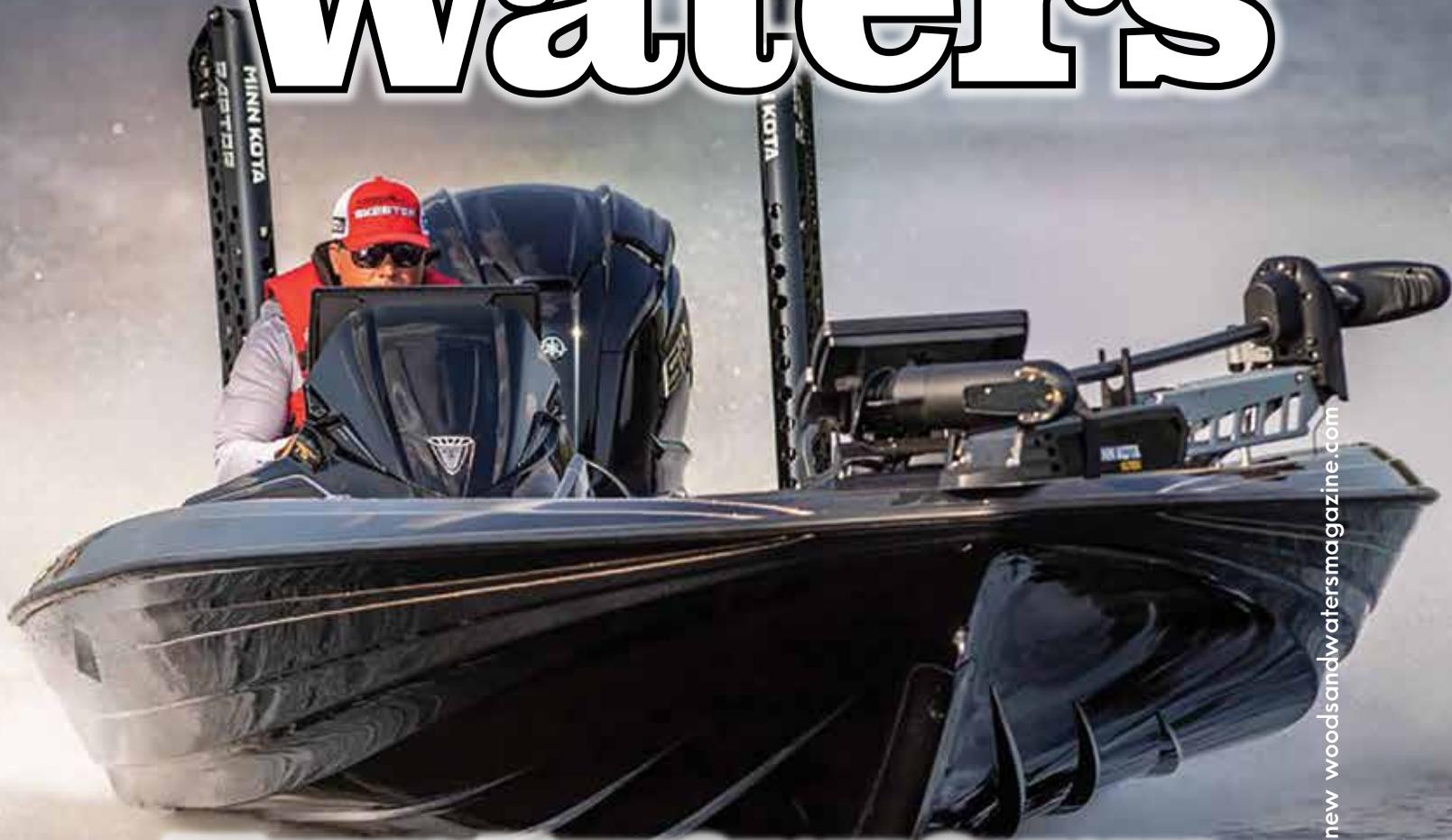


January 2023

# WOODS & WATERS

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## WHAT'S NEW/SHOW SPECIAL

**Outdoor Show Preview**  
**New Bass Boats**  
**New Bass Outboards**  
**New Tackle**



- 2023 Tournament Schedules
- Winged Wisdom - Kate Ahnstrom
- Hook, Line & Thinker - Steve Chaconas

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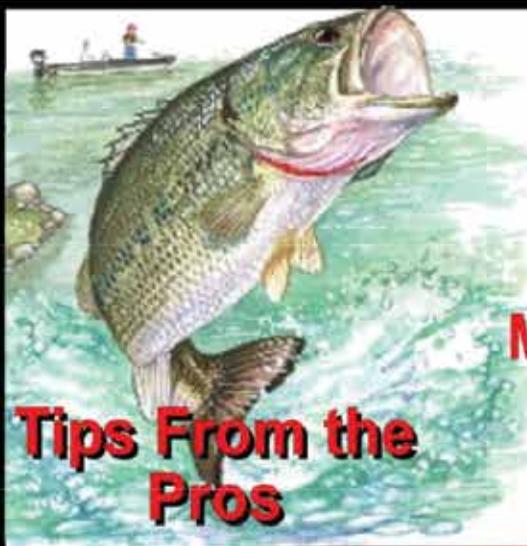
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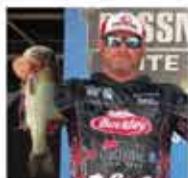
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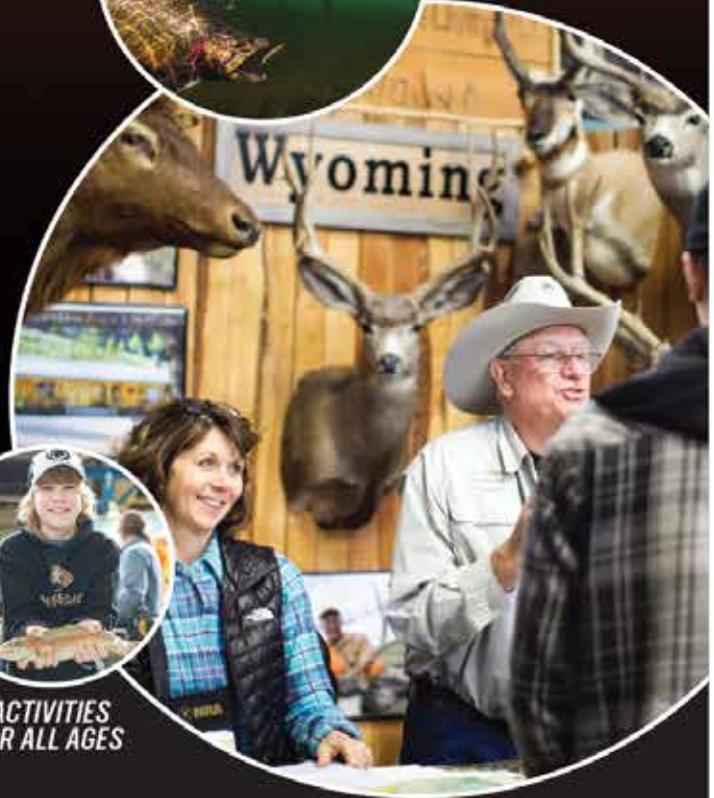
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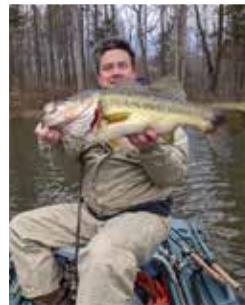
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# TOURNAMENT RESULTS



Fishers Of Men Virginia East Tournament Director Andy Lavin has the season schedule posted. The teams will kick off the year February 25 at Buggs Island, then March 18 on the tidal James, April 15 on Lake Anna, May 20 on Gaston, May 14 on Chesdin, June 17 on the Pamunkey and July 15 on the Chickahominy River.

For more information and standings visit [www.fomntt.com](http://www.fomntt.com).



Fishers of Men Chickahominy River



## Tournament Trail

VAElite Tournament Director Steve is gearing up for another great season of VAEIte events. The season kicks off March 11 with the Jackson Hudson Memorial on Bugg Island/Kerr Lake. Next is sight-fishing test April 1 on Lake Anna. Then it's more of the same at Smith Mountain April 29. May 20 on the tidal Potomac. June 17 on the tidal James and the fall classic on Lake Gaston Oct. 20-21. [www.vaelite60.com](http://www.vaelite60.com).



Matt Martin and Josh Hall



After a challenging debut year in 2022 where anglers fished in near blizzard-like conditions but found the big bass tearing it up on Lake Anna, the Big Bass Battle is back.

Tournament Director Ed Dustin will once again hold this uniquely formatted event where there is an award every hour for the biggest fished weighed. The tournament will go out of Anna Point Marina March 11. For info contact Dustin at [battleoftheborder@aol.com](mailto:battleoftheborder@aol.com).



2022 Lake Anna Big Bass Winner Jeff



## 2023 Tournaments

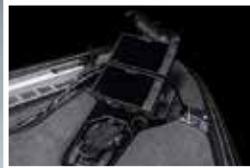
Anna Point Marina and Fish Tales will be the site of many events this coming year. Tournament Director Dave Fauntleroy invites anyone interested in testing their skills on one of Virginia's best bass fishing lakes to visit [www.annapoint.com](http://www.annapoint.com) and review the 2023 event schedule posted there.

New for 2023 is a Big Bass Tournaments March 4 as well as a number of open events held March 5, 12, 19 and 26.



Stephen and Bobby Campbell

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# TOURNAMENT RESULTS



**James River Tackle Co.**

The kick off James River Tackle Co. Crappie Tournament was held December 17 out of Hopewell Marina. Donnie Bell and Joe K. took first place with a five-fish limit weighing 8.05 pounds. Joe had the event's big crappie at 1.93.

Visit [www.facebook.com/jamesrivertackleco](http://www.facebook.com/jamesrivertackleco) for more dates and results.



Bell and

## STURGEON CREEK MARINA



Congratulations to Wayne Dorman and Brian Canteberry who won the Sturgeon Creek Marina Winter Series event December 4 with 24.15 pounds and the big fish at 6.55 pounds. The team of Rob Grike and Bobby Fincham won December 11 with 19.69 pounds. These events will be held every weekend through January. For more info visit [www.facebook.com/sturgeoncreekmarina.com](http://www.facebook.com/sturgeoncreekmarina.com).



Canteberry and Dorman



## VA/NC Crappie Trail

The second Bobcat's Bait & Tackle VA/NC Crappie Trail event was held December 3 and won by Josh Morris and Ryan Smith with an 10.53-pound, seven-fish limit - good for \$1,473. Josh Deal and George Gregory were second with 10.06 pounds.

The next event will be held January 28. For more info visit [www.facebook.com/bobscats-baitandtackle](http://www.facebook.com/bobscats-baitandtackle).



Morris and Smith



The Bass Bandits of Virginia December 11 tournament was held on the Chowan River out of Shoups Landing and drew 13 boats for a good day of winter fishing. Randy Barrett and Bobby Dunlow led with way with a five bass limit of 12.29 lbs. Ronnie Ketchum and Benny Hendrix took second with 11.82 pounds and big fish at 5.5 lbs.

For more info and 2023 event dates visit [www.facebook.com/groups/458306391457498](http://www.facebook.com/groups/458306391457498).



Chowan River bass.



## 2023 James River Tackle Co. Tournament Series

Launching from Hopewell Marina

**March 25 April 22**  
**May 20 June 10**  
**July 8 August 19**

**Two-Day Classic**  
**Sept. 30 - Oct. 1**

\$120 entry fee w/90% payback  
Safe light until 3 pm

*Fish the Appomattox, James and Chickahominy Rivers!*

For more info contact  
Tournament Director  
Donnie Bell at

**804.668.5866**

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**March 4 & 5**  
Roanoke Rapids Lake

**March 18-19**  
Chickahominy River Classic\*

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Western Branch Reservoir

**June 10-11**  
Pamunkey River

**July 8-9**  
Northwest River

**August 12 & 13**  
Chickahominy Lake

**September 2 & 3**  
Nottoway River

*Off limits period will be Monday prior to tournament til tournament day.  
\*Must have qualified from 2022 season.*

20 horsepower maximum • Single man trail  
• Each event will be 2-days • \$100 entry fee:  
-\$10 (\$5 each day of tournament) for big fish  
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Contact Brad Webb at  
[bassnucks60@gmail.com](mailto:bassnucks60@gmail.com) or  
call 757.803.3255



## Join Us For An Exciting Year Of Fellowship And Fishing!

March 11 - Nottoway River - Rt. 258 Ramp  
March 19 - Chickahominy River - Rt. 5  
April 16 - Appomattox River - Hopewell Marina  
April 29 - Chowan River - Shoups Landing  
May 13 - Pamunkey River - TBD  
June 11 - Chickahominy River - Rt. 5  
July 8 - Nottoway River - Rt. 258 Ramp  
July 16 - Chowan River - Shoups Landing  
August 5 - Appomattox River - Hopewell Marina  
August 13 - Pamunkey River - TBD  
August 27 - Roanoke Rapids Lake - Old Lake  
Sept. 3 - Nottoway River - Rt. 258  
Sept. 17 - Chickahominy River - Rt. 5  
October 7 - Chickahominy River - Rt. 5  
October 15 - Nottoway River - Rt. 258  
October 21-22 - Club Classic - TBD

- \$30 tournament entry fee
- \$40 membership fee
- must fish 3 tournaments to qualify for Classic

*Check our Facebook page each week for dates and locations of tournaments, weather permitting.*

[bassbanditsofvirginia.com](http://bassbanditsofvirginia.com)

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\*A Team must have fished 5 tournaments to fish Oct. 14-15\*

ENTRY FEE: \$120/Team includes \$10 Lunker fee  
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\*The Oct. 14-15 Entry Fee: \$200 with a 100% payback

5 FISH LIMIT PER TEAM  
HOURS: 6:00am or SAFE LIGHT, NLT 6:30am til 3:00pm

Check Web site for start times  
Registration ends 10 minutes prior to blast off.  
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Cell 703-577-1304, Email: [rpettey@comcast.net](mailto:rpettey@comcast.net)

[WWW.POTOMACTEAMS.COM](http://WWW.POTOMACTEAMS.COM)

## 2023 SHOW PREVIEW

Find out what outdoor shows you'll want to attend this winter.

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## FEATURES

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### NEW BASS BOATS

From Bass Cat to Xpress we preview what you'll see this season. *C.C. MCCOTTER*

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### NEW BASS TACKLE

Reels, lures, tackle boxes, sunglasses and more. *W2 STAFF*

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### NEW OUTBOARDS

Mercury planning to sell electric outboards this year *C.C. MCCOTTER*

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### NEW ELECTRONICS

Target lock and forward facing sonar dominate technology. *C.C. MCCOTTER*



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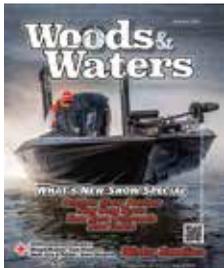


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## Regional Reports

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- **The Smallmouth King** *Chris Gorsuch*
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# Welcome The New Year At Outdoor Shows

Happy new year and welcome to our annual What's New?/Show Special edition. This is an issue you read in front of the fire or woodstove and learn about much of what you'll see in showrooms and stores this coming season.

Between our covers this month you'll find everything new in boats from Bass Cat to Xpress, everything new in outboards, in tackle from ABU Garcia to Z-Man, as well as all the new electronics you'll want to consider for your boat this year.

I'm here to tell you this edition is the perfect buying tool (as it has been for the past 35 years) since we put together articles on everything new for bass fishing. While only our marketing partner dealers are highlighted in each boat section, we do cover nearly all boat lines available in the region and have a big welcome sign out to dealers wanting in on this great collaboration.

There's all that, plus our monthly columnists (Ahnstrom, Gorsuch and Chaconas), a W2 Profile on Dave Farrington, our famous Regional Focus Reports, tournament schedules, Tide/Moon Charts, Calendar of Events and an expanded Destinations section with a bunch of new outstanding real estate listings geared toward outdoor enthusiasts like you!

Information is what we provide. It's a passion and you should be able to tell this as you read.

If you like what you have seen, make it a habit to pick up a copy at any one of the over 75 shops around the state that carry W2 OR you can have it sent to your mailbox by signing up for a subscription at [www.woodsandwatersmagazine.com](http://www.woodsandwatersmagazine.com).

Don't forget the website is all new. You can read the entire magazine online or just browse the articles and Regional Focus Reports.

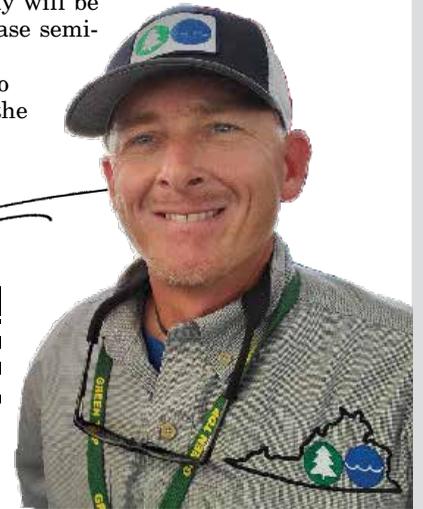
Before I go I wanted to also welcome back the Gray family to Virginia and note that I think I speak for all of us when I say we missed you last year. The Richmond Fishing Expo is back at the Meadow Event Park in Doswell January 20-22 (See the ad on page 3). We will have a nice display set up offering our W2 caps, tees and lightweight hoodies, so I invite you to stop by. If you are a subscriber, I'll give you a W2 sticker.

At this show you'll be able to visit with many of our marketing partners and yours truly will be doing the New Product Showcase seminars on the bass tank.

Until next time, remember to cherish, protect and conserve the outdoors while sharing it with others.



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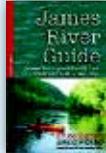
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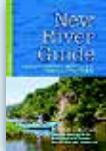
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Dear W2,

I would like to brag on one Virginia DWR officer. This officer retrieved my stolen boat from the inner city of Baltimore, Maryland and did an outstanding job.

With just my serial plate number he found my pride and joy Sea Ark bass boat with a homeless person living in it and the 75 hp Mercury outboard gone.

The DWR officer found my boat, cleaned it up and returned it to my home - a job well done!

Brooks Noble

*It's a Christmas miracle performed by our friends in green! Great story, Brooks. Thank you for your note. - ED*

Dear Woods & Waters,

I am thrilled to see your updated website. It's a great resource now with the Regional Fishing Reports posted as well as the articles. I'd like to request more small boat adventures for 2023 as not all of us have 20 footers.

Mike Haight  
Fairfax, Virginia

*Thank you for the kind words. We've got a bunch of small boat adventures planned. - ED*

Dear Editor,

The new videos you are posting on the W2 Facebook page are very interesting to watch. Have you ever thought about a YouTube channel for W2? I would think you all would be very successful with all the content providers you know.

James Rollins  
Richmond, Virginia

*Thank you for the suggestions. One thing at a time, my good man. We just got the website squared away and are producing vids, so we'll see what 2023 brings! - ED*



## Reader Letter Guidelines

We welcome your correspondence and photos. Letters must be sent to our office (114 Old Quarry Lane, Bumpass, VA 23024). Others email us (woodsandwatersmagazine@gmail.com). Paper photos cannot be returned. If we run your letter or email and you include your address, we will send you one of our truck/boat stickers.

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## Outdoor Moments

Richard Stubler



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STEPHANIE VATALARO  
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- Sat., June 17 - James River - Hopewell City Marina
- Oct. 20-21 Fall Classic - Lake Gaston - Holly Grove Marina

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Photo by Ed Dustin



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Saturday, January 14, 10:00 am - 6:00 pm  
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[www.fredericksburgexpocenter.com/boat-water-sports-expo](http://www.fredericksburgexpocenter.com/boat-water-sports-expo)

Contact Casey Silversmith for vendor information at 540.548.9239



# Get Ready For Show

BY C.C. MCCOTTER

The days are short, the weather can be rough for fishing, the NFL and hunting seasons are ending. What to do? It's time to get off the couch and grab your cew and head to an outdoor show. With so many to choose from you can surely fit at least one in your schedule this year. And if you're looking to sell some of the gear you just never use then you're in luck, too, with lots of flea markets that want you as a seller. Just remember this; if you don't go, you don't know. You don't know about a new bait your buddy secretly found, a new technique demonstrated on a tank, a new place to fish or a new activity to enjoy with a young person.

