

Things we don't get to do

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I like a little variety in my outdoor activities. My deer season is over. I finished up in Alabama last Sunday and I'll tell you all about that next week. So I am done. I probably won't start fishing for a week or so. However, the crappie and trout are both good right now and I hear tell the sauger are red hot.

But see, a man, woman or whatever else there is needs a little variety in their outdoor activities. You cannot just go through the year hunting deer and catching fish the way many of us do. You need to get outside the box if you hunt like Whitener or boat...or SUV.

If you happen to have a zebra skin tablecloth or an Oryx or two on the wall, you might go ice fishing one day and shoot pheasant the next. I have none of the African stuff however; I have been pheasant hunting on several occasions and ice fishing.

Twice.

Hiz Honor Judge David Earl Durham, well, he up and went over Christmas vacation. See, he married up with a beautiful woman and her family owns half of North Dakota where they have a lot of ice and pheasants. His stepson, Lenny Steinmetz is the top guide for that sort of thing and they all get in a wad with family and friends and go do pheasants and ice fishing. Heck, this time of year, there is not anything else to do.

Pheasants are fun to shoot, they are a big, colorful bird that makes a lot of noise when they get up and can absorb some lead. As far as I know, there are three ways to shoot them...make that two. You can hunt driven birds or work them with a dog. I have done both on several occasions. For me, the real great part about hunting pheasants is that they are relatively easy to hit. I suspect that explains why Hiz Honor did so well at it.

The Jedge and some of his in-laws and friends spent a lot of time out around Carson, ND shooting birds with Will. Not at will, with Will, a fine yeller lab. A good dog will stand them and then pick them up, too. Mostly you hunt picked fields and CRP ground. A dog is handy to have.

Then, on mornings when it is -25 and cold, too, why you might get the heater going in the icehouse and drill you a hole about a foot down until you hit water. Why then, you go fishing. You tip a small jig with a minner, you drop it down about 12-feet, and you slowly jig it up and down. If you are in the right spot, you can catch walleye, crappie, yellow perch and maybe even a northern. I have been ice fishing.

Twice.

But Hiz Honor, he and some in-laws, they went several times on Pipestem reservoir just outside Jamestown and they caught a lot of fish, none of which seemed to have made it to my table.

If you have a comfortable icehouse or shanty as they are called in some areas, it can be a comfortable proposition. You just pull it out on the ice with your truck or snow mobile and have at it. Course, you have to have it in the right spot. It needs to be over the hole for starters. If you do not have a shanty, it is not quite so comfortable. When I went, we did not have said icehouse. That is probably why I only went twice.

But see, his Honor, he has connections and so he was comfortable.

You would think he could have thought to bring some perch fillets back. They are some good eating...the ones that don't have worms all in them.

In addition, you don't have to worry about keeping them cold, either.

Deer kill surpasses last year's numbers -- The total deer kill for the 2012/13 season is one of the best ever for Tennessee.

Approximately 174, 594 deer were killed this year. That exceeds last year's kill of 167,808 by a gain of 6,786.

The sex ratios of the kill were good as well. Hunters killed 87,607 antlered bucks compared to 75,451 does. That is an acceptable ratio.

In addition, 1,850 button bucks and 2686 antlerless deer were killed.

Here in Wilson County, hunters killed 2,347 deer total with 1,215 bucks and 977 does. Button bucks made up 119 and button bucks accounted for 36.

The past season was one of the best on record and a testament to good deer management. In addition to the good numbers, many quality bucks were taken across the state.

JOHN L. SLOAN / This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it

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