. Photo by Joe Stewart, Edmond

F. Black-tailed prairie dogs at the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. Photo by Richard Waters, Broken Arrow

G. Eastern collared lizards at French Lake in the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. Photo by Juanita Harris, Norman



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A. Leucistic red-tailed hawk. Photo by Lindell Dillon, Norman

B. A long-billed dowitcher forages at Hackberry Flat Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Jeremiah Zurenda, Indianoma

C. This barn owl flew from a building it was sharing with a great horned owl at Hackberry Flat Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Sherman L. Barr, Edmond

D. Ring-billed gull at Lake Hefner in Oklahoma City. Photo by Kay Williams, Yukon

E. Northern flicker at Lake Hefner in Oklahoma City. Photo by Chase Moxley, Oklahoma City

F. Indigo bunting at Oxley Nature Center in Tulsa. Photo by Eul Edwards, Owasso

D



E



F





A. Cicada on a sunflower stalk. Photo by Seth Schubert, Moore

B. I captured this photo of a slender meadow katydid in the garden of the Butterfly Papilion in Honor Heights Park in Muskogee. Photo by Jerry Ehlers, Tulsa

C. A monarch butterfly caterpillar's very first meal is its eggshell. Photo by Aaron Goodwin, Bartlesville

D. The cottonwood borer (*Plectrodera scalator*) is one of the largest insects in Oklahoma. Photo by Aaron Goodwin, Bartlesville

E. Yellow and black garden spider. Photo by Daryle Presley, Seminole

F. Great spangled fritillary in Durant. Photo by Amanda R. Henslee, Durant

G. I discovered this unusual scorpionfly in the nature area of Rogers State University in Claremore. The scorpion-like tail does not sting. Photo by John Wilson, Tulsa

D



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A. Bald eagles in Le Flore County. Photo by Paul Hood, Piedmont

B. Black crappie at Quanah Parker Lake, Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. Photo by Anthony Knott, Snyder

C. Fishing on Lake Bixhoma on a foggy morning. Photo by Richard Waters, Broken Arrow

D. Releasing a smallmouth bass in the Illinois River. Photo by Eric Brown, Tulsa

E. Rainbow trout, admired and released. Photo by Scott Hood, Broken Arrow

F. Sunrise kayaking at Lake McMurtry. Photo by Jared Avilez, Stillwater

G. This mink gave me a run for my money. It was relentless in its capture of numerous crayfish at Stinchcomb Wildlife Refuge in Oklahoma City. Photo by Ryan Brackett, Mustang



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G



A. I photographed this cholla cactus in bloom in the Panhandle near Black Mesa
Photo by Steven Hunter, Van Buren, Ark.

B. The Milky Way galaxy over Black Mesa
State Park. Photo by Seth Schubert, Moore

C. Great blue heron at Wintersmith Park
in Ada. Photo by Chris Coffey, Davis

D. Tiny white mushroom at Great Salt
Plains State Park. Photo by Abigail
Colten, Rosston

E. These swift fox kits were playing near
their den near Black Mesa. Photo by
Steven Hunter, Van Buren, Ark.

F. Scaled Quail at Black Mesa State
Park. Photo by Rishi, Overland Park, Kan.

G. Texas spotted whiptail (*Aspidocelis
gularis*) in Murray County. Photo by Tyler
Albertson, Del City



A. American toad in a squash blossom. Photo by Ronald Jones, Tucumcari, N.M.

B. Black-tailed prairie dog, Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. Photo by Gary Bullard, Ringwood

C. A November sunrise in the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. Photo by Howard Jackson, El Reno

D. Taken from pop-up photo ground blind. Location was on the public hunting grounds at Lake Thunderbird. Photo by Ted White, Moore

E. White-tailed buck at Martin Nature Park, Oklahoma City. Photo by Brian B. Berry, Oklahoma City

F. Swirling Indian blanket at the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. Photo by Steven Hunter, Van Buren, Ark.

