

Ohio Black Bear Poachers Apprehended in Nicholas County by West Virginia Conservation Officers

A lengthy bear poaching investigation was brought to a conclusion Oct. 22 and Oct. 25, when West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (WVDNR) conservation officers and Wildlife Resources Section personnel apprehended a group of eight hunters in Nicholas County for using bait to lure black bear into sites where they could be shot from elevated and camouflaged stands. It is illegal to bait black bear in West Virginia.

"This group of hunters, all of whom were residents of Ohio, had been participating in this type of illegal activity for several years," said Capt. Michael Waugh of the WVDNR District 3 Office in Elkins. "They had purchased their bait, which consisted of donuts and corn, from multiple out-of-state vendors. The bait was then hauled into the area by truck and distributed to the bait sites using all-terrain vehicles. This

out-of-state purchase and interstate transport of the bait is believed to have been an effort on the part of the poachers to conceal the quantities of bait, the purposes for which it was being purchased, and to avert suspicion in the areas they were baiting."

Seven baited shooting sites were located by Conservation Officers D. Duffield, T.L. White and Wildlife Manager Tom Pratt when they entered the woods in Nicholas County near Summersville. On Oct. 22, five of the hunters were apprehended at a cabin used as a base camp from which to stage these illegal activities. As the individual hunters were located and removed from the elevated shooting platforms, Sgt. C.R. Johnson conducted interviews that led to additional information and the discovery of multiple baited black bear kills from previous years.

Two large adult black bears were seized at the base camp location as well as large quantities of bait stored for future use. The first was a large male bear that was estimated to weigh in excess of 240 pounds. The second was a three- to four-year-old female estimated to weigh more than 130 pounds. Two additional black bears were killed at the bait sites earlier and had already been removed from the base camp to locations outside the borders of West Virginia. Requests for assistance in recovering these black bears have been made to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under the provisions of the Lacey Act.

In conjunction with the Nicholas County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, charges were lodged against the eight participants in this illegal baiting scheme. The suspects chose to enter pleas to these charges at the arraignment. The charges lodged included killing bear over bait and hunting bear over bait. Penalties included fines of \$2,319, replacement costs of \$500 and 100 days in jail. The jail term was suspended contingent upon the payment of fines and costs.

Arraignment is pending for two of the alleged violators.

Also, based upon information provided by Sgt. Johnson, on Oct. 26, 2009, David Moore of New Richmond, Ohio, surrendered parts of three black bears that had been taken over bait in West Virginia to Ohio wildlife officers. No charges have been filed at this time.

"This investigation serves as a classic reminder that the Division of Natural Resources and its employees are ever mindful of their charge to protect the natural resources of the state of West Virginia for the benefit and enjoyment of our citizens and their children," said Capt. Waugh.



Conservation officers and wildlife manager with confiscated bait and bears.

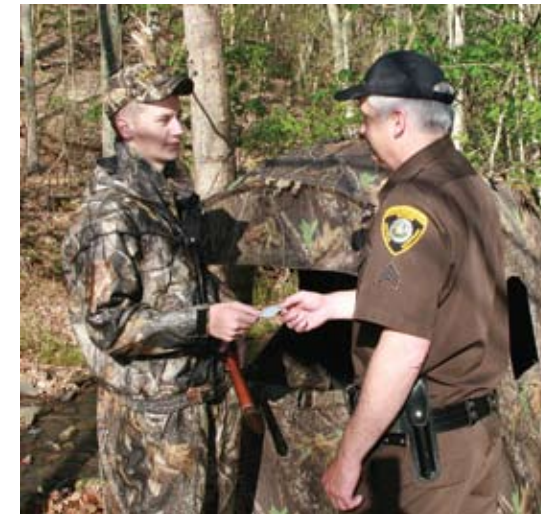
Sgt. C.R. Johnson/WVDNR Photo

West Virginia Joins Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact

When it comes to sportsmen who break hunting, fishing or trapping laws, the catchy phrase that "What happens in West Virginia, stays in West Virginia," doesn't apply as of Jan. 1, 2010. Gov. Joe Manchin signed the Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact Dec. 7 at the Stonewall Resort. "This cooperative interstate effort will enhance West Virginia's ability to protect and manage the state's wildlife resources for the benefit of all residents and visitors," Gov. Manchin said.

According to the reciprocal agreement, those who have their hunting or fishing license suspended in a Compact member state also can have their sporting privileges denied in any of the 31 other states which have signed the Compact.