First in the line up this season is the Fredericksburg Boat & Watersports Expo which is held at the Fredericksburg Expo & Conference Center January 13-15. Whether it sails, paddles, skis or boats you will find it all from the area's best boat dealers all together under one roof. Admission is \$10 and \$9 for seniors, military and first responders. Save time and

money by purchasing your tickets online at <https://www.fredericksburgexpo.com/boat-water-sports-expo>

The Virginia Fly Fishing & Wine Festival is January 14-15 at the Meadow Event Park in Doswell, Virginia and is a not-to-miss show for both the well-seasoned fly fisherman, the novice fly fisherman, and everyone in between. Want to learn to tie flies or maybe you're experienced but want to glean a few tips from the pros you can do that here. Perfect your casting technique? Yes, you can do that here as well and the best part is all casting classes are held inside. Visit [www.VAFlyFishingFestival.com](http://www.VAFlyFishingFestival.com) and explore their very informative website that lists all of the lectures and classes, the schedule of events, exhibitor lists and participating wineries and more. You are encouraged to sign up for classes in advance online where you can also purchase your tickets which are \$30 for a weekend pass or \$20 for either Saturday or Sunday. Ticket holders that are 21 and over can enjoy a free wine tasting. Children 16 and under are free with a paying adult and this applies no matter how many children you have.

The Richmond Fishing Expo returns January 20-22 to the Meadow Event Park in Doswell and will have the largest array of tackle combined with some of the finest professional talent around offering "a weekend of fishing overload".

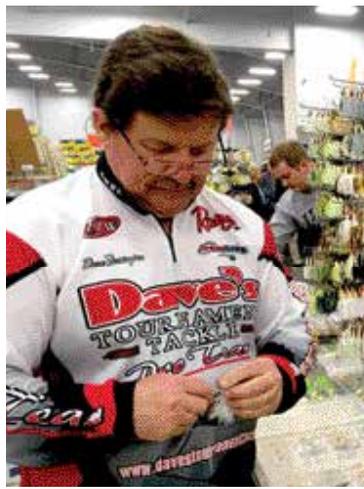
If it's made to catch fish, you'll probably find it here including boats, tackle, apparel, accessories and excellent seminars on the Bass Tub including the Woods & Waters New Product Showcase.

Pros scheduled to attend include two-time BASS Masters Classic winner Hank Cherry, BASS legend Davey Hite, Tim Horton and Matt Becker.

You'll love this show not only for the gear and the boats but also for the knowledge you'll gain by listening to the best of the best in salt and freshwater fishing.

This is a family friendly event with a Kid's Trout Pond and Kid's Casting Contest. Show hours are Friday and Saturday 9am-7pm and Sunday 10am-5pm. Admission is \$9 for adults, \$8 for senior & military, \$5 for kids ages 6-12 and kids five and under are free. Admission is good for all three days as long as you pick up a return pass. [www.RichmondFishingExpo.com](http://www.RichmondFishingExpo.com)

*It's boats, buddies, outboards, tackle, hunting and fishing adventures and more!*



vendors, seminars, fly tying to casting demonstrations. Admission is just \$5. [www.rapidantu.org](http://www.rapidantu.org)

February 4 from 8am to 1pm is the date and time for the annual Bass Fishing Flea Market now called the Dale City Bass Tackle Show and run by Horizon Bass Anglers Club at the Hillendale Fire Dept. in Dale City, Virginia. Rent a table for just \$35 or come and see what's available for just \$5 admission (kids 12 & under are free). Anglers and their families love this show and return year after year to see what's available. Visit [www.NHBAYouthFoundation.weebly.com](http://www.NHBAYouthFoundation.weebly.com).

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# Season!

The 29th annual Monaghan Fishing Show will be held January 28-29 at the Monaghan Twp. Volunteer Fire Department in Dillsburg, Pennsylvania. This is a huge flea market type of event with a Kid's Trout Pond, free appraisals on old fishing tackle, seminar speakers and more. Hours are 8am to 4pm Saturday and 9am to 3pm Sunday. Admission is \$4 with all proceeds benefitting the Monaghan Fire Dept. Visit [www.monaghanfishingshow.com](http://www.monaghanfishingshow.com) for more information.

January 28 is the date for the local favorite, the Fraternal Order of the Eagles #4123 Fishing Flea Market located on Cool Spring Road in Fredericksburg from 8am-1pm. Here you'll find tackle dealers, guide services and tables full of gear and lures that need to find a new home. Admission is just \$3 and kids under 12 are free with all proceeds benefiting Eagle 4506 Outer Banks.

The region's largest and most diverse outdoor show is the nine-day "Harrisburg Show". Officially called the Great American Outdoor Show and hosted by the National Rifle Association this event runs February 4-12.

The Great American Outdoor Show is the largest sports and outdoor show in the country, celebrating the hunting, fishing, and outdoor traditions treasured by millions of Americans and their families.

The 650,000 square foot Pennsylvania Farm Complex Show will feature nine halls of nearly 1,100 exhibitors including 400 outfitters, shooting manufacturers, outfitters, boats, RVs, hunting and fishing retailers and much more. Music, over 200 seminars, archery competitions, demonstrations, raffles and prizes make it fun for the entire family.

Tickets to the show are available at the door, but you can skip the ticket lines by purchasing them online. Adult admission is \$15, \$13 for seniors, kids ages 6-12 are \$8, a group pass (10 or more) is \$13/ticket and a two day pass is \$26.

[www.GreatAmericanOutdoorShow.org](http://www.GreatAmericanOutdoorShow.org)

The annual Augusta County Fishing Expo will be held February 11-12 at the Augusta Expoland in Fishersville, Virginia. You'll find a large collection of both new and used fishing tackle dealers, guides and various regional anglers offering insight into fishing techniques and fishing destinations with presentations on the Woods & Waters Seminar Stage. Show hours are 9-5 both days. If you'd like to be an exhibitor contact Doug Fitzgerald at [acbassjons@yahoo.com](mailto:acbassjons@yahoo.com).

February 11 is also the 33rd annual Rapidan Trout Unlimited Fishing Show held in Warrenton, Virginia at the Highland School. Inside you'll find everything fly fishing from



| *What's New?*

# BASS BOATS



Skeeter FXR21 Apex 75 Anniversary Edition



Nitro ZX21 XL



Excel XL 200



Ranger Z521R Limited Edition

BY C.C. MCCOTTER

**A**fter a period of contraction as far as the overall number of choices in boat manufacturers during the late 2010's, the past few years has seen some new options for your bass boat budget with several new brands in the region including Falcon, Vexus and Camas. There's even word that there will be a new rig designed by pro angler Jacob Wheeler coming soon.

Wheeler appears to be working with Ikon Boats, a subsidiary of HCB Yachts and there is a note on their IG page that they are "rooted in hydrasports heritage". Hydra Sports is HCB Yachts now. They are makers of large, luxury yachts and fishing boats. So it appears there's going to be another high-end bass boat added to the marketplace.

Where the bass boat market is going as the country comes down from historic boat sales numbers

due to the Covid outdoor effect and inflation is anyone's guess. Now, let's run down what you'll see at the shows, from Bass Cat to Xpress.

### *Bass Cat*

With 10 models to choose from all manufactured in Mountain Home, Arkansas, Bass Cat has always set itself apart from other boat builders. The flagship Jaguar is perhaps the largest bass boat on the market at 22' long, 94" wide, 60-gallon fuel capacity and able to hold up to 450 hp. The Puma STS is a popular boat among high end area anglers at 20'7" long, 96" wide, 60-gallon fuel capacity and the ability to accommodate up to 300 hp.

### *Caymas*

Earl Bentz is back in the boat building business with Caymas. The company was founded in 2018 and the boats are built in their own Ashland City, Tennessee plant. Bentz was a pioneer

boat racer/boat builder that created bass boat companies like HydraSports, Stratos, Javelin and Triton and he's taken all he's learned over his many years in the industry and produced the Caymas fresh and saltwater hulls.

THE CX 20 is the fastest model in Caymas' line of premium tournament bass boats. The CX 20 hull is 20' 4" in length and sports a 96" beam. Most anglers are powering the CX 20 with a 250hp outboard and enjoying speeds over 75 mph.

Caymas also offers 18, 19 and 21-foot CX bass boat models.

### *Excel*

Is it a new bass boat or pipe dream? The website said they have so many boats ordered they are delaying release until spring 2023. The Excel XL 200 model handles 150 to 200 hp, measures 20' long, 95" wide, holds 34 gallons of fuel and weighs 1,990 sans outboard.

Made in Mountain View, Arkansas this is an aluminum bass boat that appears to have been well thought out. Some nice standard features include single or dual fiberglass consoles, bucket seats, fiberglass livewell, a center rod box, Humminbird electronics and Minn Kota trolling motor, an ergonomic console that features clustered gauges and accommodates up to 10" electronics, a nifty recessed trolling motor well and bow shroud that accommodates up to 10" electronics and offers two, two-inch conduits for network wires, cup holders at the bow and cockpit, adjustable foot rests, C-channel trailer frame and Syntec non slip padding on the step up cooler lid to the front deck and on the center rod box lid. [www.excelboats.com](http://www.excelboats.com).

### *Falcon*

Down in Newberry, South Carolina there is a relatively new bass boat builder that regional

*"Now, let's run down what you'll see at the shows from Bass Cat to Xpress."*

anglers have taken a shine to. Falcon offers hulls of 21, 20, 19 and 18', the most popular of which is the F20 Predator. At 20'2" long, 99" wide with a hull weight of 1,890 pounds, 50-gallon fuel tank and 250 maximum hp rating this boat hauls bass. This boat has rocker-style switches throughout, a sliding tackle tray in the fiberglass center bow storage compartment, a step cooler to the front deck, a dry box that holds two, Plano 3600 boxes in front of the passenger seat, 6 mm foam decking in the cockpit, storage compartment, step up to back deck between driver and passenger seats and chrome trailer fenders. A number of additional standard features including, LED courtesy lights, LED compartment lights, LED livewell light, LED lights on front deck, custom cover, Minn Kota Ultrex 112 iPilot Link with MDI and Humminbird Solix 10 and 12 units make the F20 Predator a great tournament boat.

The Falcon F20 Hybrid is essentially the same boat but features 6 mm non-absorbent, non-skid, UV protected, textured foam on all deck surfaces.

Take a look at the 2023 Falcons

at Propeller Dynamics in Prince William, Virginia. 804.706-1847.

#### Lowe

This Brunswick Corporation-owned manufacturer of aluminum boats will offer a redesigned fast and stylish Stinger 8-Series bass boat for 2023.

The Stinger 198 is 19'8" long, 94" wide, weighs 1,336 pounds, holds 31 gallons of fuel and up to 150 hp. The Stinger 188 is 18'8" long, 94" wide, weighs 1,296 pounds and accommodates up to 115 hp.

Built on a cross-lock stringer system, the 2023 Stinger 8-Series boasts a strong foundation offering anglers a stable ride, rigid flooring, and a lifetime of durability. Additionally, the 2023 lineup includes a complete refresh of Lowe's most feature-packed models, all designed with the highest-grade components in the industry. Everything from the vessels' seats to the roomy casting deck and rod storage were built with the express purpose of providing the most high-quality tournament-level aluminum bass boats.

New for the 2023 lineup is the sealed storage throughout, which incorporates a raised seal-

ing surface, rigid doors, and foam padding in the interior for nearly water-proof storage compartments offering a premium look and a quiet ride.

The Stinger 8-Series has models ranging from 17'10" to 19'10" with amenities such as a 36-gallon aerated, recirculated livewell; spacious center storage box accommodating 12 rods and up to 18 tackleboxes; premium driver, passenger, and fore and aft tournament seats; and a tournament-style fiberglass console and optional matching passenger console, these boats have been manufactured with upward scalability in mind.

#### Lund

This Minnesota-based boat manufacturer has perhaps more models than any other boat builder in the world. There are boat options for bass, crappie, muskie, walleye, bay, great lakes, utility and hunting. The most intriguing options for area anglers are the Pro-V Bass XS, the Renegade and Predator lines.

The Pro-V Bass XS is available in 18 and 20 models. The 1875 XS was made popular by Jon B of the Googan Squad, who used

it during the filming of many of his popular YouTube shows. The 1875 XS is 18'9" long, 96" wide, holds 39 gallons of fuel and will handle up to 200 hp. The 2075 XS 20'10" long, 96" wide, holds 49 gallons of fuel and up to 250 hp.

The Renegade Lund line is positioned to compete against Tracker with 17, 18 and 19' models. The 1975 is 19'9" long, 95" wide, holds 32 gallons of fuel, weighs 1,520 pounds and takes up to 150 hp on a modified v hull. The back deck has unique, dual pop-up seats set just outside the passenger and driver seats that also serve as lids to rear storage compartments. The cockpit floor is covered in vinyl and there is a center rod storage box in the bow.

The Predator line has models 16, 17, 18 and 20' with the 2070 center console at the top measuring 20' long, 96" wide with a 20 gallon fuel cell and able to hold up to 150 hp and available in an olive drab or marsh grass exterior.

Virginia's Lund dealer is Mid Atlantic Marine at Lake Anna. [www.midatlanticwatersports.com](http://www.midatlanticwatersports.com).

| continued on page 20

**"Bobby, what the heck just blew by us?"**  
- John Doe, Virginia tournament angler

**F21 PREDATOR**  
21'5" / length / 99" beam / 50 gallon fuel capacity / 1,975 lbs. dry weight / 250 max hp

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*Nitro*

This Bass Pro Shop brand boat continues to be a common site on area waters due to its dealer network and value. There are nine bass boat models from 17-21', six multi-species hulls and two fish/ski models.

New for 2023 is the Nitro Z21 XL. This boat is 21'2" long, 95" wide, weighs 1,800 pounds, holds 60 gallons of fuel and up to 300 hp. It comes factory-rigged with a Mercury 250 hp Pro XS outboard, Minn Kota Fortrex 36V 112-pound thrust trolling motor, a Lowrance Elite FS 7, touchscreen switch panel, digital touchscreen with Automation Hole Shot and Shallow Water features, a NOCO GB40 jump starter pack, Z-CORE suspension seating system, a bow dual center box for up to 18 Plano 3700 storage boxes, seven-across rod storage, magnetic under-lid lure organizer, behind the seat net storage, built-in tourney ruler and holder, MarineMat cockpit floor, padded front deck

and more for around \$65K – a price that cannot be beat for a similarly equipped 21' bass boat.

You'll find the 2023 Nitro Boats at Anna's Marine Center. [www.annasmarinecenter.com](http://www.annasmarinecenter.com).

*Phoenix*

Gary Glouse has spent a lifetime fishing professionally and building boats. His Phoenix bass boat line has become popular among area anglers. The flagship is the PHX 21. This boat is 21'6", 96" wide, weighs 1,950 pounds, holds 50 gallons of fuel and accommodates up to 250 hp.

*Ranger*

The 55th Anniversary Limited Edition Z521R and Z520R Z-Comanche boats feature the complete Ranger Cup Equipped package elevated with a one-off color scheme inside and out, commemorative 55th badging throughout, RGB carpet trim lights, custom black chrome accents, and a premium heated driver's seat with shock-absorbing air bladders in the bottom

and seat back. The trailer features custom-matched fenders, 17" black Challenger wheels, and matching smoked taillights for a complete package that'll turn heads for another 55 years.

The Z521R is a full-bodied 21'9" long, 96" wide and weighs 2,300 pre-outboard. It holds 54 gallons of fuel and accommodates up to 300 hp.

The ZZ520R is 20'11" long, 96" wide, weighs 1,850 pounds, holds 54 gallons of fuel and up to 250 hp.

The list of standard features is impressive. Some additional notable ones include dual Lowrance HDS 12 units at the console, a Lowrance HDS 12 at the bow with Active Target, a Lowrance Ghost trolling motor, three-level rod shelves in the port rod locker, two-level rod shelves in the starboard locker both with Power Ventilation, a tackle organization system, stainless steel seat bases, a line spooling station under aft lid, Ranger tournament measure board, Dual Pro charger (lithium capable), push

to start ignition with proximity key fob, AGM starting batter and three lithium trolling motor batteries, dual 8' Power Pole Anchor Blades, NOCO GB40 jump starter and more.

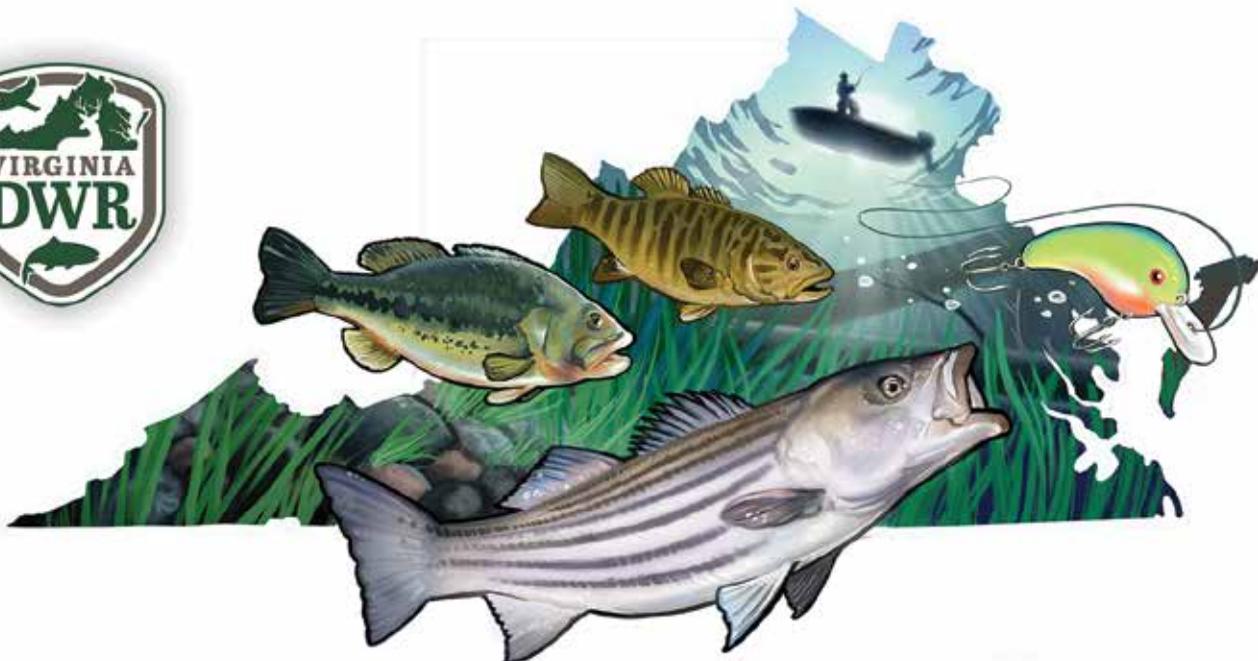
*Skeeter*

The 75th Anniversary FXR21 Apex is the boat that will turn many heads at the outdoor shows this winter and eventually this spring for the lucky few that purchase them.

This 21'4" long, 97" wide and 2,275-pound hull holds 48 gallons of fuel, accommodates up to 250 hp and features an exclusive black, semi-metallic gel coat with satin gold emblems. Incredible standard features include dual 8' Minn Kota Raptors, tri color cockpit floor EVA foam flooring, padded front deck, LED storage and deck lighting, 12" Atlas hydraulic jackplate, Hamby keel protector, a gimble mounted Humminbird Helix 15 at the console, a gimble mounted Humminbird Helix 12 at the bow, a Minn Kota Ultrex iPilot

*Get Ready for the Virginia*

# BASS SLAM CHALLENGE



Learn more online at [VirginiaWildlife.gov/bass-slam](http://VirginiaWildlife.gov/bass-slam)

112 trolling motor, 18" wheels, the Fusion Bluetooth Audio Device and two speakers, battery charge indicator gauge and many more.

Other Skeeter models regionally popular include the FXR20, the ZXR21 and 20 and the ZX200. You'll find the 2023 Skeeter Boats at Anna's Marine Center. [www.annasmarinecenter.com](http://www.annasmarinecenter.com).

#### Tracker

The Tracker Pro Team 195 TXW is the top-of-the-line aluminum boat from Bass Pro Shop. This boat is the perfect rig for young anglers just getting started in bass tournament fishing at 18'7" long and 98" wide and a total package weight of just 2,675 pounds, towable by most light trucks and SUVs. The 195 TXW holds 30 gallons of fuel and up to 150 hp. You can have one rigged with the standard Lowrance units and a 115 hp Mercury 4-stroke for around \$34K.

You'll find the 2023 Tracker Boats at Anna's Marine Center. [www.annasmarinecenter.com](http://www.annasmarinecenter.com).

#### War Eagle

This Arkansas-based aluminum boat manufacturer fields six model lines for 2023; the Sportsman, the Blackhawk, the Predator, the VS Stick Steers, the Tomahawk and Renegade.