G. Jack-o-lantern mushrooms at the Chickasaw National Recreation Area near Sulphur. Photo by John McCreight, Earlsboro

H. Monarch butterflies in McClain County. Photo by Nellie Alexander, Blanchard

D



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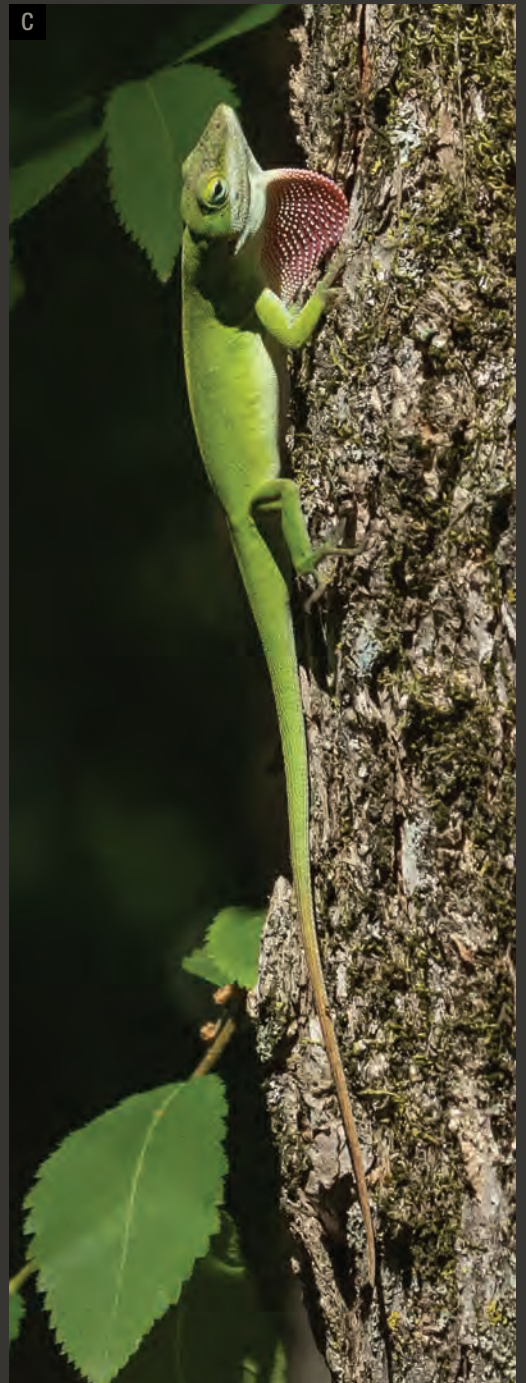
A



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A. Western ribbon snake (*Thamnophis proximus proximus*) in Norman. Photo by Tyler Albertson, Del City

B. A little brown skink found on the Skull Hollow Nature Trail on Oologah Lake. Photo by Greg Silva, Owasso

C. Male green anole with reddish dewlap showing, taken near Zoe in Le Flore County. Photo by Paul Hood, Piedmont

D. Male eastern collared lizard at the base of Little Baldy in the Wichita Mountains. Photo by Steven Hunter, Van Buren, Ark.

E



F



E. Spiny softshell turtle moving up stream in Blackfork Creek in southeastern Oklahoma. Photo by Gene Blackwell, Heavener

F. Broad-banded copperhead (*Agkistrodon laticinctus*) in Slaughterville. Photo by Tyler Albertson, Del City

G. Five bullfrogs. Photo by Daryle Presley, Seminole

G





D



A. A black-crowned night heron at Lake Hefner, Oklahoma City. Photo by Mark Bright, Oklahoma City

B. Momma black bear comes to the rescue of her cubs as they climb down a tall tree in the Ouachita National Forest in Big Cedar. Photo by Desiree Branson Cline, Honobia

E



C. A bullsake in Seminole County. Photo by John McCreight, Earlsboro

E. Eastern pondhawk. Photo by Bryant Henslee, Durant

D. A Pensive Glare. This young great horned owl was found near Pawhuska. Photo by Shane Lansdown, Stillwater

F. Morning at Cedar Lake. Photo by John O'Connor, Sand Springs

F



A



B



C



D





A. Red-tailed hawk flying over pastureland in far southwestern Oklahoma County. Photo by Ted White, Moore

B. Fox squirrel at Will Rogers Park in Oklahoma City. Photo by Howard Jackson, El Reno

C. Great horned owl at Lake Eufaula State Park. Photo by Holly Lackey, Checotah

D. Snow geese landing on one of the green fields at the Tishomingo National Wildlife Refuge in Johnston County. Photo by David Morris, Mead