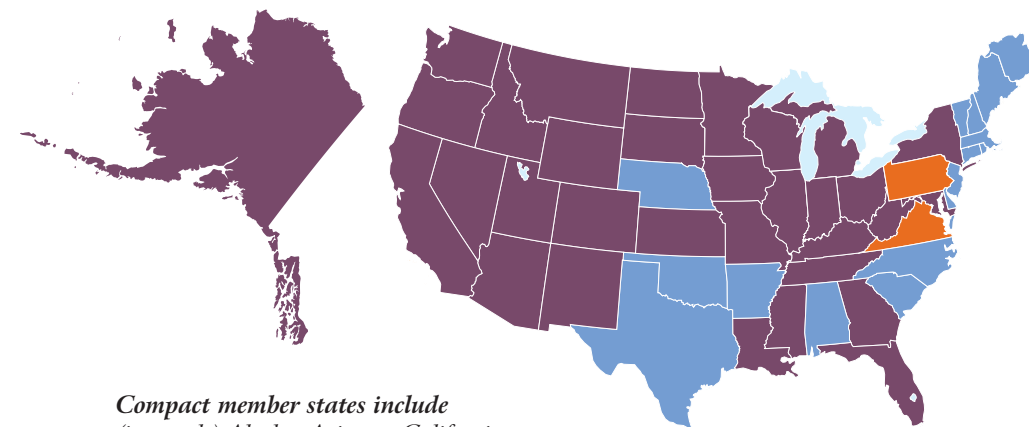
This agreement greatly expands the consequences of illegal actions. In the past, hunters who had their licenses suspended in Ohio could still come to West Virginia to hunt. Likewise,



Conservation officer checks hunter's license.

Ron Snow/WV Dept. of Commerce Photo

West Virginia residents who had their hunting privileges suspended in West Virginia could still go elk hunting in Colorado. "This should give potential violators second or third thoughts about breaking the laws that protect our fish and wildlife resources," said Frank Jezioro, director of the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources. "If people get their licenses revoked for some grievous offense, we sure don't want them hunting here," Jezioro said.



Compact member states include (in purple) Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Washington, Wisconsin and Wyoming. Virginia and Pennsylvania (in orange) are considering joining the Compact.

Calendar of Events

MARCH

15-16 Hunting and Fishing Regulations Public Meetings
12 locations around the state
 Call 304-558-2771 for exact locations and times; check hunting or fishing regulation booklets for dates and general locations

APRIL

8-11 School of the Longhunter and Contemporary Longrifle Association Show
Prickett's Fort State Park
 An intense weekend of instruction exploring the role of early frontiersmen on the American frontier ... focusing on the skills of the long hunter. In addition to the educational programming, there will be a sanctioned CLA mini-show and sale. Registration for Longhunter includes admission to both events.
 Contact: 304-363-3030

17 26th Annual Sue Browning Wildflower Hike
Chief Logan State Park
 Includes continental breakfast, guided hike, lunch and door prizes. \$10 for advanced reservations. Registration at the museum in the park. Contact: Sandy Mayo 304-855-5863

17 Stream Clean Cabwaylingo State Forest
 Lunch is free, and provided by Argus Energy, for all participants. The event starts at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 3:30 p.m. Contact: Lynette Simko 304-385-4255

23-25 Becoming an Outdoors-Woman Workshop
Canaan Valley Resort State Park
 Full weekend of BOW activities. Choose from 30 different classes. To register, contact Billie Shearer at 304-558-2771, billieshearer@wv.gov or go online to www.wvdnr.gov.

Governor's One Shot Whitetail Hunt and Banquet Dec. 6-7 Stonewall Resort

Invited guests joined Gov. Joe Manchin and West Virginia Division of Natural Resources Director Frank Jezioro for a special event designed to draw attention to hunting opportunities in the Mountain State and to the Hunters Helping the Hungry (HHH) program. WVDNR and the West Virginia Trophy Hunters Association sponsored the annual "West Virginia Governor's One Shot Whitetail Hunt" Dec. 6-7 at the Stonewall Resort.

Participants sighted in their firearms at the Stonewall Jackson Lake Wildlife Management Area on Sunday, Dec. 6. The next day they were taken for guided hunts on private property near the park. The hunt was for antlerless deer only, and the deer harvested were donated to the HHH program, with the venison to be distributed to needy families across the state. Awards for participants in the One Shot Whitetail Hunt were presented during a banquet at the Stonewall Resort that Monday evening.