War Eagle Boats has built a reputation of having the toughest aluminum boats on the water. All models are built using all welded aluminum and the wings transom design that creates superior handling, even in choppy waters.

Since 1992, War Eagle Boats have been a force in the duck hunting industry, providing customers with the best camo paint jobs in the business. Each boat is individually painted using a tested process that produces HD camo results that blend perfectly with your environment. The Sportsman Gladiator model is a regional favorite with duck hunters that install mud motor type outboards on them.

The Predator and VS models are popular with crappie guides and pro anglers throughout the south.

If you are looking for a boat that can fish as hard as it hunts, then check out the Blackhawk series. These models come fully loaded and are built on an 18°V hull that not only provides a smoother ride but will keep you dry. The best feature of the

Blackhawk is that the layout can be customized with either a side or center console, each with an impressive list of standard equipment.

The 2170 Blackhawk is a center console fishing and hunting rig that measures 21'6" long, 98" wide and holds up to 150 hp. The 961 Blackhawk is 19'5" long and 89" wide and is rated for 115-150 hp depending on the console choice.

Stop by Tomahund Marine on Rt. 5 near the mouth of the Chickahominy River for a look at the 2023 War Eagle boats. 804/829-9888

#### Vexus

This is the company made up of ex-Ranger engineers and executives after the acquisition a number of years back by Bass Pro Shops. The Vexus AVX is their aluminum line and the VX is the fiberglass line.

The flagship VX21 is 21'11" long, 97" wide, holds 58 gallons of fuel and up to 300 hp. The boat sports a number of exclusive design features, perhaps the most noteworthy is the Infused Composite Construction process that eliminates spraying layers of gelcoat and offers a much more exact molding process drive by vacuum.

The AVX line is topped by the AVX 2080. This aluminum/fiberglass hull is 20'2" long, 95" wide, holds 35 gallons of fuel and up to 200 hp. Neither the VX21 or AVX 2080 has a published hull weight.

#### Xpress

This original all-welded aluminum boat builder offers models in eight categories: bass, bay, skiff, catfish, crappie, hunting, utility and jon.

Area bass anglers have taken to the X21 Pro model that, when properly matched with a 250 hp outboard can push 80+ mph. Just ask BASS Pro Jason Christie how he likes his. There's also an X19 Pro and an X18 Pro model.

The X21 Pro is 21' long with a 95" beam that handles up to 250 hp and holds 40 gallons of fuel. Many anglers are opting for the Xpress Appearance Package with custom fitted SeaDek in a striking, color-coordinated pattern.

Take a look at the 2023 Xpress boats at Propeller Dynamics in Prince William, Virginia. 804.706-1847.  



# The Rapidan Trout Unlimited

## 33rd Annual Fishing show

**Saturday, February 11, 2023**  
**Highland School**  
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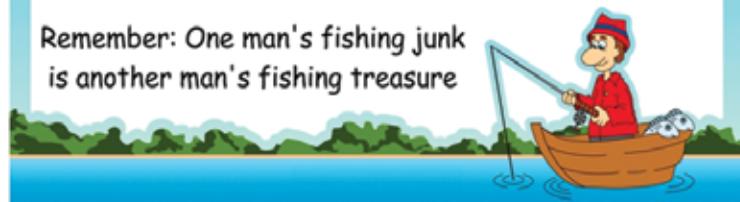
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| What's New?

# BASS TACKLE

ABU Garcia Revo Rocket



Berkley Clickin' Frittside



Costa Joe Pro



Strike King CJ Smasher



Bill Lewis ATV



Flambeau TuffTainer



FishLab BBZ Bio-Shad



Gamagatsu G-Shield



Lew's All American



Shimano Curado



Strike King Chick Magnet Jr.



Z-Man Goat Toadz



Yamamoto Slinko



SpiderWire Dura Braid Yellow



CAST Prodigy Swmibait



BY LIN BELL & W2 STAFF

**E** So many lures and so little space! The past two years has created an explosion in fishing interest and the industry has responded accordingly.

There are many new rod and reel companies, new soft bait makers and creative new designs, new jig heads, storage boxes, it's overwhelming. Here's an overview of just some of the new bass tackle you'll be seeing arriving at area tackle shops soon.

## ABU Garcia

The new Revo Rocket spinning reel features an asymmetrical X-Craftic alloy body design, that gives anglers a more compact, lightweight body. The Rocket also features the newAMG2 gear system, that is 17% larger than the previous generation, allowing for extra gear strength and the ability to create the Rocket's extreme gear ratio of 7.6:1 with 9 ball-bearing HPCR System.

The ABU Garcia Revo X combo is available in three casting models with an all-new style and improved performance. It features an asymmetrical reel design for greater comfort and is paired with a 30-ton graphite rod for added sensitivity – this duo has the looks to kill and the features avid anglers will enjoy.

The Low Profile Combo features 7 SS bearings + 1 roller bearing, an X2 Craftic Alloy frame, a Mag-Trax braking system, a Carbon 20lb drag and carbon rear grip for lightweight sensitivity and feel all for \$199.

## Berkley

Adding to their already stellar lineup of award-winning soft plastics, Berkley's newest PowerBait soft plastic, the PowerStinger, is sure to quickly become a favorite straight tailed minnow-style bladed jig trailer thanks to its unique design. Featuring new, patent pending "honeycomb" technology, the PowerBait PowerStinger offers additional swimming action when paired with a bladed jig that triggers fish to bite. The PowerStinger has a thick baitfish profile and a dense head that is durable and prevents tearing. A perfect match with the new Berkley Slobberknocker, the PowerStinger is available in both 3.5-inch and 4.25-inch, with 12 standard colors and 4 HD colors.

The Berkley Slobberknocker features an innovative through-head design that is completely unique from other bladed jigs. Featuring a signature hand-tied Berkley silicone skirt infused with PowerBait flavor to help ensure that every fish that bites will hold on longer, it also features a chip-resistant paint finish and sticky sharp Fusion19 hook. And, to match the hatch, it's available in 12 premium forage matching

colorways. This grand combination makes the new Berkley Slobberknocker the ultimate solution when it comes to fishing bladed jigs.

Expanding on their impressive line of Berkley Frittside crankbaits, Berkley created of a clicking. With a balsa-like action and enhanced clicking sound, the Clickin' Frittside fills a gap in the lineup to further deliver results in stained and dirty water situations. The Frittside Crankbait features a FlashDisc and flat-sided body shape that mimics a variety of species and provides a balanced weighting system that makes for easier and more accurate casting.

The Berkley Juke is the new highly versatile crankbait for saltwater and freshwater anglers with a coffin-shaped bill for maximum darting action with little effort. This flat-sided shad-shaped body, featuring a tantalizing side flash, can be cranked, twitched, or trolled with an extremely lifelike movement that entices strikes from various fish. This unique bait was designed by world-class design engineers at Berkley Labs to provide a level of responsiveness and fantastic rolling action with minimal rod movement and is equipped with precision-tuned rattles for maximum attraction capabilities.

## Bill Lewis

Available in three different sizes, the aptly

named Bill Lewis ATV is built for any type of structure or cover around. The ATV 1.0, 1.5 and 2.5 are all available in 12 fish-catching colors.

#### CAST Co.

For 2023 the makers of the secretively popular OG Herring will introduce a smaller version said to wander like it's nearly six-inch big brother. This topwater lure has been deadly on area lakes with relatively clear water. Also new for 2023 is the Prodigy line of swimbaits. Made from a proprietary plastic material these baits are extremely durable, lifelike and swim true with very little blowout even at higher retrieve speeds. The baits are available in three-inch, and 4.1" version in blood shadow, white pearl, chartreuse, glow purple reign, blue moon, gypsy and blueback herring. You can fish them on wire keeper jig heads or on A-rigs. Six and eight-inch version are said to be coming later in the year.

#### Costa Del Mar

Costa's Jose Pro sunglasses bring next-level performance to its best-selling Jose frame in 2022. Named in honor of the legendary waterman and larger than life personality, Jose Wejbe, this frame builds off the original with SIX PROformance innovations to help anglers manage sweat, reduce fogging and keep their frames locked in place, even when the water gets rough. The Jose PRO celebrates the legacy of the man who broke barriers in the angling community and lived for the thrill of the bite.

#### Daiwa

The new flagship reel for Daiwa features every piece of technology ever invented in spinning reels by Daiwa, making the Exist G LT 22 one of the finest spinning reels ever built. Or it sure seems like it, starting with the AIRDRIVE ROTOR that has reduced weight with more rigidity. The AIRDRIVE BAIL reduces weight by 33% with an adjusted angle to improve line management. The AIRDRIVE SPOOL has a newly shaped spool skirt. The AIRDRIVE SHAFT has a non contact structure between the mainshaft and pinion gear. It's built on a Monocoque Body, with Touch Digigears, Magsealed for durability and water resistance and a new generation ATD Type-L drag System that improves initial drag response. These flagship reels start at a whopping \$859. <https://daiwa.us/pages/exist-showcase>.

#### Ever Green

Designed in Japan to service bass anglers used to difficult, discerning bass on waters like famed Lake Biwa, the Ever Green XV-5 was painstakingly designed and tested to catch fish when other methods fail—even \$30 artisan-painted jerkbaits, which Japan is also known for. The bait does not feature a knocker or internal rattle—also a plus for targeting clear, water pressured fish. The tight wobble produces all the vibration and sound necessary to draw the lateral line detection of bass, stripers, wipers, white bass, walleyes, and trout. It's part crank and part jerk bait. It's 3 1/2 inches, weighs 5/8 ounce and will go 3-7 feet.

#### Fenwick

The new Fenwick Elite rod family lives up to that legacy featuring seven species-specific rod models and a total of 49 unique rod actions designed to excel regardless of the species targeted. Featuring Powerlux 200 resin and 30-ton graphite, the Elite rods are a combination of lightweight feel and sensitivity. Each model features proven Fenwick actions that pair perfectly with popular techniques for catching a variety of fish. Combined with the advanced resin technology, other key features include premium high-quality cork, an ergonomic reel seat, Titanium guides with zirconia inserts, and a limited lifetime warranty.

#### FishLab

The FishLab BBZ Bio-Shad crankbait is a compact bodied four-piece swimbait that comes in at only 4 inches. The swimming action on this bait is phenomenal and mimics the tight swimming action of threadfin and baby gizzard shad perfectly. The square bill design helps the bait deflect off of rock and timber as well as a hybrid tail material for a lifelike swimming action and keeping the bait running true. The BBZ Bio-Shad also features tournament grade BKK treble hooks.

#### Flambeau

The Flambeau Terminal Slim Waterproof Tuff Tainer packs a boatload of terminal tackle into a "slim" profile (1.7" depth) in comparison to the standard 5000/3700 series bandwidth (2.125" depth) while maintaining the same footprint.

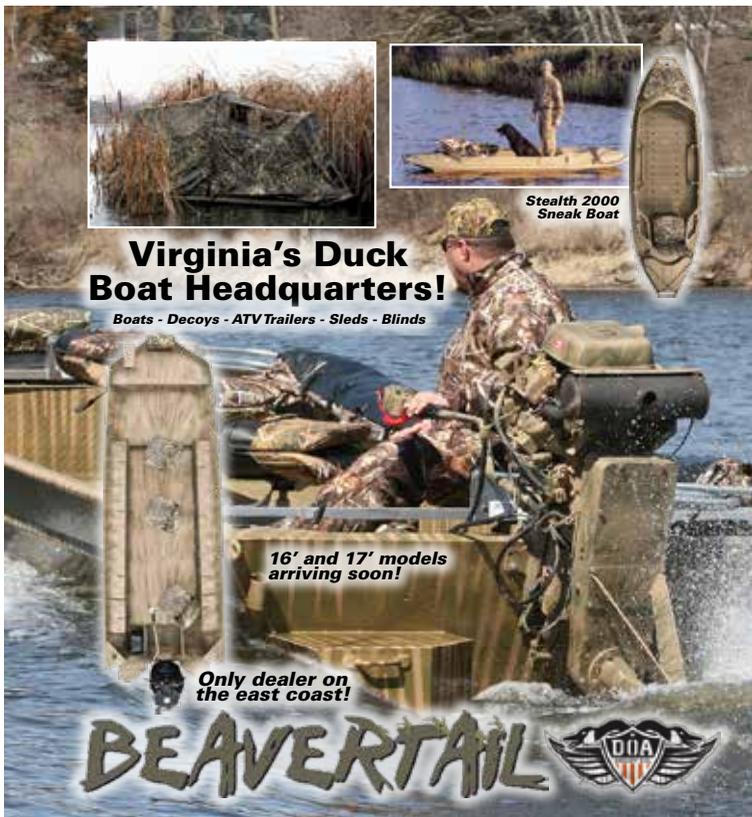
| continued on page 24



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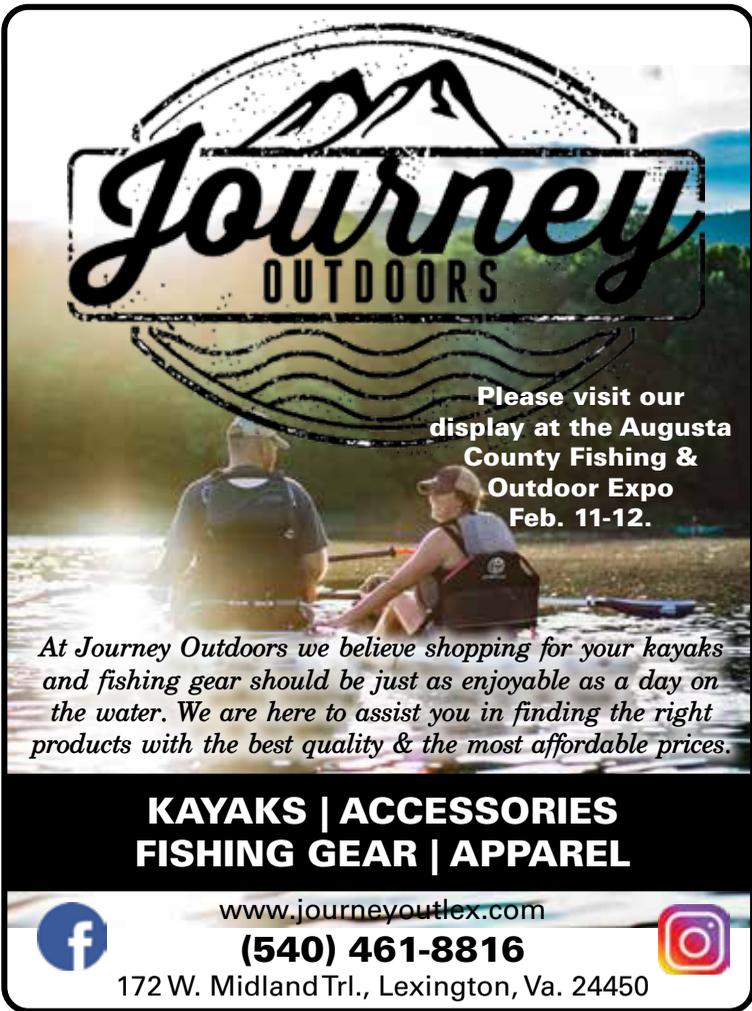
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#### Gamagatsu

The G-Shield Tungsten Flipping Weight should be popular among matt punching tidal Potomac anglers. It features a specially designed composite insert that not only protects an angler's line but also provides 360-degree protection for the knot. The insert is wider at the base than at the insertion hole so the hook can recess itself into the weight, creating a more compact, lifelike and snag-resistant offering. The flipping weight is slightly wider and excels when flipped or pitched into heavy cover and features a stealthy smoke-colored finish. For easy identification, the weight size is stamped on the side of each weight.

#### Lew's

The first tournament quality baitcast reel in the American Hero family features Authentically unique MultiCam® dip process military camo pattern, Premium 10 bearing system, One-piece aluminum frame with graphite sideplates, Externally adjustable Magnetic Control System (MCS), Combat Grip® paddle grips and thumb bar and P2 Super Pinion® bearing supported pinion gear. \$179 Lew's first tournament quality spinning reel in the American Hero family features authentically unique MultiCam® dip process military camo pattern, proven aluminum frame and sideplate design, 11 bearing system, Zero Reverse® one-way clutch bearing and Black Ti anodized aluminum spool. \$89

The new Lew's American Hero Tier 1 rods will be popular among area anglers. These Premium HM50 Tour Grade high modulus graphite blanks are tourna-

ment grade designed to Jamey Caldwell's specifications. They feature Lew's patented VTR (Vibration Transfer Ring®) allows direct contact with the blank, High density EVA split grips, Lew's exclusive skeletal reel seat, and Authentically unique Multi-Cam® dip process military camo pattern.

Featuring screaming fast 9.5:1 gear ratio, 40 inches RPT retrieve speed and premium 10 bearing system with stainless steel double shielded ball bearings, the Hyper-speed LFS will be very popular with anglers. The Zero Reverse® one-way clutch bearing, One-piece aluminum frame and gear sideplate, and 6-pin QuietCast® externally Adjustable Centrifugal Brake (ACB) system, coupled with a 20-pound carbon fiber drag system make this a work horse burner of a reel for serious anglers. \$199

Lew's flagship Team Lew's Elite TI SLP baitcasters feature Super Low-Profile design with superior control ergonomics and Para-Mag™ braking system and recessed brake dial design integrate perfectly for seamless palming and incredible cast control. Beautiful and rugged black titanium deposition finish on aluminum hood and sideplates, accentuate the internal Hardened aluminum alloy Speed Gears® with exclusive P2 Super Pinion®. 11 bearing system with Japanese & NMB double-shielded stainless steel bearings, a NEW Speed Knot™ quick line attachment spool and Carbon fiber drag system with carbon drag star round out the features on this reel. \$499.99

#### Lunkerhunt

Bringing versatility and durability in a floating soft-plastic bait, the Hive Versa Fish has a natural minnow/shad profile to help you catch more fish using a wider range of techniques. The Versa Fish can be fished as a Neko rig, shakey head, soft jerkbait, bottom bounced on a round jig head, NED rigs, or bladed jigs. (184 of 318)

The Versa Worm can thrive with the Japanese influenced, Piku Piku style topwater finesse fishing. You can Texas rig the Versa Worm for a slow sinking, weedless presentation. Neko rig the lure and twitch the bait with a tail up presentation on bottom. This versatile bait excels in transforming itself to become your go-to lure on the water.

Presentation is key to drop shot fishing, and the Lunkerhunt Hive

Hover Shot is on "the level"! The Hive Hover Shot can be used as a dropshot bait and represents a Goby, Leech, or small baitfish while keeping a perfect horizontal presentation, to give a more natural presentation. Featuring a deep-ribbed body and spade-action tail, these lures are designed for fish to hold on to longer, allowing you to set the hook. Featuring Lunckerhunt's U.D.S.P, these baits were specially formulated to be neutrally buoyant and last longer on your hook so that you can spend your time fishing instead of replacing them.

#### Missile Baits

Missile Baits has partnered with Hog Farmer Baits to offer the Spunk Shad in the Missile Baits soft plastic line up. The Spunk Shad is a pintail swimbait with a thick ribbed body and a small pintail that creates a seductive shimmy when fished on a Chatterbait, Scrounger, Ned rig, or weightless hook. Missile Baits will start with the Spunk Shad in 4.5" and 5.5" sizes.

"The Spunk Shad is a great bait on a Chatterbait and I have thrown it for years. Hog Farmer makes a bunch of great baits but has limited distribution for their Spunk Shad. We think this partnership will be mutually beneficial for both companies," says John Crews, BASS pro angler and Missile Baits owner.

The Spunk Shad from Missile Baits will be offered in the 4.5" and 5.5" sizes. Both sizes will come in 6 colors, most of which match perfectly with the most popular Chatterbait Jackhammer colors including Green Pumpkin Delight that looks seamless with the BHite Delight colored Jackhammer. The Spunk Shads will be packaged in Missile Baits bags and be available anywhere you find Missile Baits. The Spunk Shad 4.5" and 5.5" will retail for the same price as the Hog Farmer colors, which are \$5.99 for the 4.5" and \$6.19 for the 5.5".

Missile Baits is having Roboworm manufacture their new, all-purpose, finesse, hand poured soft plastic bait called the Magic Worm. It is a 6" straight worm with proportions that make the Magic Worm easy to rig in most of the popular finesse techniques including drop shot, Neko rig, Texas rig, shaky head, and wacky rig. will come in 12 totally unique colors that only Roboworm can pour.

#### Netbait

The Crush Worm has quickly become the mainstay drop shot bait for a wide range of anglers. We recommend using an extremely subtle technique with minimal rod tip movement as it's been proven, consistently that slight twitches and dead sticking of the Crush Worm optimize the bait's performance. Finesse Fishing just got even better with the NetBait Crush Worm infused with BaitFuel giving it the triple threat of color, action, and powerful scent performance.

