Kentucky Afield Outdoors: Year in Review **Record deer harvest among Kentucky Fish and Wildlife highlights for 2013**

by KEVIN KELLY

tucky as the nation's top spot for trophy white-tailed deer.

The state produced 42 reported entries into the Boone book in 2012.

"We've got more huntwe've ever had," said Karen Waldrop, wildlife director for the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife wrapped up. The study also worked to stem the Asian needed before the restric-Resources. "And we're nationally recognized as a deer food sources. destination."

certainly enjoyed another record deer harvest.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife's website (fw.ky.gov) reported 139,228 deer teleyear's overall harvest record. That total could climb some more.

season stands as one of the department's highlights in 2013.

The ongoing efforts by Kentucky Fish and Wildlife to restore the state's bobwhite quail population and ing expand in Kentucky. the expansion of Big Rivers (WMA) and State Forest in western Kentucky as well as new regulations permitwildlife division.

In addition, wildlife biologists continued their work with University of Kentucky graduate students on separate in Wayne County. research projects focused on the state's restored elk herd.



Ky. Dept. Fish & Wildlife herd to where we have a advancement of Asian carp Earlier this year, Outdoor huntable population, allow as one of the division's key Life magazine picked Ken- the maximum opportunity areas of focus in 2013. for hunters and still have a healthy herd that behaves and ted almost 83,000 pounds of acts like an elk herd should," said Gabe Jenkins, wildlife and Crockett Club record biologist for Kentucky Fish on Kentucky and Barkley and Wildlife.

assessing lifespan, identifying causes of death and tracking movement just identified elk habitat use and carp's migration up the Ohio

A cow elk study, started While it won't be known last winter when 40 adult to fish in the Greenup and until later if hunters in Ken- cow elk received radio coltucky have topped that tro- lars and ear tags, is looking Brooks said. "We learned phy mark this year, they have not only at the lifespan of a lot about the numbers of cows but also at the social Asian carp in those pools and structure of the herd, repro- what we need to do moving ductive success and mortality factors.

"As an agency, we're gochecked as of Dec. 26, up ing to continue to try to keep River attracted attention this Cumberland. almost 6 percent from last this up for a while," Jenkins vear. said. "So even when the students are finished with their life engaged in a project with work, we have some things An unprecedented deer that we want to look at and Illinois and two out-of-state address. We're going to continue to deploy collars and try to keep up with that sample size for a while at least."

> This past year also saw opportunities for bear hunt-

Wildlife Management Area compasses a 16-county region, a separate archery/ crossbow season was established and the first bear quota ting night coyote hunting are hunt with dogs was initiated. all accomplishments of the Hunters met their quota of cidentally, has been going up 10 bears during the inaugural archery/crossbow season, with the largest a 375-pound male taken with a crossbow They've got a trophy com- borhoods (FINs) program

Fisheries Division Director Ron Brooks noted the that the data we had prior to

"We want to sustain the continued efforts to blunt the last year was maybe insuffi- sion and renovation of the better hunting and fishing in

Commercial anglers net-Asian carp over a two-day tournament held in March lakes. Bighead and silver Fieldwork for a four-year carp reproduce quickly and ing opportunities now than research project focused on gorge on plankton that forms the base of the aquatic food chain.

The department also River.

'We contracted fishermen Meldahl pools primarily," forward on that leading edge project."

Kentucky Fish and Wildagencies from Indiana and universities to determine the population status of blue, flathead and channel catfish in the Ohio River and whether trophy-sized catfish were being overharvested.

"The trophy fishermen, The bear zone now en- the folks that like to go to the tournaments have all been saying for several years that the number of big fish is going down," Brooks said. The pay lake industry, coinin terms of interest for having commercial fishermen bring them trophy-sized fish. ponent at pay lakes now.

"We got a bit concerned

cient to look at size. So we Pfeiffer Fish Hatchery, one put together a project and it of two hatcheries owned and showed us that there were operated by Kentucky Fish some potential issues in the and Wildlife. upper portion of the river."

that can be taken daily by commercial fisherman and sportfish anglers.

tions become law. If passed, anglers fishing on a sport fishing license would be allowed to keep one blue and flathead catfish more than 35 inches long and one channel catfish more than 28 inches long on the Ohio River with no daily creel limit on fish under those limits.

The past year brought Trophy catfish in the Ohio some good news about Lake

> The Army Corps of Engineers dropped the water level in the lake in 2007 to ease pressure on Wolf Creek Dam because it was at risk of failing. With repairs to the dam nearing completion, the Corps raised the lake to 705 feet above sea level this past spring and could return it to its normal 723 feet above sea level next year.

> "The water level has increased to about half of what we lost in 2007. They did that earlier than was planned," Brooks said. "That helped the striped bass fishery and probably helped the trout fishery below in the tailwater as well."

The Fishing In Neighexpanded this year and now includes 39 lakes, he noted. Also of note was the expan-

"We added eight more Earlier this month, the acres of ponds and a pret-Kentucky Fish and Wildlife ty large, intensive rearing Commission voted in favor building as well," Brooks of new restrictions to limit said. "That will help us. Our the number of trophy catfish goal is to increase production out of that hatchery by 20 percent."

Legislative approval is complishments will bring lunge and stream fishing.

the future. They also will improve overall fish and wildlife populations for the enjoyment of all Kentuckians.

Kevin Kelly joined Kentucky Fish and Wildlife in December 2013. His journalism career has included stops at daily newspapers in Cincinnati, Ohio, St. Petersburg, Fla. and Charleston, S.C. He is an avid angler These important 2013 ac- with a passion for muskel-



The continuing restoration of Kentucky's northern bobwhite quail population along with a record modern gun and overall deer harvest are some of the highlights of 2013 for the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources.



(Giv Terry Stickel

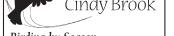
> Molly's husband's father-in-law is Molly's husband's brother's brotherin-law and Molly's sister-in-law is Molly's brother's stepmother.

> > This means that Molly's <u>?</u> married the sister of <u>?</u>.

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Birding by Season Winter was filled with migrating sparrows, catbirds, goldfinches and robins. Spring was filled with cowbirds, wrens, titmice and woodpeckers. Babies, babies everywhere in the summer. Fall has red-winged blackbirds, crows and blue jays. My yard is always filled, and so is my heart. Happy New Year, everyone!

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