This event began in 2007 when Gov. Manchin and other state governors participated in a One Shot Antelope event in Lander, Wyoming. He decided

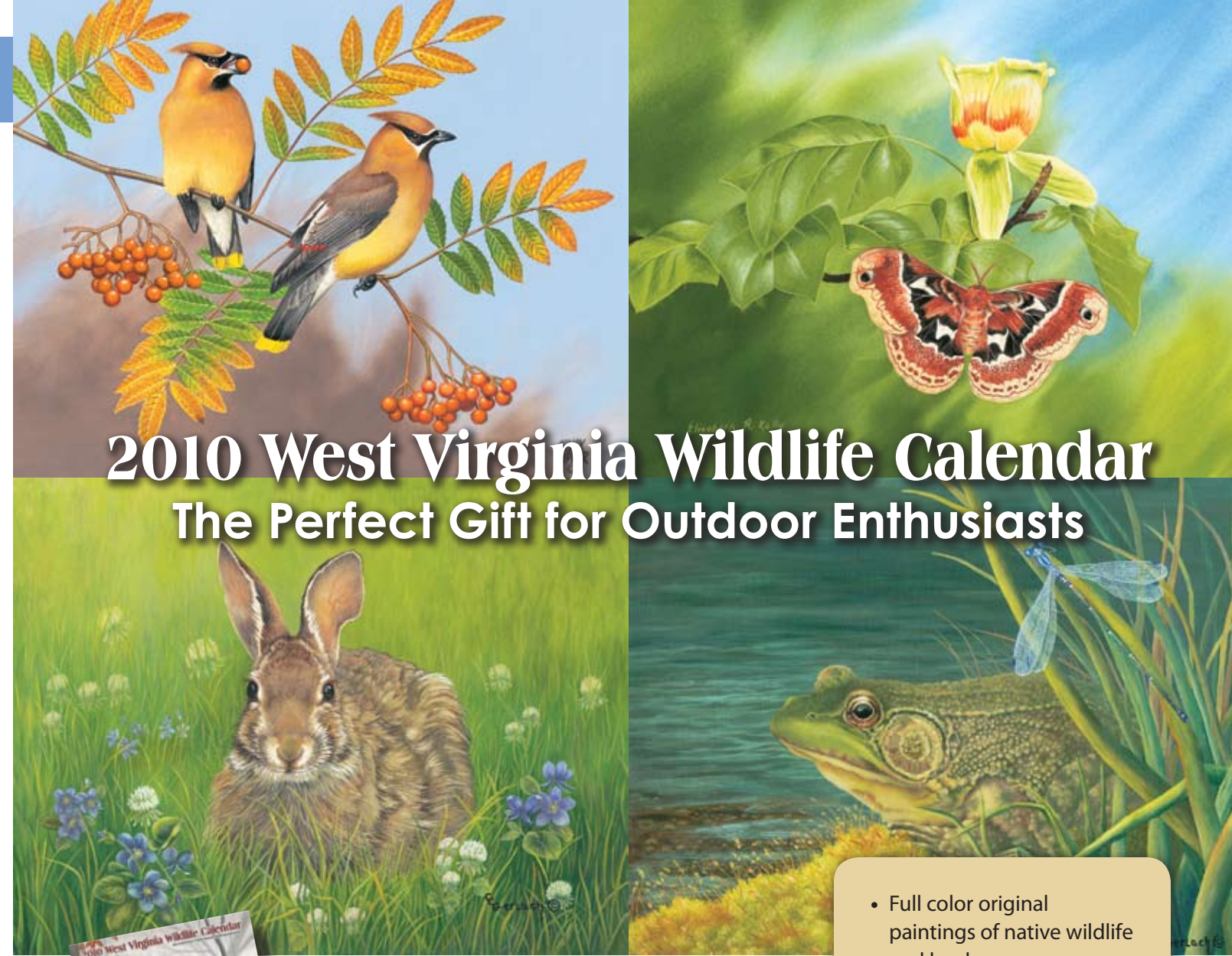


The Governor's One Shot Whitetail Hunt ended with a banquet for participants.

to bring that experience to West Virginia, where whitetail deer hunting opportunities are among the best in the East. In 2007 the event raised \$17,000 and in 2008 it raised \$35,000 for the HHH program. This year, registrations for the charity hunt provided more than \$50,000.

"This is an opportunity for our guests to learn about what West Virginia has to offer outdoor sportsmen, and also to help promote the worthy Hunters Helping the Hungry program that means so much to so many less fortunate West Virginians," Manchin said.

Steve Shaluta/WV Dept. Commerce Photo



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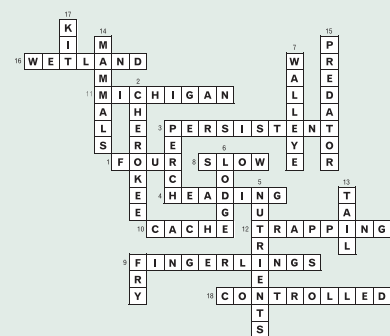
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Answers to page 21.



ACROSS

- 1. Four 3. Persistent 4. Heading 8. Slow
- 9. Fingerlings 10. Cache 11. Michigan
- 12. Trapping 16. Wetland 18. Controlled

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- 2. Cherokee 3. Perch 5. Nutrients
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