#### Rapala

The Rapala OG (Ott Defoe's Garage) Rocco crankbait is a product of Defoe's fertile fishing mind and professional angling experience. This is a highly castable, buoyant, round balsa bait with a square circuit board lip. It reportedly has a medium rolling action, runs five feet deep, deflects off cover and backs out of sticky situations. This bait is just 2-1/2 inches long, but weighs 3/8 ounce and sports a two No. 4 VMC Hybrid trebles.

| continued on page 26

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Shimano designed the ARMA-JOINT 190SF to solve the challenges of casting a big jointed swimbait in search of trophy fish. Lure engineers leverage Shimano's proprietary ARMA BOOST technology to significantly increase casting distance and accuracy by reducing unnecessary air resistance and the chances of the lure spinning during flight. As the angler casts the lure, ARMA BOOST technology facilitates the lure to disconnect from an internal magnet and forces the body to fold into its compact shape. \$42.99

Shimano's Swaggy Strong spinnerbait incorporates an innovative tapered-wire design for added toughness without sacrificing performance, ideal for hooking fish at the end of a long cast or in deeper water. The lower arm's thicker (1mm) wire improves hookup ratios and adds durability for increased angler confidence when hooking into the fish of a lifetime. Swag Strong's upper arm tapers to a thinner (0.9mm) wire that enables the lure's specially-designed blades to transmit more vibration through the water.

Shimano's legendary prowess in DC technology continues with the addition of the all-new Curado DC 200, an expansion to the tournament-proven Curado family of low-profile reels. The Curado DC 200 provides anglers up to 40% more line capacity for added versatility and performance using a wide range of baits and techniques, especially those looking to leverage heavier line, larger lures or maximize casting performance. \$269

Built upon a one-piece aluminum CoreSolid Body that houses Shimano's Infinity Drive and MicroModule gearing system, the Shimano Bantam MGL A Casting Reel provides a solid in-hand feel and unbelievable reeling force to supply power without resistance or hesitation. Offering added versatility, the Shimano Bantam MGL A Casting Reel features an all new MGL Spool III with decreased startup inertia that enables anglers to cast further while providing the ability to use a variety of lure weights and presentations. \$349

The Shimano Miravel is a lightweight yet powerful reel with fierce versatility for the multi-species angler. Built utilizing Shimano's legendary carbon-infused CI4+ body to provide a lightweight platform and in-

creased sensitivity, the Miravel also features Shimano's Magnum-Lite rotor to allow for an effortless startup and quick hooksets. \$129

The redesigned SLX lineup features Shimano's proprietary DIAFLASH technology — carbon tape diagonally wrapped in opposite directions on the outermost layer of the butt section to form an array of "X" shapes — to prevent twisting and enhance an angler's pulling power. The comprehensive series of casting and spinning rods expands upon the previous generation of SLX rods and now features two models specifically for anglers throwing large swimbaits. \$99

**Strike King**

The Strike King Tour Grade Compact Tungsten Casting Jig allows for a small profile without reducing weight with a short-shanked, heavy-wire 3/0 hook and hand tied skirts. \$6.49

The Chick Magnet Jr is a scaled down version of their popular bal-sa flat side crank bait, the Chick Magnet Jr. features circuit board lips, diving depths of 2-4 feet and 13 colors for \$9.99

The Strike King Filler worm is a new shape to apply the OPT Technology to with multilayer colors, heavily salted bottom-ends with wide nose and thin body design to prevent splitting on the hook. Perfect for drop shot, shaky heads and Neko rigs.

**St. Croix**

Headlined by a trio of powerful, all-new swimbait models featuring the St. Croix-exclusive GRASP reel seat, St. Croix's redesigned and comprehensive Legend Tournament Bass Series expands to 19 technique-specific casting models and eight spinning models for 2023. Featuring all-new SCIV+ carbon blanks and iACT Glass blanks on select reaction bait-models, new Legend Tournament Bass rods feature refined angler ergonomics and cosmetics, as well as all of St. Croix's top technologies. Retail prices range from \$290-\$395 with a 15-year warranty.

**SpiderWire**

After its introduction at ICAST 2021, SpiderWire DuraBraid continues to impress anglers that demand high performance as the most abrasion-resistant conventional braided line on the market. Now, this popular braided line is available in Hi-Vis Yellow.

| continued on page 49

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| What's New?

# OUTBOARDS



BY C.C. MCCOTTER

**T**he electrification of outboard motors is coming – soon. That is the #1 trend we are following in this segment of the fishing marketplace. Mercury Marine is said to have four fully electric powered outboard motors ready for introduction this year. Now they won't be able to power your bass boat but Mercury's Avator line will be more aimed at the small boat owner, but it's realistic to expect electric options for most freshwater boat within five years. Yamaha isn't far behind with their electric power outboards either.

Other trends we are following include V12 outboards, digital/joystick steering and

## Honda

While not all that common to see a Honda on the transom of a bass boat, it's not unusual anymore. The Honda BF series includes 250, 225 and 200 hp models built on a 3.6 liter, 4-stroke, single overhead cam, 60-de-

gree, 24-valve V6 block that originated in Honda racing and was used in Accuras.

The Honda BF 250 comes in versions that weigh 609-632 pounds. White and silver models are available. At idle, when the engine senses a need for additional amperage, Honda's AMP+ automatically increases the rpm's by 100 to produce an additional 9 amps. This helps prevent the draining of critical battery power when using multiple accessories. The charging system features a 90 amp "On Demand" belt-driven alternator with 60 charging amps. This superior design reduces heat buildup and provides outstanding battery charging across the RPM range. [www.hondamarine.com](http://www.hondamarine.com)

## Mercury

Mercury Marine, a division of Brunswick Corporation introduced the industry's first V10 outboard with the official launch of its all-new 5.7L 350 and 400hp Verado outboard engines last winter. This winter it's the new V12 600 hp Verado. Now you won't be powering your bass boat with this out-

board, however, the saltwater guys are going to love.

It features a two-speed transmission, electro-hydraulic controls (imagine the torque this thing generates?), contra-rotating propellers and surprisingly quiet operation built around a block that displaces 7.6 liters and weighs 1,260 pounds.

Mercury's Pro XS 175-300 hp are by far the most common motor you will find on area angler's bass boats (except for Skeeters, that come rigged with Yamahas). The V8 outboards (300, 250, 225) are built around a 4.6-liter block and weigh just 511 pounds.

Not much has yet been made public about Mercury's Avator electric outboards. It is rumored that select dealers may see availability in spring. [www.mercurymarine.com](http://www.mercurymarine.com)

## Suzuki

With outboards that range from 2.5 to 350 horsepower, Suzuki is another option area anglers might consider for a repower or small boat.

New for 2023 is a 75 hp four stroke perfect for a wide range of boats. Su-

*"The electrification of outboard motors is coming - soon. This is the #1 trend we are following in this segment of the fishing marketplace."*

zuki says the performance, fuel efficiency and durability of the new DF75 make it an ideal power choice for a wide range of fishing and family boats, from center consoles, flats skiffs and RIBS to pontoon boats, deck boats and aluminum lake boats.

The DF75 is built with a rugged one-piece, forged crankshaft, an oil-bathed, self-adjusting timing chain and Suzuki's multi-layer anti-corrosion system for strong protection against the harsh marine environment. Built-in technology such as a self-diagnostics system, oil change reminder system and fuel water detection system help boaters maintain their DF75 outboards and keep them running strong season after season. In addition, Suzuki's Tilt Limit System helps prevent accidental damage to the boat or outboard due to excessive tilting of the motor. The Suzuki DF75 is available with a black or white paint finish, to best match a variety of boats. Suzuki offers the DF75 in Long (20") and Extra Long (25") shaft lengths — and the motor can be converted to tiller steering.

The Suzuki SS series of outboards (250, 200, 150 and 115 models) are best suited for bass boats. The 250 and 200 are interestingly built on different blocks. The 250 is a 4.1 liter, 60-degree V6 that weighs in at 578 pounds. The 200 is a V4 that weighs 518 pounds. These motors are not light. They do include a standard five-year warranty. [www.suzukimarine.com](http://www.suzukimarine.com)

### Tohatsu

Probably the most popular outboard for small boat owners due to price and reliability, Tohatsu now offers a full line of motors capable of powering today's bass boats. The BFT series consists of 250, 225, 200 and 150 and 115 hp options. The BFT115D is new for 2023 and built on a four cylinder, four stroke that weighs 487 pounds.

The 250, 225 and 200 outboards utilize a 3.6 liter 60-degree V6 that weighs in at 619 pounds. A five-year warranty is standard with these outboards.

Ed Allen's Boats & Baits on Chickahominy Lake is a Tohatsu dealer. [www.tohatsu.com](http://www.tohatsu.com)

### Yamaha

The line of Yamaha SHO outboards in 250, 225 and 200 hp remain big blue's top-selling bass boat powerplant. These outboards are built around a 60-degree, 4.2-liter block and weigh 529-567 pounds. A few industry exclusive features worth noting include a new alternator that generates 70 gross amps of charging power. This 40% increase in charging is more than enough juice for anglers' growing array of on-board tech. The Yamaha SHO outboards can also be equipped with an optional isolator lead to better charge house or trolling batteries.

Designed exclusively for V Max SHO

V6 20-inch-shaft outboards, V MAX SHO Series propellers are available in one-inch pitch increments from 22 to 27 inches, for fine-tuning wide-open-throttle RPM for tournament-level performance.

Optional digital SHO backlit gauges provide real-time outboard performance, boat systems and environmental data at your fingertips. Streamlined displays are designed to withstand the elements and are available in square or round style for single- or multi-engine applications.

With a quick double-tap of the trim button, Yamaha's new, exclusive, TotalTilt® performs a full tilt up or down, until it reaches the trim rams. This makes trailering quick and easy and is handy when a complete up or down tilt is needed.

[www.yamahaoutboards.com](http://www.yamahaoutboards.com)



*Mercury Avator*

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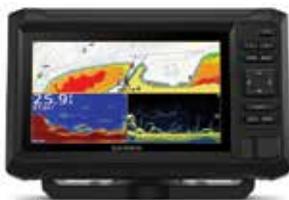
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| What's New?

# ELECTRONICS AND GEAR

Garmin Echomap UHD2 7



Rhodan HD  
GPS Anchor+



Lowrance HDS Pro  
& S3100 Module



MotorGuide  
Tour Pro

Humminbird MEGA Live



In the ever-changed world of marine electronics, forward-facing, real-time sonar continues to drive technological advances. Keeping your transducer automatically pointed at the fish while you watch them react to your lure has been addressed by Humminbird and Minn Kota and we anticipate that will be a trend Garmin and Lowrance follows soon.

Here's a bit of news you might not have heard yet; from off it's acquisition of Navico last year, Brunswick Corporation (owner of Mercury Marine) formed the Navico Group that includes Attwood, C-MAP, Lowrance, Marinc, MotorGuide, ProMariner and Simard among a number of other marine technology companies.

So, yes, Mercury now owns Lowrance and MotorGuide. It should be interesting to see what the plan is for both brands positioning themselves in the boat market for the coming year.

Here's a preview of what you can expect to see for sale in area shops this

winter and spring.

## Garmin

With an optimized design for deeper water, the new Garmin LiveScope XR transducer has extended elements so anglers can see both long- and close-range views in real time. Anglers can now see further around and below the boat – up to 500' in freshwater and 350' in saltwater – and the Reverse Range feature allows them to utilize more of the screen to display fish and structure. To see detail closer to the boat, the Compress Range feature displays a live look in sharp detail up close, while still allowing the angler to keep an eye on targets further away at the same time.

The LiveScope XR System delivers three unique vantage points with one mount that can be easily adjusted to fit an angler's fishing techniques and preferences, no tools required. Simply turn the transducer forward for a live look at what's out in front of the boat; point it down to see directly beneath

the boat; or turn it sideways with the included Perspective Mode Mount to enable the 'top down' perspective mode that's perfect for scouting open water or shorelines. Select the LiveScope mode that best fits that fishing spot, and the view will automatically change on a compatible Garmin chartplotter2 screen. LiveScope XR is compatible with a wide range of Garmin GPSMAP® and ECHOMAP™ chartplotters and combo units.

Garmin has a new ECHOMAP™ UHD2 chartplotter series with 500W of vivid, high-contrast scanning sonar power, all-new hardware with a sun-light readable display and more. Offered in a new 5-inch as well as the popular 7-inch display, the ECHOMAP UHD2 plotters offer physical buttons for easy control and operation of functions every angler depends on for a successful outing, including marking key waypoints or quickly toggling between different chart views. Plus, built-in Wi-Fi® enables

| continued on page 32

*“So yes, Mercury now owns Lowrance and Motorguide. It should be interesting to see what the plan is for both brands positioning themselves in the boat market for the coming year.”*



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seamless sharing of sonar and user data between two ECHOMAP UHD2 units on-board.

Whether fishing with a friend or wanting the flexibility to add another chartplotter on board, built-in wireless networking allows anglers to stream sonar and share user data, such as waypoints and routes, between two ECHOMAP UHD2 units.

When bundled with an ECHOMAP UHD2, the GT20-TM transducer delivers a crisp view of structure, bait and fish – right from the plotter screen. For even greater clarity, users can add to their onboard system by purchasing a GT24UHD-TM transducer with Ultra-High Definition scanning sonar – CHIRP traditional and ClearVü – to target and identify a wider array of fish in vivid color schemes.

Thanks to the preloaded BlueChart® g3 coastal charts or LakeVü g3 inland maps with Navionics data, users can more efficiently pinpoint the perfect honey hole or navigate to their next destination with enhanced situational awareness.

The ECHOMAP UHD2 series is available now with suggested retail prices ranging from \$399.99 to \$649.99.

#### **Johnson Outdoors (Humminbird and Minn Kota)**

It's been a while since Johnson Outdoors could fulfill all the orders for its Humminbird and Minn Kota products. To make sure the shortfall was addressed they underwent a massive expansion last year; the plant in Mankato, Minnesota was expanded 50% with a six times the key machinery brought in to accommodate the higher demand for Minn Kota products. The Eufala, Alabama plant expanded 25%, runs 24/7, six days a week now and received a 40% warehouse expansion. Not being able to produce enough great product for willing buyers is bad. Humminbird realized that and addressed the issues.

They also kept on setting new standards. Humminbird won the Best in Category Award for Electronics category at the most recent ICAST show back in July with their new MEGA Live Imaging TargetLock combined with MEGA Live Imaging – a way to keep live imaging sonar always pointed at the target automatically.

Combined with Minn Kota Ultrex™, the need to choose between Spot-Lock® and MEGA Live Imaging is no longer. The new Humminbird MEGA Live Hand Control™ Universal Mount allows anglers to utilize the technology on any vessel.

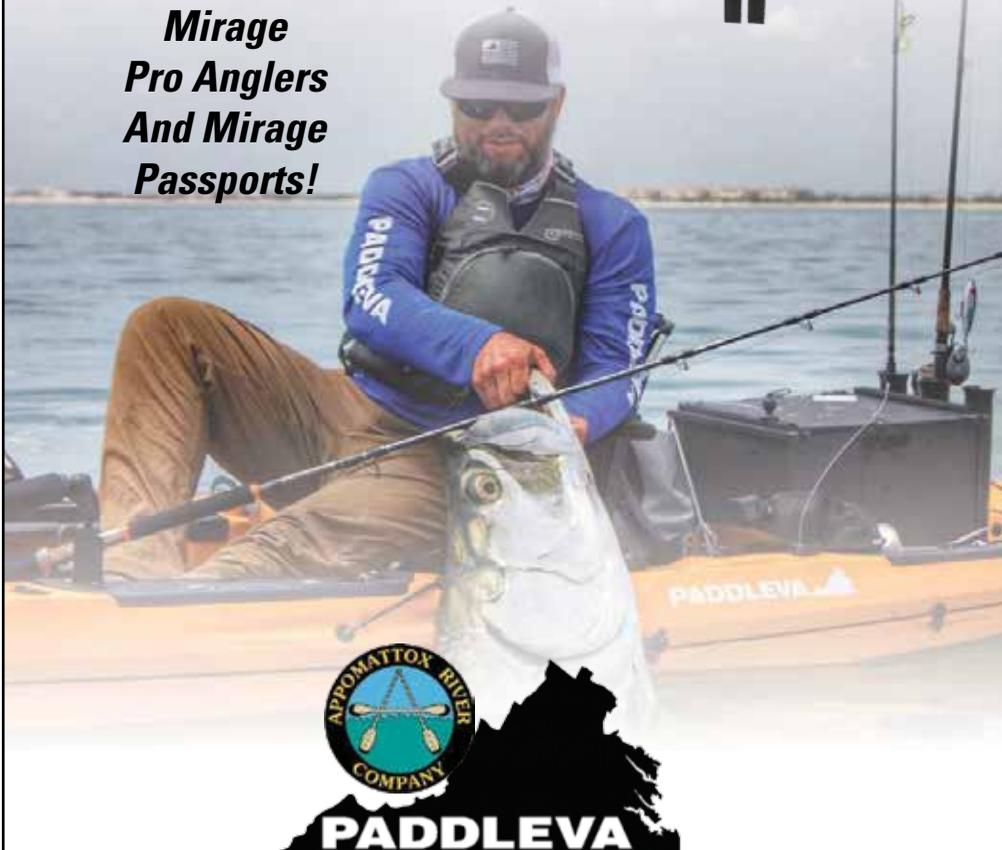
Thanks to the GeigerTec billet aluminum adjustable mount and 50-inch transducer shaft, anglers take control while locking onto fish-holding structures or waypoints, regardless of the boat position or movement due to wind and current. The MEGA Live Hand Control allows for independent hand control of the MEGA Live Imaging



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Transducer while on any boat with or without a trolling motor. Choose from multiple viewing modes - Forward Mode for partial coverage below the boat and out in front of the boat, Down Mode for a full view below the boat and Landscape Mode for a wide, top-down view out and around the boat.

The GeigerTec mount can be installed on any boat. The package comes with a MEGA Live Imaging Transducer, Adjustable Mounting Arm, Shaft and Handle, Ethernet Cable, Power Cable and Mounting Hardware.

Humminbird MEGA Live Imaging is compatible with all Apex models, all Solix models, Helix 8-12 G3N MEGA SI or MEGA DI and 7-15 G4N MEGA SI or MEGA DI model units.

For decades, Humminbird LakeMaster® has offered anglers accurate and advanced mapping. Now, LakeMaster is taking it to an entirely new level with the introduction of Humminbird LakeMaster maps with VX Technology.

The new LakeMaster lineup maintains the same regions as the current lineup, but with two options per region: LakeMaster and LakeMaster Premium. Both products now include SmartStrike technology as a feature, allowing anglers to enter search parameters like season, time of day, temperature, and targeted fish species to create a custom chart that highlights areas of the map where fish are most likely to be biting. LakeMaster and LakeMaster Premium also include customizable Chart Presets, four Depth Highlights with customizable colors, Shallow Water Highlight, Water Level Offset, and One-Boat Network capability. And for an added advantage, LakeMaster Premium includes two additional features: 2D Shaded Relief and Aerial Imagery.

#### Lowrance

After consulting with the area Lowrance sales representative we can report you can expect big new things.

"We launched the new HDS Pro which replaces the HDS Live that has a new internal sonar and offers the utmost transducer clarity when combined with our new HD 3-in-1 side scan transducers or our new Active Target 2 system," Joe Pechie told W2. HDS Pro units including the HDS PRO 9, HDS PRO 10, HDS PRO 12 and HDS PRO 16.

Lowrance has also launched a new external sonar module; the S3100, so end users running older displays like the HDS Live, Carbon or Elite FS also get the advantage of running the new HD transducers. Additionally, Lowrance is launching a HW and MH version of the 3-1 transducer sold separately that adds fish reveal feature on side scan. For Fish reveal you need to have the S3100 even on the new HDS Pro.

The S3100 provides full support for high-definition Active Imaging™ HD sonar to HDS® LIVE™ and Elite FS® displays and Fish Reveal™ SideScan for HDS® PRO.

| continued on page 34



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Active Imaging™ HD delivers the clearest images of fish and structure with Lowrance® CHIRP sonar and high-frequency (up to 1.2 MHz) SideScan and DownScan Imaging™ – plus FishReveal™ DownScan and NEW SideScan views, making fish identification easier below and to the sides of the boat.

Fish will be easy to see on both sides of the boat with the new FishReveal SideScan view, which takes the guesswork out

of fish identification by combining on one screen the incredible detail of high-frequency SideScan with the superb clarity and target separation of Lowrance CHIRP sonar. Available for HDS PRO, HDS LIVE and Elite FS displays.

