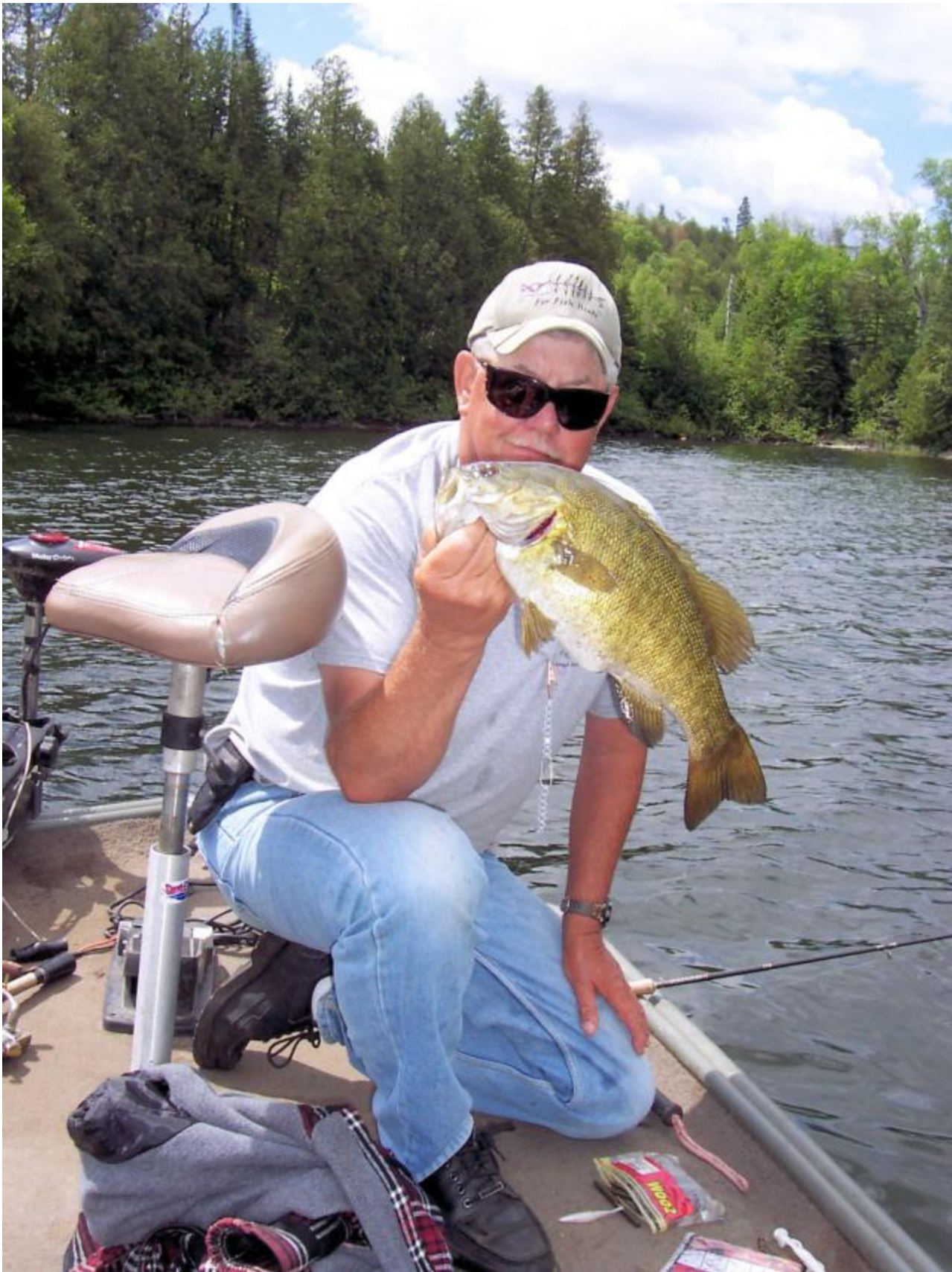




# **Celebrating the outdoor sports on National Hunting and Fishing Days**

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The special day honoring anglers, hunters and other folks who enjoy the outdoors is nearly upon us. And, numerous special events are scheduled to celebrate this special occasion during the fourth weekend in September.