E. Red-bellied woodpecker on a tree near Lake Tenkiller. Photo by Carolyn Ehlers, Tulsa

F. A raccoon takes a peek along a hiking trail at Arcadia Lake near Edmond. Photo by Angie Precure, Meridian

G. On the Arkansas River near Cleveland, Okla. Photo by Joni Martin, Agra



A. Eastern tiger swallowtail on a pink thistle. Photo by Penny Watson, Tulsa

D. Black swallowtail caterpillar. Photo by Nancy Gassaway, Muskogee

G. Icicles and snow encase a blaze maple's buds. Photo by Seth Schubert, Moore

J. White crowned sparrow at Sequoyah National Wildlife Refuge. Photo by Kyle Underwood, Sallisaw

B. A sulphur butterfly on a sunflower at the Tulsa Rose Garden in Woodward Park. Photo by Lori Spears, Tulsa

E. American goldfinch during summer in Park Hill, near Lake Tenkiller. Photo by Carolyn Ehlers, Tulsa

H. This blue jay is thriving despite missing part of its lower mandible. Photo by Mark Mascilli, Taloga

C. September evening in Guthrie. Photo by Joey Baker, Guthrie

F. Sunset at Twin Lakes. Photo by Brooke Oliver, Bethel Acres.

I. A female northern cardinal in the snowy branches in Dewey County. Photo by Mark Mascilli, Taloga



F



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H



I



J





A. A red-tailed hawk in the woods near Lindsay. Photo by Jon Wilson, Amber

B. Red-winged blackbird at Lake Overholser, Oklahoma City. Photo by Mark Bright, Oklahoma City

D. A buck in Canadian County. Photo by Ryan Brackett, Mustang

E. Scissor-tailed flycatcher near Goodwater, in McCurtain County. Photo by Randy Sander, Broken Bow

C. Red-shouldered hawk at Kitchen Lake. Photo by Andrea Johnson, Del City





B



A. Barred owl at Martin Nature Park in Oklahoma City.
Photo by Brian B. Berry, Oklahoma City

B. Courting time for this wild turkey near Piedmont.
Photo by Paul Hood, Piedmont

C. Robbers Cave State Park at the end of fall. Such beautiful colors. This image was snapped at a small creek along the trail toward Cattail Pond. Photo by Brett Day, Bridge Creek

C



A



B





A. An osprey with breakfast at Fort Cobb State Park. Photo by Debbie Peck, Fort Cobb

B. Female belted kingfisher at Lake Hefner in Oklahoma City. Photo by Joe Stewart, Edmond



C. White-tailed deer yearling at Martin Nature Park in Oklahoma City. Photo by Andrea Johnson, Del City

D. Turkey vulture. Photo by Kristy Hiatt, Sayre

E. Nesting red-bellied woodpeckers in Harrah. The male, with the full red head, is leaving the nest as the female brings home dinner. Photo by Shi Ann Ingalls, Harrah



A



A. A female ornate box turtle (*Terrapene ornata*) rests on a rural Washington County road and soaks up some sun. Photo by Aaron Goodwin, Bartlesville

C. Female indigo bunting at Stinchcomb Wildlife Refuge in Oklahoma City. Photo by Chase Moxley, Oklahoma City

E. Wild prairie verbena provides some welcome color early in the year in Osage County. Photo by Dale Parsons, Bartlesville

F. A hot summer sunset photographed at Panorama Vista on Talimena Scenic Byway in Le Flore County near Talihina. Photo by Cynthia Washington, Talihina

B. Dandelion in a McClain County pasture. Photo by Kellie Carter, Newcastle

D. Red-tailed hawk in Oklahoma City. Photo by Andrea Johnson, Del City

B



C



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Watchable Wildlife

THE AMERICAN BISON

BY JUSTIN VEACH, EDUCATION INTERN

The American bison, often mistakenly referred to as the buffalo, is the largest mammal in North America. A male bison, called a bull, can stand up to 6 feet tall, weigh from 1,000 to 2,000 pounds, and can be up to 12 feet in length. The heaviest wild bull recorded weighed about 2,800 pounds. A female bison, called a cow, tends to be much smaller, averaging about 1,000 pounds in weight.

Bison are covered in long, shaggy, thick dark-brown fur during winter, and a thinner, lighter-brown coat during summer. Newborn calves have reddish fur, giving them their nickname “red dogs.” Their fur turns light brown after a few months. Bison have two sharp horns that can grow up to 2 feet in length. They have a large hump on their back made of muscle that helps them use their large heads to push masses of snow out of their way. The average lifespan of a bison in the wild is 10 to 20 years. Cows start to breed around age 2.

Female bison usually stick together in a herd while male bison will go off on their own or join other male bison in their own herd. The two herds will join during the mating season, which usually occurs between July and September. Dominant bison mate first, and their calves will enjoy a better food supply and the possibility to grow larger. Gestation lasts for around 285 days, and a newborn calf will usually nurse until the next calf is born. Calves will stay with the female herd.

Male calves will usually leave after about three years.

Despite their huge bodies, American bison are very agile. They have the ability to spin around quickly and can jump up to 6 feet vertically. When they charge, they can reach speeds up to 40 mph. One fun fact about the

Despite their huge bodies, American bison are very agile. They have the ability to spin around quickly and can jump up to 6 feet vertically.

bison is that its tail can indicate if it is ready to charge. If the tail is hanging down naturally, charging is unlikely. But if the tail is standing straight up, the bison could be ready to charge.

American Indians and early European settlers learned that bison are very difficult to domes-

ticate, and their large bodies and quickness made them dangerous to be near.

In 2016, President Barack Obama made the American bison the first national mammal of the United States. Once numbering up to 50 million, bison were found nearly everywhere in large, vast numbers across America. But by 1890, market hunting had reduced the population to less than 1,000. In 1905, William T. Hornaday and Theodore Roosevelt created the American Bison Society to try to save this animal from extinction. The Bronx Zoo and Yellowstone park also played important roles in bison conservation efforts. In 1908, the federal government established the National Bison Range in Montana. Due to conservation efforts and commercial breeding, bison now number about 500,000. 🌿





STEVE DOAK/BIXBY

Majesty in flight: This dramatic image of two bald eagles soaring over the Arkansas River was captured by Steve Doak of Bixby. It was selected among the best 127 submissions to the annual Readers' Photography Showcase featured in this issue of Outdoor Oklahoma.

Outdoor Oklahoma

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