With two fully independent 1kW sonar channels, you can connect the S3100 to up to two additional transducers to track multiple depth ranges at the same time.

The Active Imaging™ HD transducer not only delivers three key sonar technologies – Lowrance® CHIRP, SideScan and DownScan Imaging™ – in one convenient package, but also features a new transducer design that boosts signal clarity.

The Lowrance Ghost trolling motor now has an Active-Imaging 3 In 1 nosecone transducer that widens your fish-finding field of view. This easy-to-install nosecone fits on your Lowrance

Ghost Trolling Motor with ease, and once it's, it delivers a SideScan view to the right and left of your watercraft, and its DownScan Imaging™ shows you what's directly below your boat. Plus, this underwater imaging is further enhanced by Lowrance CHIRP sonar, a game-changing advancement that delivers high-end image clarity and target separation. Like a cherry on top of the cake, the Active Imaging 3-in-1 Nosecone Transducer even comes with FishReveal™, a free upgrade from Lowrance that enhances your underwater images to new extremes, letting you easily spot fish and see the bottom and bottom structures in striking detail.

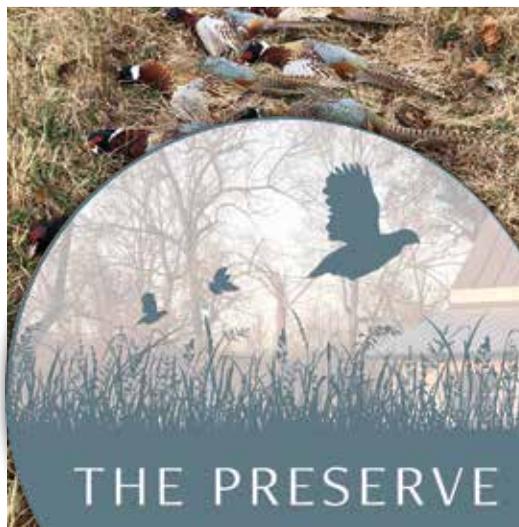
Stop into Green Top Sporting Goods to see the 2023 Lowrance products and be sure and chat with Green Top Marine Electronics Pro Steve Lane.

### MotorGuide

This brand was once the undisputed king of electric trolling motors but fell behind when depth finder manufacturers began making their own trolling motors for their units. With Brunswick Corporation back, we think MotorGuide is on the way back to prominence.

The Tour Pro, a highly regarded model name 20 years ago, is MotorGuide's newest trolling motor available in 109-lb. and 82-lb. thrust models. These are true cable steer units with GPS anchoring capabilities. Each is accompanied by Pinpoint GPS technology so you can electronically “anchor” on your favorite spot. They also feature the Zero-G Lift Assist system that requires 40% less stowing and deploying effort versus competitor's assist mounts. The Tour Pro foot pedals are metal, too. A rugged two-piece shaft features an oversized stainless steel outer column and an unbreakable inner composite shaft with lifetime warranty. These units' universal sonar connect and transducer is compatible with many Lowrance, Humminbird, Garmin an Raymarine depth finders.

The MotorGuide Xi5 is a wireless, electronically steered trolling motor said to be 50% faster than competitor's models that is offered in 105-lb. and 80-lb versions with Pinpoint GPS and



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built-in transducers. The shaft is made from a composite, bendable material. Each unit includes a wireless foot pedal and a handheld remote control. The Xi5 units are compatible with a large range of Lowrance, Garmin and Humminbird units.

### Rhodan

Rhodan HD GPS Anchor+ trolling motors are manufactured in Florida and are available in 36 (120-lb.), 24 (80-lb.) and 12-volt (55-lb.) models in a wide variety of shaft lengths (even a 96" shaft for saltwater anglers that prefer not to use a wreck anchor).

In Anchor Mode, the Rhodan HD GPS Anchor+® Trolling Motor will keep the boat's bow parked where you want it, in any depth of water, automatically compensating for wind, waves and cross-current. Anchor sites can be jogged in precise five-foot increments in four directions relative to the boat's heading using the wireless fob. No need to mess with a wet, tangled anchor line. High definition precision differential GPS receiver provides remarkable positioning accuracy.

In the Track Mode, the Rhodan HD GPS Anchor+® Trolling Motor will automatically pull the boat along a chosen course, continually compensating for wind and current disturbances. Dual Tilt-compensated compasses keep your boat on a stable directed path as your boat makes a beeline track for your chosen target. This allows you to fish your favorite shoreline without continually correcting your boat's heading. The track speed is adjustable (32 thrust settings) and the track heading can be changed in precise five-degree increments, all using the wireless fob.

In the Manual Mode, the system behaves just like a normal trolling motor, allowing the operator to wirelessly steer the system and control the thrust. Rhodan has refined the system further by incorporating Thrust Dependent Electronic Steering Control,

complete forward and reverse thrust capabilities, and anti-wrap-up technology which prevents the power cord from winding itself around the shaft.

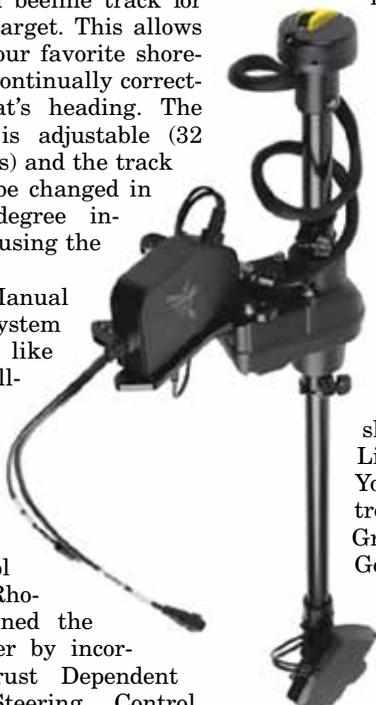
The Rhodan HD GPS Anchor+® Trolling Motor has 12 memory locations. Four of these are dedicated to memorizing anchor sites. The remaining eight can be used to record intricate paths or routes over 1000 miles long! The twelve memories will remain in the system memory even after power down. Paths can be recorded while running at trolling speed and even at cruising speed with the trolling motor stowed! The system will automatically anchor the boat when it completes a memorized route.

A wireless, floating, waterproof remote control fob lets you control the trolling motor while fishing from anywhere on the boat. The HD GPS Anchor+® Trolling Motor can steer the boat while the main engine is at low power settings. This allows the system to troll at higher speeds or to anchor in fast moving current. Instant "Off" button in case you need it while working a fish. An audible battery meter allows the battery state of charge to be checked from anywhere on the boat using the wireless fob. The stowed position sensor automatically prevents the trolling motor and propeller from operating in the stowed position. A lockable quick-release mount permits the unit to be

moved for safe-keeping or use on another boat. Durable corrosion-free composite shafts flex upon impact. There are both black and White models are designed for saltwater use and are equipped with sacrificial zinc anodes and the trolling motor lower unit and shafts all include Line-X® finish.

You'll find Rhodan trolling motors at Green Top Sporting Goods. 🌿🌿

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2/26 – Lake Anna    3/26 – Lake Chesdin  
 4/23 – Chickahominy Lake    5/13 – Chickahominy River  
 6/24 – James River  
 Sunday October TBD – Classic

(Location to be voted on by the qualified teams from the regular season)

Special tournament outside of regular season  
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 March 18 | James River | Hopewell Marina  
 April 15 | Lake Anna | Sturgeon Creek Marina  
 May 20 | Lake Gaston | Holly Grove Marina  
 May 14 | Lake Chesdin | Seven Springs Marina  
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Andy Lavin "Team" Series Director

\*Teams earn 50 bonus points for attending the Friday night pre-tournament meetings. This includes a FREE MEAL, door prizes, fellowship music and an inspirational message. Family and friends are welcome at no additional cost. TRUTH VERIFICATION AT EVERY EVENT.



# Dave Farrington Spinnerbait Dean

BY C.C. MCCOTTER

This month's W2 Profile features one of the most humble, hard-working, kind folks we've met in our 30+ years. Dave Farrington, 62, hails from around Greensboro, NC and many of us see him only once a year but he is a very welcome site.

Farrington's massive Dave's Tournament Tackle booth at the Richmond Fishing Expo is full of every bass lure you'd ever want, soft plastic and hard and some made of metal. His fertile fishing mind is on full display.

One of his special talents is spinnerbaits. From the creation of his revolutionary, custom-made Tiger Shad spinnerbait to all the bladed baits that have come since, Farrington is the region's dean of spinnerbaits.

At the show he'll handcraft most of the baits per a customer's specifications. All the components are at his fingertips and he's on his feet assembling spinnerbaits over eight hours each day.

When he's not building baits

or running his North Carolina tackle shop (J&N Tackle), Dave enjoys tournament fishing and recreational fishing nearby Belews Creek Lake. His wife, Kim and two daughters have often accompanied him in his Richmond show booth.

We caught up with him recently for another W2 Profile.

*W2: How did you start fishing?*

Farrington: My Daddy took me fishing down to the Oakdale cotton mill dam when I was five years old and we sat out on a rock with worms and a bobber and caught fish. This is literally five minutes from where my shop is today. When I turned seven or eight my Daddy bought me a Zebco 33 and I started fishing with lures and started catching bass. Back then that was a really big deal to have that kind of gear at eight.

*W2: How you began in the tackle business?*

Farrington: I was a painter by trade and in the winter I wasn't too busy so I thought I'd

*"Paying attention to detail hasn't changed. Trying to make sure he angler has a good experience with the baits hasn't changed.."*

- Dave Farrington, Dave's Tournament Tackle



Dave Farrington at work.

try and make some lures. First lure I made was a spinnerbait with the basic bullet style head in green shad pattern. People liked them.

W2: Who the most influential person in your early days?

Farrington: I used to sell for Lionel Holingsworth who made the True Trex spinnerbaits. He just wasn't able to keep up demand, and I asked him if I could start making stuff and he said, "Yes" and actually gave me a few of the contacts for materials.

W2: What is it about the tackle business that you were drawn to and continues to motivate you today?

Farrington: I think it's the contact with the anglers, the relationships you built.

W2: Can you offer insight from your years of experience, as in on how tackle business has changed over the years?

Farrington: The older anglers were more about relationships and the younger anglers are not. The easy of obtaining gear online is why this has changed. The internet has made us less of a people society.

W2: What hasn't changed for you, i.e. - service, a fair deal, selling cutting edge, desirable products, etc?

Farrington: Paying attention to detail hasn't changed. Trying to make sure the angler has a good experience with the baits hasn't changed.

W2: What do you think about shows these days?

Farrington: Shows are a tremendous amount of work but they keep us in front of anglers and let them know we are still there. We had 1,600 sq. ft. at the Richmond Fishing Expo. Moving over 400,000 items

is like moving your house each weekend.

W2: How important is your pro staff to DTT?

Farrington: They're extremely important. We couldn't do what we do without them. The goal is that they help us with our designs and colors. The best ones do.

W2: What's the best-selling lure you make?

Farrington: The Tiger Shad by far but we also make a Bullseye, a deep crankin' spinnerbait, the TiTiger with a titanium arm, the Raptor with a titanium midsection, the River Special, the Assassin Shad and the Bladeroller.

W2: What events do you fish now?

Farrington: This year I'll fish the BFL

North Carolina Division. Might fish the Virginia Division of CATT.

W2: Where is your favorite place to fish and why?

Farrington: Buggs Island. I like it because it has a wide variety of fishing situations and most of the time you can get away from the people.

W2: What do you enjoy doing when not making lures?

Farrington: Sleeping and eating.

W2: If you weren't in the tackle business what would you be doing now?

Farrington: Probably be fishing a lot more and in the painting business. 🌊🐟

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winged wisdom



## Field Trials:

### *Does Your Dog Have It?*

BY KATE AHNSTROM

**H**ave you ever wondered just how good is your bird dog? Looking for a metric in which to make that measurement? Do you have another fabulous hobby? Field trials are where you and your four-legged hunting buddy can prove your proficiency in the hunt field.

Henry Horne, Glen Allen Kennels, the same gentleman that got us hooked into this crazy German short-haired pointer (GSP) life, also introduced us to the uber addictive game, National Upland Classic Series (NUCS). NUCS is a “shoot to retrieve” trial that showcases the dog’s hunt ability as well as the handler’s shooting ability. Henry has proudly taken several of his GSPs to championship titles.

Why bother with another hobby? Simple. It gives you more opportunities to work your dog, fine tune your skill sets and, did I mention that it gives you more opportunities to work your dog?

NUCS is just one game out of many. In NUCS, we have three birds, usually chukar, that we must locate within 15 minutes.

The birds may be set out in a random pattern, or they could be set with one in the front, one in the middle and one in the back. It all depends on who is running the tournament.

NUCS divides dogs into divisions such as Amateur (under two years old), Open (over two years old), Flushing, Pointing and Doubles. Dogs are awarded points based on finding and pointing or flushing the bird, retrieval back-to-hand and

how quickly it’s all accomplished.

The handler must be able to work well with their dog, methodically and quickly, clearing a field that can be several acres in size. And no tournament series is complete without a national competition and tremendous prizes such as shotguns, Garmin collars, dog boxes and trailers and so much more.

Mike and I have become completely addicted and are already looking forward to our first nationals with Lacy Blues and Kai this March. Field trials help keep our dogs in shape and give us a chance to showcase what they can do. The camaraderie and friendships that form in this sport are another wonderful benefit. With competitions all throughout the mid-Atlantic and as far out as Utah, we love seeing this great country and taking advantage of hunting seasons out west.

Other great games include AKC, NAVHDA, US Complete, UFTA, NSTRA, and BHU just to name a few. NAVHDA and AKC are two testing systems that use a set standard in which to measure the dog’s own merit. The handler is not involved with the shooting of any game which allows for a clearer optic on the dog’s ability without worrying about the ability of the handler to drop game.

One of my student’s and I traveled to Maryland last September with our yearling GSPs and put them in a NAVHDA Natural Ability test. We both proudly came home with a Prize 1! These tests are designed to

measure the puppy's ability to work willingly, use its nose to hunt, track and test for their ability to swim freely. That swimming portion was NO threat as we would regularly swim our pups through the summer for exercise and to expel some of that crazy GSP energy. Some of the games offer walking tests and some even have horseback trials. It just depends on what you prefer and honestly, how deep you want to dive in with your wallet.

We already have horses but the thought of having to repeatedly get on and off one of my monster, almost 18hh Percherons makes my hips hurt just thinking about it! One unifying factor across all of the tests is that they all offer a youth category. Some of the trials even offer youth scholarships that pay the entry fees for that young person to compete. I can't think of a better way to get the next generation involved with the sport.

For the new year, consider trying out a new sport, field trials. On January 6th-8th, the Virginia Gun Dog Classic hosted by Glen Allen Kennels and Virginia Shooting Sports will be hosting the NUCS premier east coast competition at Mid-Oak Farm in Cartersville. Handlers from as far away as Kansas and Iowa will be competing for one of the coveted belt buckles.

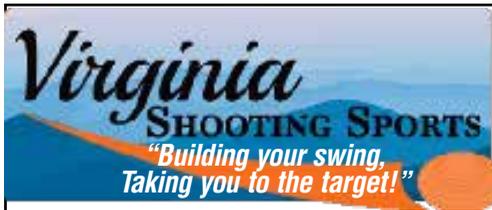
We will be welcoming several new handlers into the game at this event and will also be dedicating this year's competition to our beloved friend and competitor, Joseph "Joe" Throckmorton. Joe was a true sportsman and an honorable houndsman. He eagerly answered any questions from any handler and loved to share the ins and outs of how to best play the game. He never said a cross word about anyone. A true gentleman. Being able to spend time with handlers like Joe and Henry are exactly why Mike and I love field trials.

Take a moment to google field trials near you or even better, c'mon out to Mid-Oak and see it all in person! Details can be found on our website [VaShootingSports.com](http://VaShootingSports.com). Be sure to bring a friend or family member so they may witness the excitement firsthand.



Kristen Murray Photography

*Kate Ahnstrom, owner of Virginia Shooting Sports is a certified, professional instructor of the Paragon School of Sporting, pro staff Syren/Caesar Guerini, resident pro Orapax Hunting Preserve, Artemis ambassador for Virginia and field staff member of the Sisterhood of the Outdoors. Her tireless dedication to her students' success is obvious in each and every lesson.*



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# How To Mold Your Own Secret Lure

**F**orty years ago, a tournament goodie bag held a pack of Zoom centipedes. They didn't interest me. No legs, no tail, no nothing. Just a French fry-shaped plastic slab. Not catching my interest, how could it interest a fish? They sat in the bottom of the Skeeter for years.

Preparing for another tournament, fish were biting Carolina rigged lizards. Lots of them. Not wanting to burn up the supply, the bag of centipedes volunteered to be a place keeper. Surprisingly, these do-nothing baits produced bigger fish. Excitement and anticipation followed and a trip to the local tackle shop came up empty. There was no internet, no Amazon, and no way there would be centipedes for the tournament.

Seeing a frowning face, my wife suggested making some. Never having poured soft plastics or even knowing anything about it, I was at the mercy of my spouse.

Taking the remaining centipede, she poured plaster of Paris over the bait. The next day, we had a single cavity mold. Using old soft plastics and microwave, a centipede was born. We learned plastic shrinks when cooled.

Putting the baits back in the mold, more plastic was poured. Since coloring wasn't

an exact science, this homemade version was a laminate.

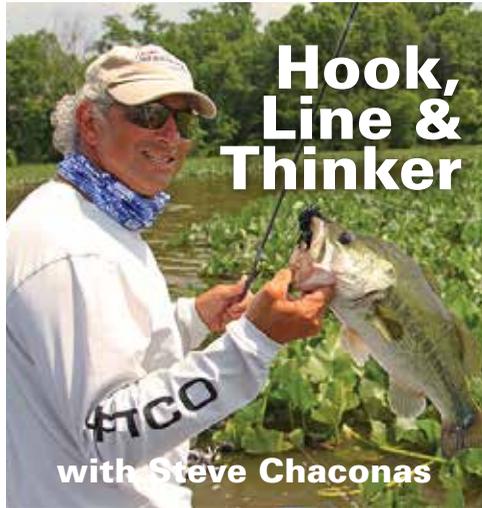
A few days later the two-tone bait performed like magic. I loved it and so did the fish. So intrigued with this bait, it became my primary lure, not only for Carolina rigs, but for split shot and drop shot rigs. It was so effective that my guide clients wanted to take a few home to try in their home waters. But the single cavity mold couldn't keep up with my demand...and the plaster of

Paris mold was crumbling.

I found a Lure Craft catalog with five-cavity, silicon molds, soft plastic liquid, dyes and glitter. A short pour of green pumpkin with black flake topped with watermelon with red and sometimes orange flake was my fav. This bait has given me 25 years of service with happy guide clients.

Hand-poured baits are back as finesse fishing has expanded. Regional garage businesses and anglers know what colors work on their bodies of water. Flat side stigma is no longer an issue, as laminating color trumps injected round baits.

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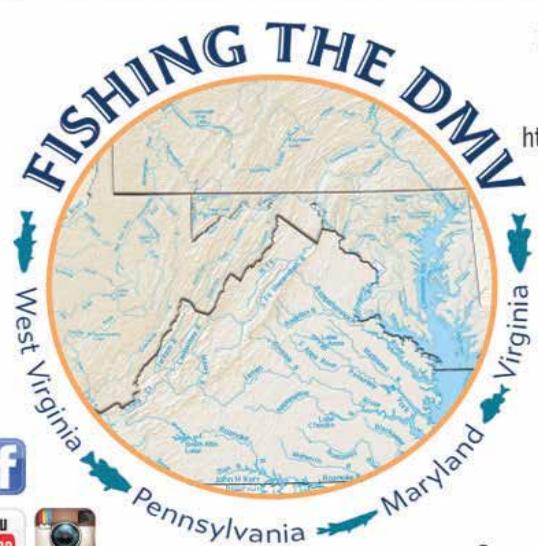
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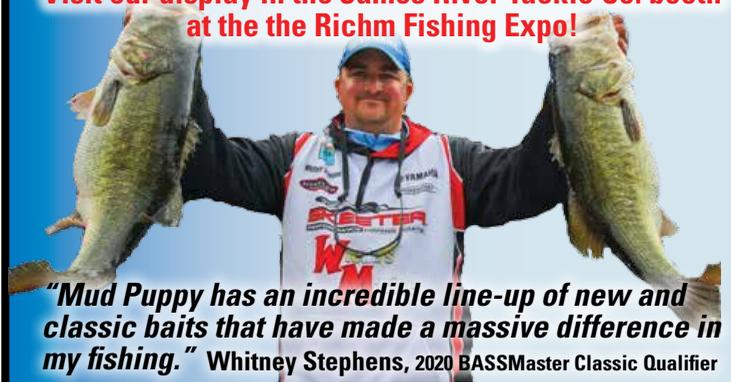
were not protected as they were cost prohibitive to defend.