In fact, a couple of two-day events are even scheduled during National Hunting and Fishing Days in Illinois. Even better, certain celebrations planned for this special weekend are among the largest and oldest in the nation.

National Hunting and Fishing Days events are expected Sept 23 at NILO Farms near Brighton and for Sept. 23-24 at John A. Logan College in Carterville and at Silver Springs State Fish and Wildlife Area in Yorkville.

National Hunting and Fishing Days provides an opportunity to showcase and celebrate the hunting and fishing heritage. The support and dedication of anglers and hunters helps make fish and wildlife management programs possible. Those who enjoy the outdoors recognize and appreciate the tremendous contributions of sportsmen and women to wildlife conservation.

Winchester's annual event at NILO Farms is among the nation's oldest Hunting and Fishing Day celebration. Now in its 46th year, this event will again feature many of the popular attractions from previous year.

Those attending will have an opportunity to test their shooting skills, see top-notch hunting dogs perform and win one of many various attendance prizes. Other previous attractions include archery shooting, black powder demonstrations, air rifle shooting, a child gun safety program and tours of the NILO kennels. The day concludes with a special drawing for Winchester Ammunition.

More than two-dozen vendor displays include various conservation groups, hunting clubs, outdoor artwork, waterfowl calls and boating, hunting and fishing equipment dealers. Food and refreshments will be available.

The event began as a vision more than 45 years ago. It has now developed into a full-blown national celebration.

Winchester representatives feel the celebration, like the sports it represents, has become a deep-rooted tradition that annual serves to introduce millions of Americans to the outdoor sports.

As in the past, admission to the event is free. The activities begin at 9 a.m. and continue until 4 p.m.

In addition to one of the nation's oldest celebrations, Illinois is also home to the country's largest and recently reorganized National Hunting and Fishing Days event. This celebration, now celebrating its 30th year, is scheduled for Sept. 23 and 24 at the John A. Logan College campus in Carterville.

The Southern Illinois National Hunting and Fishing Days celebration is recognized as one of the largest NHFD events in the nation. Activities in Carterville are scheduled for 9 a.m.-5 p.m. on Saturday and from 9 a.m.- 4 p.m. on Sunday. Parking and admission are free.

According to event promoter Ron Allen, several special attractions headline this special 30th anniversary event.

“Visitors can see the Tucker buck,” he explained. “This is the largest non-typical buck ever harvested in North America.”

In addition, those attending can see the Illinois state record hybrid black crappie caught from Kinkaid Lake.

“Another item of interest to deer hunters is the Tennessee state record typical buck,” Allen explained. “This buck scored 190 by Boone and Crockett scorers.”

Allen says that the southern Illinois celebration features some 200 vendors and also includes a kid’s activity area featuring archery, shooting sports and fishing. Other activities include, a wildlife and nature art show, seminars on fishing, game preparation and outdoor cooking, a buckskinner's village and tomahawk throwing area.

Visitors can also see the Dog World area, boat, RV and ATV displays and demonstrations; taxidermy displays; a special deer tent; hunting retriever dog demonstrations; trap range and a special fishing display.

The Northern Illinois National Hunting and Fishing Days celebration at Silver Springs SFWA features free admission and free hands-on activities for all ages from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. on Sept. 23 and 24.

Activities at the northern Illinois celebration include over 100 vendors, along with canoe rides; fly casting and tying demonstrations; kids casting competition and a historical re-enactment encampment. Other events include hunting dog demonstrations, an outdoor women seminar, instruction on canoe paddling, dog training, archery, shotgun and BB gun shooting; RV, ATV and boat displays.