This hobby has been adopted by anglers across the country. It doesn't take a huge investment to get started. In business for over 48 years, LureCraft has silicon molds of just about every soft plastic ever made and ones never seen before to create fishing catching supplies to fill tackleboxes. If there's a bait they don't have, they supply the silicon to easily create a unique recreation of your lucky old favorites. If you have the imagination and creativity, pouring soft plastic lures can be enjoyable and they catch fish! 🟢🟢



Author Capt. Steve Chaconas is Potomac bass fishing guide & freelance writer. Potomac River reports: [www.nationalbass.com](http://www.nationalbass.com). YouTube video channel National-BassGuide.

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## Land For Sale

#6123-#63444-1.91±Acres-\$19,500. Are you seeking a good place to build with the peaceful serenity of the country and wildlife for neighbors? Take a look at this 1.91 acre parcel located just off Highway 49 between Lunenburg Courthouse and Chase City with a soil scientist having reviewed the lot for a conventional drainfield. The property is completely wooded with mature hardwoods and some pines as well. This is a great location for your new home, hunting base camp, a weekend getaway, or an investment for the future. The construction options are broad so build your cabin, bring the camper, park the RV, or order a modular or manufactured home to get off the beaten path. The lines are well marked and painted for easily locating the 1.91 acres. Take a moment to explore this possibility before it becomes a missed opportunity in your rearview mirror of life. Call to schedule your showing!  
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#6369-#64688-17±Acres-\$179,000. 17-plus acre pine plantation (planted in 2005), long frontage on USACE, overlooking cove of Kerr Lake! Perc site, plus old stable/barn with exceptional hunting and recreation. Kerr Lake living and a great investment.  
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#6367-#64689-68±Acres-\$249,000. Calling All Loggers! 68+acres pine timberland, long frontage on paved, private road, 150+ feet on state road, 2,000 feet on USA COE, short walk to water's edge, small block of mature hardwoods, balance in 15-year-old pines. Ready to thin! Exceptional wildlife, hunting and investment. Built your Kerr Lake dream retreat.  
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#6428-#64925-39.99±Acres-\$139,000.00 Almost 40 Acres of towering pines that have been thinned once. The property is adjacent to 205 acres for sale on the Banister River. Along with a beautiful view. Over 2000 ft of road frontage. Making this a great investment property. I can't leave out the hunting aspect. The deer are here! I mean lots of them. I cannot count how many I jumped up upon inspection. Along with a multitude of deer I also found signs of turkey. You could easily cut the timber on a portion of the property. Plant a couple of food plots, and still put money in your pocket. The possibilities are endless. As hard as it is to find land with timber value in today's market. This won't be available long.  
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#6475-#65158-1±Acres-\$69,000.00 Excellent price in a waterfront community on Kerr Lake!! Located in Buffalo Point subdivision, Lot 15 is approximately 1 acre that has already been perked for a three bedroom 2 bath home. The lot shares a dock buoy with the lot across the street! Property also comes with a 10ft walkway easement to be able to access the buoy and beach. Don't miss this opportunity to be part of Kerr Lake! Location is only a few minutes away from downtown Clarksville.  
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#6178-#63768-4.48±Acres-\$65,000. 4.48 acres in a waterfront community on Kerr Lake! Westview Subdivision is located 5 minutes from Clarksville, Va. Partially open and partially wooded, your building site awaits for that dream home! This lot will come with a community dock slip in which you can store your boat! Property is already perked and ready for a septic system. This is priced to sell in a great neighborhood. Call today!  
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#6489-#65238-2.93±Acres-\$199,000.00 Sweet Sunset Cove Oasis on Kerr Lake! This lakefront Oasis just shy of 3 acres has it all! Just imagine after a day of fun on the lake pulling up to this gorgeous lakefront property with a dock permit in

place. Then relaxing with the family looking over miles of water watching the sunset. What? Do you need more dock space for when your friends visit? A slip at the community dock is available for \$10,000! Just when you think this property could not be any more perfect. There is a towering hardwood forest with a beautiful winding creek going through it. When standing on the potential homesite the view from every angle is pure Kerr Lake beauty! This rare find on Kerr Lake will not last long!

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#6501-#65297-3.50±Acres-\$89,000.00 Sportsman's Oasis on Buffalo Creek! 3.5 lakefront acres with a shared pond already stocked with fish that backs up to over 100 acres of Core land on Kerr Lake that you can hunt and fish on. This property is conveniently located 10 minutes from Clarksville. There is also the possibility of buying a spot on a shared dock! Upon inspection I saw an abundance of deer and turkey signs along with a turkey gobbling off the roost! As I walked off the property into the towering hardwood forest on the Core land. I was greeted by a nearby nesting pair of bald eagles then the sound of geese and mallard ducks taking off from the nearby wetland. This is truly a Sportsman's Oasis!  
*Virginia United Country Realty @434-374-2011*

#6534-#65434-0.96±Acres-\$149,000.00 Waterfront lot on .96 acres overlooking Kerr Lake. The wide expansive views of the lake from this lot is absolutely gorgeous. This beautiful lot offers mature oaks and nearly an acre to build your dream lake home. The lot is conveniently located near the Holiday Shores boat launch. Currently, the property does not have a dock permit; however, the owner is working to secure a permit. The property is located less than 30 mins to the nearest hospital. It is located approximately 15 mins to Clarksville and the nearest grocery store, dining, library, shopping, and doctors offices. Clarksville also offers a host of entertainment throughout the year whether it be live beach music at the Lake Life Live concerts or fabulous play put on by the Clarksville Community Players. Nearby Boydton, VA (30 mins) is home to the world's largest Microsoft facility offering jobs on an assortment of levels. Mecklenburg County also offers a brand new facility for their middle and high school aged youth for the 2022-2023 school year. Come enjoy Kerr Lake Living and all that Mecklenburg County has to offer!  
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#6551-#65508-1.9±Acres-\$319,500.00 With nearly 2 acres on the main channel of Kerr Lake overlooking a plethora of species to appease your fishing palate whether it be bass, crappie, catfish, or stripers to name a few, you have an excellent footprint to begin making your treks to the lake. The cabin was gutted a couple years ago with reconstruction stopped once the assembly had gotten under roof once again. Pick up your tools and complete the existing 1.5 story cabin for yourself or bring your plans and start from scratch as well and septic is already in place. With a bit of vegetation modification, you could have an incredible view of the lake from the rear deck, yard, and entire west side of the cabin. There are very few lots that offer this much potential with usable pieces in place today for you to get going, so do not miss your chance to take the proverbial reins and guide your lake project to completion. Where else can you find trophy fishing, incredible sunset views, and a peaceful country feel all while sitting on the main channel of Kerr Lake? The potential is massive for this lake gem!  
*Virginia United Country Realty @434-374-2011*

#6571-#65577-38.35±Acres-\$149,000. 38.65 acres of prime property located in Mecklenburg County, VA. Wide open and fairly level, this property would be ideal for a secluded home site, hunting property or farm. Yerby's creek borders the northwestern border and a smaller stream meanders in and out of the southern border. If you are a big game hunter, there's plenty of deer tracks throughout the property and bear, turkey are abundant in this area. Hardwoods border most of the property and creeks, providing wonderful stand locations. The entire property has been re-planted in pine trees, giving you future timber value as well. Being centrally located between Richmond, VA and Raleigh, NC gives you the seclusion you want while the world is still within reach. Virginia's largest lake, Buggs Island Lake (also known as John H Kerr Reservoir) is just minutes away, giving you access to fantastic fishing watersports and recreation!  
*Virginia United Country Realty @434-374-2011*

#6586-#66648-0.11±Acres-\$4,900.00 Need a base camp to store your boat, camper, and/or hunting supplies? Then this is the property for you! Within approx. 900 yards you can be at the Staunton View public boat ramp or the Hogan Creek Wildlife Management Area consisting of approximately 530 acres of prime hunting land. Properties like this one are in high demand and this little gem won't last long. Stake your claim before someone else decides to enjoy the convenience this property lends to Kerr Lake Living!  
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Author Chris Gorsuch with a winter smallmouth caught fishing the Fort Hunter pool.



# Fishing The New Susquehanna River

BY CHRIS GORSUCH

**B**oasting as the longest commercially non-navigable river in the United States, the Susquehanna is also one of the oldest rivers in the eastern US. Looking at all the natural rock and ledge structures that span the river, this beautiful yet brutal waterway seems locked in time. Having been witness to countless floods the last several decades, the Susquehanna seems to quickly rebound. When you consider its size and geological age, the Susquehanna River is still subject to change.

The change we are experiencing today is not due to industrial or environmental circumstances. It is due to the actions of short-sighted anglers who introduced an

invasive species into the river. This is not to say that new species introduction is always a bad thing, or that fishing for invasive species is not an amazing angling opportunity. However, it does show how introducing a species outside of fishery management can have catastrophic consequences.

Many anglers do not seem to understand the difference between native vs. introduced vs. invasive species. Going back to our records of nearly 200 years, the native species of the Susquehanna River were bowfin, quillback, bullheads, sunfish, eels and a variety of suckers and minnows. Seasonally, ocean run shad, herring and striped bass joined the mix of native species. Dam construction eventually limited access to many ocean-run species.

Gamefish such as musky, smallmouth,

channel cats, and walleye were all introduced by fisheries management or permission from the commission. For example, smallmouth bass were introduced to the Susquehanna around 1873 after Thaddeus Norris (with permission from the commissioner of fisheries,) had success introducing 450 Potomac River smallmouth to the Delaware River in 1870. This is a great story in itself, but perhaps for another time. The introduction of smallmouth bass fit well with the native species that can still be caught today. This gave room for the commission to stock musky, channel cats and walleye with great success, all without critical changes to other species.

Approximately two decades ago, anglers stocked flathead catfish without the consent of the fish commission. Flathead catfish grow quickly and offer an amazing

*“My grandfather would say, ‘There is a bass behind every rock.’ And honestly, in the 70’s and 80’s that was very true.”*

fight when hooked. Initially the PFBC issued a kill-on-capture/seek and destroy, making it illegal to release live flathead after being caught. Early on, even a few tackle shops offered bounties on flatheads brought into their shop. This 'kill order' was lifted when the PFBC realized the flathead catfish were here to stay. Oddly, the PFBC seems to have removed flathead catfish from their invasive list in 2020.

Anglers are now faced with another kill-upon-capture/seek and destroy mandate on northern snakeheads. Similar to the flathead, this angler believes that snakeheads are here to stay and will offer angling opportunities for those who embrace them. The impact of these invasive species is still quite unknown and may be for some time.

My first memories of smallmouth on the Susquehanna River revolved around fishing with my grandfather. He had a passion fishing and passed that along to me. Since my earliest memories, I have been hooked on smallmouth bass. Their willingness to chase lures and fight well beyond their physical size just intrigued me. He had an annual tradition of constructing a rather crude plywood johnboat in the spring and floating this wooden box down the Juniata during the summer weekends.

If we were not floating, we were wet wading in the heat of the summer. When time allowed, we would hit the big river and pitch a tent at a campground that my grandfather's friend Leroy owned. That same campground is still in operation today. We would wet-wade the Duncannon area with live bait we collected along the way. The water is much the same, but the fishery has changed a great deal since the 70's.

During that time, nearly every outing resulted in 80-100+ bass. Big bass for us back then were 16"-17" and they were few and far between. My grandfather would say, "There is a bass behind every rock." And honestly, in the 70's and 80's that was very true. In the good old days, if you will, there was a lot of fish but not necessarily a lot of big fish. This began to change in the 90s.

It was this time period that I purchased my first jet boat and my obsession with smallmouth really took hold. The jet boat gave me range and I began to explore different areas along the main river and its northern stretches. For me, targeting river smallmouth became a four-season event. Numbers were still solid, but size was improving, and the Susquehanna River was gaining national attention. By the end of the 90's, Susquehanna was a destination for big smallmouth and plenty of them.

Entering 2000, the outboard jet market was starting to explode. Prior to the mid 90's, most jet units were converted after purchase. By 2000, every outboard manufacturer was offering factory "jet-ready" packages. With the fishery gaining notoriety and jet drives becoming more popular, spring and fall community holes were busy and everyone was catching.

Few of us realized how delicate the fishery was. Within just a few years, numbers were on the decline and there seemed to be gaps in the year classes. Spring flooding and cases of Columnaris were impacting the young of year in three out of every four years. By 2007, outdoor writers, guides and passionate anglers had the PFBC's attention. As a result, the first Smallmouth Symposium was held, and I was in attendance. By the second year of Symposiums, Pennsylvania had invited fisheries managers from Maryland, New York and Virginia.

By 2012, the PFBC changed the bass regulations on the Susquehanna and the lower 40 miles of the Juniata. The regulations were 'catch & release' only and a moratorium for no bass fishing from May 1 until the opening day of bass in June. Even through these troubled years, many of the wintering areas held great numbers of bass. Fort Hunter, one of the most popular wintering areas was easy fishing. These deep-water areas held large numbers of bass and forage from November to early spring. The regulations worked and by 2017, the moratorium for targeting bass from May 1st to mid-June was lifted.

What a remarkable recovery for the smallmouth. However, they were not quite out of the woods. A new apex predator was gaining in numbers and after two decades was about ready to change a few things when it comes to deep water smallmouth fishing and wintering areas. I am sure the change was more subtle than it appeared, but community wintering areas were changing. Places like Fort Hunter still hold bass, but nowhere near the numbers it once did. From December to March, instead of being smallmouth central, it is now home to large schools of flathead catfish. And this is perhaps the silver lining.

For anglers to be successful late fall and winter, they must up their game and explore new areas. While some wintering areas are still hold numbers of bass, most are now home to flatheads.

For me, while initially I hated these invaders, their presence has made me a better angler. While I doubt I will ever fully embrace them, they are here to stay. If anglers want to catch bass consistently and in numbers when the river is at or below 38°, my advice is to stop

lamenting yesterday and find new areas and patterns. Doing so will better your overall smallmouth game and improve your knowledge of their movement throughout the year. 🌱🌊



Author Chris Gorsuch is a licensed charter guide in the state of Pennsylvania. He started the Reel River Adventures guide service in '07 and spends 225-250 days on the water annually. His home base is on the Susquehanna River where he operates 20' jetboats. Chasing smallmouth is his specialty, however he enjoys catching walleye and other freshwater gamefish on the upper North Branch. He has written 100's of articles. You can follow his daily fishing reports on Facebook 'Reel River Adventures-RRR' & Instagram @Chris\_Gorsuch



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## REGIONAL FOCUS

# CHICKAHOMINY

Lake & River

For a map of the Chickahominy River or Lake visit [woodsandwatersmagazine.com](http://woodsandwatersmagazine.com)

Local anglers know that the fishing on the Chickahominy system can be very good for big fish this time of year. While you might not catch dozens of bass now, you do have an excellent shot at a 10+ pounder in the upper river and lake.

Some traditional areas to look for winter bass on the tidal Chickahominy River include the backs of lower river creeks like Morris, Tomahund, Gordon's, Shipwreck and Yarmouth. Largemouth bass will school by the dozens in deeper creek bends with wood. You can target them with a three-inch Keitech Swing Impact Fat on a 1/4-oz. jighead or a similar bait on a drop shot rig.

In the upper Chickahominy, you'll still want to target the region from the first big bend up from Riverside Camp up to Walker's Dam. In this region, savvy anglers know hundreds of fish school in the deep channel bends. Don't be afraid to fish 18' of water with blade baits like a Riverside Ripper or Crazy Blade. Many species are harbored in this deep water including largemouth bass, crappie, yellow perch and catfish.

Yellow perch and crappie will school around Walker's Dam this month, too. Be careful to observe safe fishing practices around this structure. Crappie love the concrete and wood structure in the water here where the river is separated from the lake.

When you are on the river this year, use Riverside Camp & Marina's facilities which include a fine boat ramp and piers, tackle shop and campground with rental cabins. Rockahock Campground welcomes anglers with ramps on both the lake and river, plus rental cabins and yurts.

Up on the lake, Ed Allen's Boats & Bait is fishing headquarters on the lower end of the lake. Here you'll find a boat ramp, jon boat rentals, minnows, tackle shop, restaurant



Like father, like son. Here Ryan Grattan with a 8.17 Chick Lake mailbox he weighed in at **Ed Allen's Boats & Bait**.

and fishing pier.

Another Chickahominy Lake launching option is Eagles Landing. Located a couple miles above Walker's Dam, Eagles Landing offers a concrete ramp, rental boats, tackle shop and live bait.

Several area shops cater to bass anglers; Adam's Sports Mart in Providence Forge, and Fishing ProTech, both in Toano.

Tomahund Marine is the area headquarters for marine resupply and repair. They also sell

War Eagle and Muddy boats/motors so if you are looking for a duck and fishing boat, perfect for hunting and fishing the marshes of the Chickahominy and James River they have some in inventory and more on the way.

Adams' Sports Mart and Absolute Outdoors are the area's headquarters for hunting and fishing. Adam's backroom is filled with fishing gear for bass, crappie and catfish, and Adam's place is where you'll find most hunters fueling up their trucks and their bellies. There's a devoted group of waterfowlers and rabbit hunters in the area.

In nearby Toano, a bit down Rt. 60 there's a great gun shop and an awesome tackle shop. The wife might want to accompany you. Drop her off at the nearby Williamsburg outlets. Reconvene for lunch or dinner at the waterfront Lakeside Restaurant at Ed Allen's.

Toano General Gun Store is area headquarters for hunters and firearms enthusiasts. Don Bishard can help you with everything from long guns to handguns, accessories to ammunition and in-house gunsmithing.

Lin Bell's Fishing ProTech is also a Must-Do when in town. Bell specializes in hard-to-find and new bass tackle. Bell will take his shop on the road to the Richmond Fishing Expo, January 20-22 at the Meadow Event Park in Doswell. He's coming in hot with a load of special run color ZOOM baits, Megabass Visions and MagDrafts, the new Ever Green XV5 baits, CAST Co Prodigy swimbaits and more. *C.C. McCotter*



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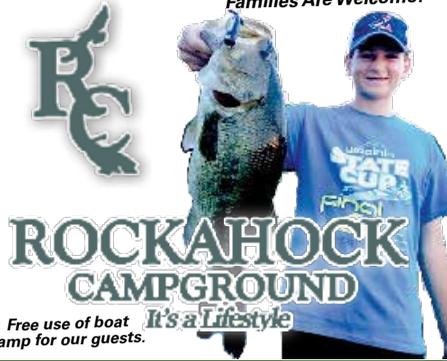
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	HIGH	LOW		HIGH	LOW		HIGH	LOW		HIGH	LOW
1	5:13am	11:38am	10	11:34am	5:17am	19	7:05am	12:28am	28	2:38am	9:01am
	5:34pm	11:30pm		11:55pm	5:58pm		7:24pm	1:35pm		3:00pm	9:04pm
2	6:08am	----	11	----	5:57am	20	8:04am	1:28am	29	3:37am	10:05am
	6:27pm	12:35pm		12:09pm	6:33pm		8:22pm	2:30pm		3:59pm	9:59pm
3	7:00am	12:21am	12	12:34am	6:40am	21	8:59am	2:26am	30	4:39am	11:09am
	7:17pm	1:26pm		12:47pm	7:09pm		9:17pm	3:22pm		5:00pm	10:57pm
4	7:47am	1:10am	13	1:16am	7:27am	22	9:51am	3:22am	31	5:41am	12:09pm
	8:02pm	2:12pm		1:28pm	7:49pm		10:10pm	4:11pm		5:58pm	11:53pm
	8:30am	1:55am	14	2:04am	8:21am	23	10:42am	4:17am			
	8:44pm	2:54pm		2:16pm	8:34pm		11:02pm	4:59pm			
6	9:11am	2:38am	15	2:57am	9:21am	24	11:32am	5:12am			
	9:24pm	3:34pm		3:12pm	9:26pm		11:55pm	5:47pm			
7	9:49am	3:19am	16	3:57am	10:27am	25	----	6:07am			
	10:02pm	4:12pm		4:14pm	10:24pm		12:22pm	6:34pm			
8	10:25am	3:59am	17	5:00am	11:33am	26	12:47am	7:03am			
	10:40pm	4:48pm		5:19pm	11:26pm		1:13pm	7:22pm			
9	11:00am	4:38am	18	6:04am	----	27	1:41am	8:01am			
	11:17pm	5:23pm		6:23pm	12:36pm		2:05pm	8:12pm			

James River All corrections taken from Newport News Chickahominy  
 -0:12 Jordan Point +1:22 Richmond Deepwater Terminal +3:45 Ferry Point +4:55 Mt. Airy  
 +1:23 Petersburg +1:57 Richmond City Locks +4:25 Wright Island +5:20 Lanexa

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## REGIONAL FOCUS

# Richmond

Tidal James River Region

For a map of the James River visit woodsandwatersmagazine.com

This month will mark the return of the Richmond Fishing Expo at the State Fairgrounds in Doswell, January 20-22. The Gray family has a great show planned and announced that BASSMaster legend Davey Hite and two-time BASSMaster Classic champion Hank Cherry will headline the special appearance list. Timmy Horton and Matt Becker will be joining them.

This indoor expo will feature more bass and saltwater fishing tackle, fishing kayaks, apparel and new boats/outboards than anywhere else, plus a BassTub demonstration tank and a Kids Trout Pond. There's even the annual Woods & Waters Magazine New Product Showcase on the Bass Tub demonstrating many of the new lures and gear available at the show. For more information on any of these shows visit [www.ncboatshows.com](http://www.ncboatshows.com).

In fishing news, Donnie Bell from James River Tackle Co. held the season's first crappie fishing tournament and promptly won it with his partner.

Bell says the crappie fishing will contin-

ue to be strong this month on wood and bridge pilings in and around the mouth of Appomattox River. Bass anglers will want to explore the Appomattox River this winter as many bass over-winter in it, off the James River.

One of his favorite tactics is pitching a Mud Puppy Brush Monkey to wood on deep banks on a warm afternoon. Google Earth the Appomattox all the way up to Colonial Heights and note some good fishing areas to try this month. Check with Bell on launch ramps and current river conditions.

Bell says tidal James catfish anglers know January is a month for big blues. Cut live shad fished on bottom rigs or live eels are gobbled



Donnie Bell and Joe K. won the December 17 James River Tackle Co. Crappie Tournament on the James River with 8.05 pounds.

readily by blue catfish up to 80 pounds now.

Bell will have a large booth at the Richmond Fishing Expo where you'll find his hand-painted glide baits, Muddy Puppy lures, bargain bins as well as some interesting new marine accessories.

Over on Lake Chesdin, anglers are discovering that the saugeye DWR has been stocking the past few years are doing well. Visitors are catching them exceed-

ing the minimum size limit of 18 inches using swimbaits reeled slowly along the bottom at the mouths of creeks with rockypoints and bait.

Chesdin bass anglers should target some of the biggest bass of the year using suspending jerkbaits and spoons this month.

Chesdin striper are feeding heavily now. You

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can find them under birds on main lake flats in the mornings and in main lake pockets in the afternoons.

Area bowhunters, if you busted something on your bow or crossbow last month, you need to stop by Shooter's Archery north of Richmond, about halfway to Fredericksburg. This shop offers bow hunting and archery enthusiasts a very unique venue that includes and indoor and outdoor range and proshop.

Also at this location is Angler's Bait & Tackle - where you'll find a good selection of bass tackle including Nikko Baits. The Nikko Winnow is a top-producing winter swimbait that's nearly indestructible.

Hunters west of Mechanicsville will want to stop by Jo Jo's Fishin' & Huntin' Express in Manquin. This shop is well-stocked with everything you'd need for a successful day deer hunting or waterfowling.

G'Daddy's Bait & Tackle in Carrollton, Virginia (just across the James River Bridge in Hampton) is stocked with ZOOM soft plastic baits, a limited special collection of Poe's classic all-wood crankbaits, Duckett rods and Reel Blessed custom rods. Profound Outdoors baits can also be found in the shop. Gift certificates are available at the shop as well as fishing licenses and the City of Norfolk lake fishing permits.

Robby Patterson of Propeller Dynamics invites you to stop by his display at the Richmond Fishing Expo. He'll essentially move his showroom to the show with Xpress boats and Raptor boat. Patterson is the area authorized warranty service center for Minn Kota, MotorGuide, Lowrance, Power Pole and Garmin so if you have a marine electronic, he can fix it or sell you a new one! He also offers propeller repairs and sales if you found a rock over the summer with your rig. *C.C. McCotter & Donnie Bell*



## Bass Tackle continued from page 26

SpiderWire DuraBraid sets the standard in technical performance with an increased abrasion resistance that is 25% tougher than other conventional braids.

### SPRO

Developed by elite series pros Chris and Cory Johnston, The CJ Smasher is a 3-inch poured worm using Dura Tuff material for longevity and value, and each CJ Smasher is infused with The Amino Bite scent attractant. Available in 10 colors, 5 pack.

### Yamamoto

The new Slinko maintains the classic Senko profile while adding some bulk with a ribbed-shaped body. Available in 18 popular colors.

### YUM

YUM Bait Company has joined forces with the legendary Scottsboro Tackle Company to deliver a new swimbait incorporating the action and looks of these hand-poured swimbaits. Available in four sizes and 10 colors.

### Yo-Zuri

The 3DB Lipless Twitch Baits are a proven style for the inshore saltwater market and now Yo-Zuri has introduced a version designed specifically for the bass market. The same action that has caught fish all over the world but with black nickel hooks and split rings and color schemes choose by MLF and BASS Elite pros. The bait features Yo-Zuri's patented 3D internal

prism and painted finishes that never chip or wear off. Slow sinking with a seductive wobble on a straight retrieve and a quick darting and flashing action on a twitch and pause retrieve. The deep body mirrors shad, bluegill or herring. Two sizes: 3-1/2" (9/16oz), 4-3/8" (1oz) and 13 color patterns that are a combination of painted, translucent and 3D prism finishes.

### Z-Man

An original, 'self-walking' topwater lure, Z-Man's 5-inch HellraiZer slashes, sputters and carves the surface. Designed by ChatterBait inventor Ron Davis, the HellraiZer is power-driven by an exclusive, weighted tail blade. A simple, straight retrieve effortlessly planes the lure to the top, where it delivers its crazed fleeing action at slow or fast speeds. A thin, elongated, minimalist body sports a belly line tie and a single treble hook. The weighted tail blade connects to a rear, feathered treble hook to accentuate swimming motion. Five inches, 5/8 ounce.

A new four-inch, surface kicker G-Toad features twin curved paddle feet that thump and churn at all reel speeds—from the slowest crawl to fast buzzing retrieves. V-shaped belly provides surface stability, while a ventral hook slot aids rigging and hookset success. Dorsal ridges protect hook points and provide a template for rigging with single or double hooks. Composed of naturally buoyant ElaZtech, this super versatile surface bait also boasts unheard of toughness. \$4.99 per 3-pack.

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## REGIONAL FOCUS

# Lake Anna

For a map of Lake Anna visit [woodsandwatersmagazine.com](http://woodsandwatersmagazine.com)

Cold rainfall brought Lake Anna water levels and water temperatures back to normal late last month. Annual baitfish migrations from up lake into the mid lake region are underway and the lake's bass, striper and wiper are right behind them. Here's what you can expect for a January visit.

According to guide C.C. McCotter, lower water temperatures and muddy water up lake mean striper, wiper, bass, white perch, crappie, even catfish have moved into the lower up lake and mid lake regions. The game fish simply followed the schools of threadfin shad. Where the shad hold up is a based on a combination of water temperature, plankton and depth.

The key to finding these schools of winterfish is being vigilant, McCotter notes.

"Watch for any little sign of gamefish pressuring bait like swirls, bait jumping out of the water, sudden movements of seagulls and herons," he told W2. "Of course, I'm always watching my Humminbirds as well."

When you do catch a clue of where to fish, it's go time. McCotter suggests you try ZOOM Super Fluke Jr on a jig head, the three-inch

Prodigy swimbait on a jig head or A-rig, a bucktail, a suspending jerkbait and a spoon. These are the baits he used to catch striper, wiper, bass and white perch.

If you want to focus exclusively on catching the big wintertime bass Anna is known for producing, focus your efforts mid lake, says McCotter and use suspending

jerkbaits, swimbaits and spoons.

Bass are schooled now. You should be able catch them jigging spoons in 27-35' of water at the mouth of Pigeon, Mitchell and Sturgeon Creeks. Some of the more adventurous/aggressive bass can be caught using a suspending jerkbait around main lake points in the same region.

Hot zones here can include the mouth of



Purple Heart recipient Rick Barrow and guide, C.C. McCotter with bass and striper they caught last month fishing out of **High Point Marina**.

Marshall Creek, the mouth of Pigeon Creek, Mitchell Creek, the mid section of Contrary Creek and the mouth of Sturgeon Creek.

Unless the water clears up and warms up considerably, you can pretty much write off up lake bass until spring.

Down lake bass are creatures of the deep that occasionally enjoy a mass foray into shallow pockets and up on shallow points. Most of the best places to target

these bass are the points at the mouths of down lake creeks (Beaver Pond, Boggs, Dukes, Rockland, Blount's, Levy and Valentine's) as well as the coves near Dike III.

Swimbaits, reeled slowly along the bottom are effective down lake as are suspending jerkbaits.

Hot bass zones in the up lake region include between the two bridges in both the North

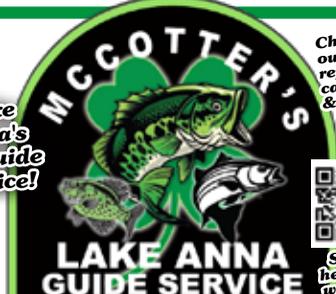
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Anna and Pamunkey Branch and just above and below them.

Mid lake bass tend to school in creeks due to clearer water. Hot zones here can include the mouth of Marshall Creek, the mouth of Pigeon Creek, Mitchell Creek, the mid section of Contrary Creek and the mouth of Sturgeon Creek. Using swimbaits, hard and soft plastic swimbaits can be effective when fish and bait are in the area otherwise go deep with spoons and blade baits.

Keep in mind the schools of bass can move from very deep to shallow throughout the day. So if your depth finder shows fish in 28-32 of water at the mouth of a creek where you caught them shallow in the morning, don't doubt it.

Good to excellent fishing is available now for Lake Anna's striped fish. Anglers will find most in the mid lake region after they fed actively in the upper the North Anna River and Pamunkey Branch for much of last month. Striper and wiper will relocate mid lake around baitfish and you might also find schools right around the 208 marinas. Evening fishing at Dike 3 can also be productive in January.

Look for some remaining schools to linger from the Holladay Mill Bridge down to Big Been Flats in the North Anna side and from Stubbs Bridge down to The Splits in the Pamunkey Branch. Some fish might remain in The Splits region to 208 marinas region, too. Don't overlook the mouths of Contrary and Pigeon Creeks either in January.

Anglers are again reporting a lot of non-keeper striper and wiper (under 20") in the lake, but there are some bruisers out there, and January is often when anglers catch the year's largest fish. Could a 13-lb. + wiper be coming this winter? We'll have to fish and see!

You can also often catch white perch in the same areas when the striper won't bite. The 1/4-oz. Capt. Mack's Super Spoon is deadly on all three and a blade bait is a lot of fun to fish for perch.

Some of the lake's crappie remained schooled around bridge pilings near the main river channel. Deep brush piles are good, too, if you can find one that hasn't been fished too often. Two-inch jigs on 1/16-oz. jig heads and small minnows on slip bobbers are best. This is the year anglers will begin to catch legal sized saugeye (18"). DWR Biologist Mike Isel told W2 gill net surveying revealed good numbers of these tasty fish from a stocking three years ago. You can target saugeye on deep rocks with grubs, swimbaits and nightcrawlers on a worm harness.

Tournament Director Dave Fauntleroy wanted to invite anglers to review his lineup



Mike Webb fished with *McCotter's Lake Anna Guide Service* last month and enjoyed learning how to catch striper and wiper on lures.

of bass fishing tournaments in 2023. His season kicks off March 4 and includes open events held March 5, 12, 19 and 26.

High Point Marina and The Lighthouse Inn welcome winter anglers looking for a warm room and great access to the lake. The tackle shop is well-stocked with guide-selected items, including a restock of spoons, Megabass suspending jerkbaits and MagDrafts, Tiger Shad spinnerbaits, Fitt Premium Baits, Missile Shockwave swimbaits and more. All the waterfront motel rooms offer an outstanding view and dockage for your boat. This marina also sells non-ethanol fuel both on and off the water.

Over at Sturgeon Creek Marina the annual Winter Series bass tournaments have begun and some impressive limits have

| *continued on page 52*

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## Lake Anna Report

been brought to Chris James' scales. The heaviest five-fish limit so far belongs to the team of Wayne Dorman and Brian Canteberry with 24.25 pounds. This series is for serious diehards and some outstanding limits well over 20 pounds are expected this month.

Anna's Marine Center wanted to invite anglers in the market for a new boat to visit them at the Richmond Fishing Expo January 20-23. Dee and Will will bring a selection of 2023 Skeeters representing the FXR, ZXR models.

The new Humminbird MEGA Live real time sonar and MEGA Live Target Lock have been popular options on the new SKEETERS. Solix units are also available if you want to step up the product line. Stop by for a look as well as to see the new Nitro Z21XL boat and TRACKER rigs.

Elk Creek Country Store is where to find fuel



The team of Bobby Fincham and Rob Grike had this 19.69-pound limit to win the **Sturgeon Creek Marina** Winter Series tournament on December 11.

and Uncle Mike's Tackle Shop on the way to fishing the warm side of the lake this month. Mike notes bass and perch were schooled in Elk and Millpond Creeks for much of December with water temperatures in the mid 50s to lower 60s. These fish will be moving toward warmer water every day and eventually end up in front of the Elk Creek and Millpond Bridges and Pond 1. Swimbaits, dropshots and spoon are all good now.

Lake Anna Outfitters at High Point Marina still has several fishing kayaks in stock. They have a 3 Waters Big Fish 103 and a Big Fish 105 with pedal drives. They also have a Feel Free Lure 11.5 V2 with pedal drive and two Feel Free Moken 10V2 paddle-powered boats. *Chrissie McCotter*

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## REGIONAL FOCUS

# Smith Mountain Lake

New River Valley

Smith Mountain Lake level was 794.79' and rising due to heavy rains by the middle of December. This is slightly higher than at the end of November. Keep in mind normal pond is 795' so the lake was in good shape at the start of winter.

Water temperature was 49 degrees on the surface from mid to down lake by the mid-December W2 deadline. Expect the lake level to hold steady in January and watch the water temperature begin to drop into the lower 40s by the end of the month.

January can be a good month to fish the lake for largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, striper and crappie.

Most January largemouth bass will be caught around points, on rock piles, in brush piles and under docks. Best depths will be from the surface to 25 feet deep. Some largemouth bass will be schooled deep and on baitfish. You can pursue the differently, using spoons, spy baits, multi-arm rigs and plastic minnow imitators on Moon Eye heads.

The lake's smallmouth bass will be holding on rocks, ledges, humps and main channel points. Best lures will be Ned rigs, hair jigs, drop shot rigs and Carolina rigs. Focus your efforts on the mid to the lower sections of the lake, especially within sight of the dam.

Wilson targets striper in the upper section of the lake this month, especially in larger creeks.

His best lures are swimbaits, jiggling spoons and ZOOM flukes fished on 1/4 to 1/2 oz. jig-heads. The best depths will be from near the



Jason, Mark and Richard had 18 stripers fishing with Capts. Spike and Kathy of *Spike's Prime Time Fishin'* on November 16.



Marty, Taylor, Brent, Tony, Kevin, Don and Chad with *Spike's Prime Time Fishin'*.

surface to 50 feet deep. Vertical jigging with a spoon remains a good method to catch stripers this month, too. Wilson says to try to find areas with the largest concentrations of baitfish.

Spike and Kathy Francescini operate *PrimeTime Fishin'*, one of the longest continuously operated guide services in Virginia.

They are off until April now but are taking booking requests and thank all their 2022 customers for a great year!

They note the lake's striper population continues to grow and that January and February are two of the best months to land a citation (20+ pound) SML striper.

Many anglers will now fish alewives or shad on planer boards or freelines with 5/8 split shot 10 feet deeper than you see the fish. You can also fish down rods with 2 oz. sinkers exactly where you see the fish.

Remember, you can now keep two fish per day under 30 inches or over 40 inches.

Give them a call if you want to try fishing the lake this coming season. Not only do the Franceschinis offer guided fishing trips but they also rent lodging they own at the lake. Kathy's Place, 3 br/2b, sleeps eight with game room. The other rental is a 2 br/1 bath, sleeps four with kitchen in the great room. Both have flat screen tvs and wifi and fully equipped kitchens. Guests enjoy use of the docks and also water, electric, cleaning stand and room to park boats. You also get use of a golf car with each rental to use to and from the docks. The listing #s are 218590 and 282712 on VRBO.

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## REGIONAL FOCUS

# Buggs/Gaston

Kerr Lake/Lake Gaston

For maps of Buggs Island or Lake Gaston visit woodsandwatersmagazine.com

### Lake Gaston

By mid-December the water level on Gaston was around 199.50' (200' is full pool) and Dominion was holding the level steady. Water temperatures ranged from 46-49 degrees with the up lake section just below Kerr Dam the coolest. Anglers can expect 40-44 degree water temperatures for January in most parts of the main lake.

For January on Gaston, BASSMaster Elite angler and guide Rick Morris will target deep bass schooled on bait using a jiggging spoon. The lake's plentiful spotted bass will be mostly on hard cover like rocks and a little deeper. They will also take the spoon as well as a small soft plastic jerkbait fished on a jighead.

Lake Gaston can also offer good crappie and striper fishing this month. Target freckles on bridge pilings and deep brush piles. The lake's striper will school on bait and you'll have to keep an eye on seagulls to know where to go.

Holly Grove Marina is a family-friendly tackle shop, boat ramp, restaurant/gathering place on the lake and we're glad to have them with us. Holly Grove is located about 10 minutes off I-95 at the Bracey exit on Rt. 903.

### Kerr Reservoir (Bugg Island)

The water level on Kerr Lake by the W2 late December deadline was 297.96' and rising (about a foot higher than last month). 300' is full pool so much needed rains were bringing the lake back up. Daytime water temperatures varied from 44-49 degrees depending on the

region of the lake late last month.

This month anglers should expect continued drop in water temperatures - back down to around 40-45 degrees eventually.

Shad and herring are now on the main lake and still lingering at the mouth of some major creeks. Many anglers here use spoons on points now. Some like to use swimbaits. If you visit, you are mostly going to be targeting schooling bass, striper or crappie on or near baitfish. The suspending jerkbait bite could develop later this month, too.

If you cannot get a reaction bite, you can also try fishing shaky head worms and drop shotted worms around 15-20' humps and points with underwater cover like rocks and brush-piles.

Fishing points in the larger creeks like Nutbush, Bluestone, Rudd's, Butcher's and Eastland as well as main lake points at the mouths of these creeks should be the pattern now.

Striper anglers are still fishing the Clarksville area where they are finding feeding fish under



Guide, **Rick Morris** shows that Buggs Island isn't the only place to catch a 15+ inch citation crappie with this Lake Gaston saddlebag.

birds and busting bait.

Casters will want to use three-inch spoons like the KT Slab/Toothache spoon around the mouth of creeks and on main lake channel bends. Swimbaits or soft plastic jerkbaits on jigheads are also good where you find birds. Some striper anglers will troll umbrella rigs this month tipped with swimbaits.

Before you head out onto the lake, be sure to stop by Bobcat's Bait and Tackle to get a current fishing report and all the gear you could possibly need.

The second Bobcat's Bait & Tackle VA/NC Crappie Trail event was held December 3 and won by Josh Morris and Ryan Smith with a 10.53-pound, seven-fish limit - good for \$1,473. Josh Deal and George Gregory were second with 10.06 pounds. The next two events are scheduled for January 28 and February 25.



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## REGIONAL FOCUS

# Potomac River

Cold weather and shorter days are putting tidal Potomac River bass into winter patterns and it's a great time to fish! Here's what to expect on a January visit.

If you want to catch your first bass of the new year on the river it's time to look for steep drops. Take it slow, small, and light and use grubs, tubes, thin small worms, and hair jigs.

Spinning gear handles lighter, six-pound test leaders on 10-pound test Gamma Torque braid. Mustad Ultra Point Mega-Bite hooks are thin enough wire to set hooks on hard-mouthed, cold fish from a longer distance on light line.

Crappie and bass are being caught in deeper spots out of the current, like Spoils, and Smoot Bay. DC Bridges are also spots to try, as is Washington Channel.

The hot spots are Possum Point, Four Mile Run and Blue Plains, but they can be very crowded. There are so many shad and other species schooled at these warm water discharge it's hard to get baits through them.

You need to "feel" fish before setting the hook here. Drop shots, split shots are

good, but Carolina rigs with 1-ounce weights keep baits in one spot a long time, letting current push it. Generally, a five-inch finesse Mud Puppy Custom Lures DS worm in green pumpkin or watermelon/red works. Same baits on split shot and drop shot.

During the warmest part of the day, near warmed rock and wood surfaces or close to Blue Plains, work suspending jerkbaits in clearer water 45 degrees or warmer...warmer the better...50 is very warm this time of the year. Use 10-pound Gamma Edge fluorocarbon line. Before you jerk, crank baits down first.

If water temperatures in other areas warms to 45, try crankbaits and spinnerbaits. For crankbaits, a tight wiggle bait is needed. Spool 10-pound test Edge and make long



Here's a nice river rockfish caught by a client of **Apex Predators Guide Service** back in the fall.

casts. Fish are not hitting very hard, so crank-bait hooks become critical. Replace with Mustad Ultra Point trebles.

Spinnerbaits, 3/8 ounce or heavier with willow/Colorado gold blades, retrieved near flats out of current close to deeper drops, pausing when you don't feel the bottom, will work. Slow down with a slower reel or slow it down by slightly under-spooling. White or white/chartreuse skirts, best with chop on the water.

The temperature gauge is the most important boat instrument and your PFD the most important

piece of gear. Dress in layers, take a buddy and let others know where you are going to be. A fall into the river this time of year can be fatal!

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The king of all winter baits is the Silver Buddy! The company is making them again. On the tidal Potomac cast to three-foot depths and burp them down drops to deeper water. You can also vertically jig over 8-15 foot holes, but don't overwork them. Control your drops on semi slack line back to bottom. Feel a "tick" or feel fish when you lift again. For tackle, use a 7-foot medium action graphite rod and 10-pound test GAMMA Copoly. Casting reels are easier to cast while wearing gloves. Blade baits locate groups of fish. Take note of depth and stay on them.

For bottom baits, try three: 3" and 4" tubes, and 1/4-ounce hair jigs with plastic chunks and SR grubs. Thinner diameter line offers less resistance, encouraging fish to hold on longer. Thin diameter makes it easier to feel light bites and set hooks on longer casts, and gets to the bottom, holding in wind and current. I use Gamma Edge six-pound test tied to 10-pound Gamma Torque braid, spooled on a fast spinning reel.

For three-inch avocado Mud Puppy Custom Lures SR grubs (perfect replacement for stingray grubs), use 1/4-ounce round Mud Puppy jig heads. Rig tails flat. A drop of PRO's Soft Bait glue keeps grubs on hooks! Cast to and let them drop to the bottom, lifting the rod, slowly drop, creating a very slow gliding motion into cover.

Green pumpkin Mizmo tubes rigged with a 1/4-ounce Mud Puppy Custom lures weedless insert tube head made with Mustad Hooks make this bait glide. Punisher Hair jigs...black/blue (blue chunk with Punisher rattle), olive/orange (green chunk with Punisher rattle).

Drop shooting becomes very effective the colder it gets, near 40 or below. Fish group on drops on South Point, Smoots, Spoils, barges above the Wilson Bridge, and Foxes Ferry. Using six-pound test Edge, keep leaders about six inches or less. Use a 3/16-ounce Water Gremlin BULLSHOT bullet-shaped split shot weight. Rig SR grubs or a five-inch DS finesse worms on 2/0 Mustad Mega Bite hooks. Try to feel cover with your weights, leave in this location as long as possible, aggravating fish into biting.

Call Capt. Mike at Apex Predators/Potomac Creek Guide Service now if you want to try for some winter rockfish and catfish on the tidal Potomac or Rappahannock. Mike has a larger, v-hull boat he runs these trips from. He uses the Tracker Grizzly for his snakehead and crappie trips in the summer.

Virginia waterfowl season runs to the end of January this year. Call Travis Staunch with Ram Rod if you want to get a day on the river with him.

Check Taylor's Bait & Tackle in Aquia or Costello's in Warrenton for much of the tackle mentioned here.

Steve Chaconas & C.C. McCotter

# POTOMAC TIDE/MOON CHART

	HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW
1	3:56am	10:19am	10 10:41am	5:05am	19 5:51am	12:27am	28 1:30am	7:59am
	4:21pm	11:12pm		10:50pm		6:04pm		1:55pm
2	4:52am	11:11am	11 11:14am	5:36am	20 6:49am	1:27am	29 2:28am	8:48am
	5:14pm	----		11:26pm		7:04pm		2:51pm
3	5:45am	12:08am	12 11:50am	6:06am	21 7:44am	2:22am	30 3:26am	9:40am
	6:04pm	12:02pm		6:19pm		8:01pm		3:47pm
4	6:36am	1:01am	13 12:07am	6:40am	NEW 22 8:37am	3:14am	31 4:24am	10:35am
	6:52pm	12:52pm		7:06pm		8:57pm		4:43pm
5	7:23am	1:50am	14 12:53am	7:18am	23 9:29am	4:03am		
	7:37pm	1:40pm		7:59pm		9:51pm		
6	8:08am	2:35am	15 1:45am	8:02am	24 10:21am	4:52am		
	8:20pm	2:24pm		9:01pm		10:45pm		
7	8:50am	3:18am	16 2:43am	8:52am	25 11:14am	5:38am		
	9:00pm	3:06pm		10:12pm		11:39pm		
8	9:29am	3:57am	17 3:47am	9:49am	26 ----	6:25am		
	9:39pm	3:45pm		11:23pm		12:06pm		
9	10:06am	4:33am	18 4:51am	10:55am	27 12:34am	7:11am		
	10:15pm	4:22pm		5:03pm		1:00pm		

**Corrections:**

Washington Channel:	Alexandria:	Occoquan Bay:	Port Tobacco:	Dahlgren:
Low: +2:32	Low: +2:21	Low: +1:04	Low: -2:35	Low: -3:01
High: +1:28	High: +1:45	High: + :26	High: -2:40	High: -3:14
	Lewisetta: Low: -4:52	High: -2:40	Cornfield: Low: +7:50	High: +7:27

**Feb. Tides**

1	5:19am	11:32am
	5:38pm	----
2	6:11am	12:34am
	6:29pm	12:26pm

Tides for Aquia Creek.  
See corrections below

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## REGIONAL FOCUS

# BACK BAY

*Northwest River, North River, Currituck Sound*

Bob's Fishing Hole continues to hold tournaments all winter long. Teams weigh a three-fish limit and blast off at 8 am. In addition to the Winter Series, Bob's is also holding crappie tournaments. You can find out all the dates by visiting their Facebook page.

James notes Bob's Fishing Hole's winter bass anglers use jigs, jerkbaits and some drop shot to target fish over-wintering in the Northwest River from Back Bay.

For a January visit James says to stop in an he'll give you some tips on where to try fishing. Deep shoreline wood on the main river using creature baits and the drop shot has been productive. You can fish from spot to spot using the suspending jerkbait like a Megabass Vision 110 Minnow. River bends with a channel near a creek mouth are always good places to probe.

As you begin to plan your expeditions for the coming year, the Northwest River and Back Bay should be on your list

North Landing Beach Resort Campground is fishing basecamp for the North River. Archie and the staff invite you to fish and stay with them this month in their one and two-bedroom cottages with kitchens, sinks and flatscreens. North Landing Beach Resort is



Bo Dean Whitehurst with the big fish from the December 3 **Bob's Fishing Hole** tourney that helped him place third.

close to free boat ramps on Back Bay, the North Landing River (on site) and within a 20-minute drive to Bob's Fishing Hole.

North Bay Shore Campground is headquarters for North Bay or the upper portion of Back Bay behind Sandbridge.

Here you'll find the best ramp for all of North

Bay, especially if the NE wind blows and there's low water. From here you can access all the weedy "ponds" that are full of bass around North Bay and enjoy excellent crappie fishing in nearby Muddy and Hell's Creek.

North Bay Shore Campground welcomes anglers and has cabins and a bath house for overnight stays. A canal runs right behind the cabins, so you can keep your boat in the water! Best of all, the campground is 10 minutes from Sandbridge restaurants.

Backwater Adventures Guide David Ward guides on the North River, Kitty Hawk Bay and other northeastern North Carolina rivers.

Ward says January fishing will be all about the weather. He notes the water temps should be in the 40's and some days starting in the upper 30's.

Ward notes the bites will be fewer and slower, but this month will be a good time to catch a big one. Jigs and crankbaits will be the best choice. He suggests fishing very tight to wood and any other cover that could hold a little heat. Flatsides, Shad Raps and the Rapala DT-6 will cover you in the crankbait department this month.

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## REGIONAL FOCUS

# Chesapeake Bay

### Middle Bay

Fishing for striped bass is now strictly catch and release and if you give it a whirl on a calm and sunny day, the fish are holding in the deepest parts of the shipping channel and to a lesser degree the False Channel. They are also tucked in like cordwood at the bottom at the Bay Bridge rock piles but unlikely to bite – best to just leave them alone. The warm water discharge at the Calvert Cliffs Power Plant will always get the attention of anglers during the cold winter months. Anglers may even find a speckled trout nosed into the warm water there if they're lucky.

White perch can be found deep in several areas in the middle Bay, usually around the 40-foot mark. Large white perch can be found at the rock piles at the Bay Bridge, holding deep in the swift current. It will take a heavy jig or dropper rig to get to them. The 40-foot channel edge out in front of Matapeake is another traditional area for white perch to be holding, before that edge drops off into 100 feet of water. You can find them on your depth finder be aware you may also detect schools of gizzard shad hunkered down in the same areas.

### Lower Bay

If striped bass are your target this month, keep in mind all Maryland and Virginia waters of the Chesapeake are closed and only allow catch-and-release fishing for striped bass.

If you do focus on striped bass, the best action is occurring from the mouth of the Wicomico River south to the mouth of the Potomac along the channel edges. Bird activity can be sparse so keep a watchful eye



Tautog fishing can be very good on near shore wrecks this month. Photo by Monty Hawkins.

on a depth finder along the deeper channel edges. The section of the Potomac from the St. Marys River to Point Lookout is the best place to find diving gulls and breaking striped bass..

Jigging has been a very popular way to fish along the channel edges and anglers are using 1- to 1.5-ounce soft plastic jigs from 6-8 inches with good success. White and chartreuse colors are popular, braided line and a fast taper fishing rod are very helpful tools of the trade. Trolling is another option, and a warm cabin can offer an inviting way to fish. It will take stout trolling rods to handle the heavy inline weights needed to get bucktails, sassy shads, or umbrella rigs down to where the fish are holding.

### Coastal

Tautog are providing fishing opportunities at the inlet jetties, the Route 50 Bridge piers, and nearby bulkheads. Sand fleas are the preferred

bait. A fair percentage of the tautog being caught fail to meet the 16-inch minimum but the fishing is fun. The daily creel limit for tautog is four per day.

Now that the black sea bass season is closed, tautog are also the focus at the nearshore and offshore wreck and reef sites. Most anglers are doing well and some double-digit size tautog are being caught. Pieces of green crab and white-legger crabs along with sand fleas are the baits of choice.

### Eastern Shore

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For maps of the Chesapeake Bay visit [woodsandwatersmagazine.com](http://woodsandwatersmagazine.com)

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## REGIONAL FOCUS

# Mountain & Valley Country

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As we begin another year in the Shenandoah Valley I'm reminded of the glory days of catching good quality bass on the local river. Excitement going into fishing trips knowing you could hook multiple citation bruisers was more than one could stand.

I'm happy to report it appears the health of the Shenandoah fishery is trending in the direction of the days of old. Reports of citation smallmouth, largemouth and walleye come in on a weekly basis.

The first day of general firearms season in Virginia, Neil Quince and Jim Storrs took to the Shenandoah River out of Riverton, Front Royal after anything that would bite. Neil ended up landing a monster, double digit largemouth bass. The big girl ate a Missile Jig and craw trailer in the 44-degree water. They also had quite a few aggressive smallmouth. They ended up with 22 total on the day, 14 smallies and eight largemouth. Lonnie Conner also had success on the Riverton section with a 5.27-lb. smallmouth in the month of December. John Boy Stevens and Dennis Loy also posted pics of 21+ inch citation smallmouth during the month.

January will continue to be a wintering pattern for the river. Water temperatures will continue to drop and water clarity remains clear. Look for fish to be stacked up in the deeper slack pockets of the river. Drag deer hair jigs and tubes along the bottom in the deep sections of the river.

A Ned rig would be another good option. Be patient and slowly drag them along with periodic pops and twitches. Before leaving the deep water I would consider throwing a jerkbait. A free floating jerkbait has fooled a lot of big smallmouth.

Going against the fish slow motto for winter bass be sure to try out a crankbait. Sounds crazy but we've seen a lot of good citation, winter bass take a crankbait in the right place at the right time.

The second contradiction I'm going to make to my earlier recommendations is to fish the same presentations shallow. In the December issue of *Bass Times* article on page 20 Jason Christie talks about going against the traditional deep slow bite. He said fishing in the wintertime. "I've caught them shallow burning a crankbait at times. You have to be open-minded".

I realize he's predominately fishing lakes but the river will fish similar. Understand that shallow water will warm up a few degrees by mid-day especially if the sun



Neil Quince caught and released this citation largemouth fishing the Shenandoah River in mid-Nov. Photo from **Jake's Bait & Tackle**.

is beating down on the rocks in the shallow water. How many of you have seen the kayak videos of snow on the ground and the angler easing up along the bank to touch the back of a big smallmouth as it leisurely swims off? Fly hatches, bait fish, and forage will become more active in the shallow water as it warms.

Areas I would recommend to catch fish this winter will be as mentioned Riverton, Front Royal down river from the

powerline to the dam. Locke's Landing up from Watermelon Park up river on the first bend is a good wintering hole. Egypt Bend is another stretch of the river that offers slower deep slack wintering holes with potential for big bass.

Don't forget January is a great month to catch the Richmond Fishing Expo. A short trip down the road January 20-22 will put you amongst many like-minded folks talking fishing, sharing tips, and buying stuff you can't do without! W2's C.C. McCotter's Bass Tank demonstrations are always a highlight. I have learned techniques at the Richmond Show that I still use today to help me catch fish. Hope to see you all down there! *Jared Mounts*



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## REGIONAL FOCUS

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Happy New Year! We wish you all a healthy, happy & prosperous 2023! As we put away our holiday decorations and consider our resolutions for the upcoming year we ask that you take the pledge to take a youngster with you when you go into the woods and/or out on the water. Even just one short outing can make a profound difference in a child's life.

Don't think that you need to go after the biggest buck or the granddaddy bass to impress upon a child the love of the outdoors. Sitting in the woods together hunting squirrels or putting a worm on a hook to see what bites can be magical to young folk. And even if you end the day empty handed, don't discount the sweet time spent together - a day spent mentoring our youth is a very, very good day no matter what you do.

This cold, wet weather certainly can make us want to grab a blanket, curl up on the couch with a warm beverage and binge watch Yellowstone but it makes Brian "Razor" Bodine of Razorback Guide Service get up and out early with a smile. His ever-popular waterfowl hunts and cast & blast trips are proof that these cold, short winter days can be productive and fun! Razor's Spring gobbler days are filling up fast so grab your new 2023 calendar and call today to book your hunt.

Die-hard anglers know that January can be "hog month" on our local ponds and reservoirs. Even a slight warming trend encourages fish to feed and you'll want to

be there when they do. Slow rolling spinnerbaits or working a tube or jig in and around structure will elicit bites.

Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources will be in full swing trout stocking mode on area streams and rivers this month. Keep your rod and waders at the ready and check their website daily for updates so you'll be in the know.

Weekend tournaments are being held at Lake Anna this month so break out all of your cold gear, grab a partner and see how you do! These short, chilly winter days have historically been excellent days to fish on Anna with many citations recorded. Both Sturgeon Creek and Anna Point/Fish tales are hosting, see our Calendar of Events for more information.

There are a few shows to look forward to both this month and next! The weekend of January 13-15 kicks off the season the Fredericksburg Boat & Watersports Expo held at the Fredericksburg Expo Center. Admission is just \$10 and there's a \$1 discount for seniors and military. Visit [Fredericksburg-ExpoCenter.com](http://Fredericksburg-ExpoCenter.com) for tickets and more information. The following weekend, January 20-22 is The Richmond Fishing Expo at the



Jeff and Logan Buttolph with the 14.97-pound limit they won them third in the Lake Anna Bowl Tourney last month. Photo courtesy of **Central Virginia Outdoors**.

Meadow Event Park in Doswell. This is the only show in Virginia that is truly dedicated to fishing. Visit [RichmondFishingExpo.com](http://RichmondFishingExpo.com) for more information and to purchase tickets which are \$9 for adults, \$8 for seniors/military, \$5 for ages 6-14 and kids five years old and younger are free.

The 27th Annal Dale City Bass Tackle Show is on February 4 at the Hillendale Fire Department. Here

you'll find great deals on new and gently used tackle and have a good time with your fishing buddies.

The massive NRA Great American Outdoor Show runs February 4-12 and is held at the Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex in Harrisburg, PA. This show is so vast that you better be sure to wear your comfortable shoes and plan to stay a few days just to be sure you see it all! Visit [GreatAmericanOutdoorShow.org](http://GreatAmericanOutdoorShow.org) for tickets. Single day adult tickets are \$15 with discounts for seniors, children and groups. Multi-day discounts are also offered. *Chrissie McCotter*



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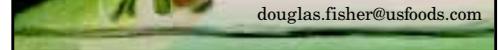
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## Outdoor Calendar

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### Fishing Tournaments

- January 1 – Lake Anna Winter Bass Series – Sturgeon Creek Marina, 7am-3pm. Visit SturgeonCreekMarina.com or call 540/895-5095.
- January 8 - January 1 – Lake Anna Winter Bass Series – Sturgeon Creek Marina, 7am-3pm. Visit SturgeonCreekMarina.com or call 540/895-5095.
- January 15 - January 1 – Lake Anna Winter Bass Series – Sturgeon Creek Marina, 7am-3pm. Visit SturgeonCreekMarina.com or call 540/895-5095.
- January 22 - January 1 – Lake Anna Winter Bass Series – Sturgeon Creek Marina, 7am-3pm. Visit SturgeonCreekMarina.com or call 540/895-5095.
- January 28 – Bobcat's Virginia/Carolina Crappie Trail – Visit BobcatsLakeCountry.com
- January 29 - January 1 – Lake Anna Winter Bass Series – Sturgeon Creek Marina, 7am-3pm. Visit SturgeonCreekMarina.com or call 540/895-5095.
- February 25 - Bobcat's Virginia/Carolina Crappie Trail – Visit BobcatsLakeCountry.com
- March 4 – Fish Tales Big Bass Tournament – Lake Anna, Anna Point Marina, 8am-4pm. Call Dave 540/840-6772.
- March 5 – Fish Tales Open – Lake Anna, Anna Point Marina, 8am-4pm. Call Dave 540/840-6772

### Shows/Community/Other Events

- January 14 – Pines Pheasant Ring Shoot – The Preserve at Dundee, Hanover, VA – Visit ThePreserveatDundee.com.
- January 14-15 – Virginia Fly Fishing Show, Meadow Event Park, Doswell, VA - visit www.vaflyfishingfestival.com.
- January 13-15 – Fredericksburg Boat & Watersports Expo, Fredericksburg Expo Center - visit www.fredericksburgexpo.com.
- January 20-22, 2023 – Richmond Fishing Expo – State Fairgrounds of Virginia – Doswell, Va. Visit www.RichmondFishingExpo.com
- January 28 – Fraternal Order of Eagles Fishing Flea Market – 21 Cool Spring Rd., Fredericksburg, VA. Contact David 540/287-0731 DWL629@gmail.com.
- January 28-29 – 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Monaghan Fishing Show – Monaghan Twp. Volunteer Fire Dept., Dillsburg, PA. Visit MonaghanFishingShow.com.
- February 4 – 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Dale City Bass Tackle Show – Hillendale Fire Dept., 13511 Hillendale Dr. Dale City, VA.
- February 4-12 – NRA Great American Outdoor Show – Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex – Harrisburg, PA. Visit GreatAmericanOutdoorShow.org.
- February 11, 2023 – Field Pheasant Ring Shoot – The Preserve at Dundee, Hanover, VA – Visit ThePreserveatDundee.com.
- February 11 & 12 – Augusta Fishing & Outdoor Expo – Augusta Expoland, Fishersville, VA. Visit AugustaCoBass.com.
- February 11 – Rapidan Trout Unlimited Fishing Show – Highland School, Warrenton VA. Visit RapidanTU.org.

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