



• By Lee McClellan

Ping-Sinking Valley WMA



ADRIENNE YANCY ILLUSTRATION

THE KARST TOPOGRAPHY of the Buck Creek drainage in Pulaski County makes one of the most unique cave systems in the world. Hunters, hikers and bird watchers now have 804 acres of this distinctive landscape to explore.

The Ping-Sinking Valley Wildlife Management Area (WMA) opened to public use last fall. It is one of the few places in state that experiences “valley tides,” reflecting the streams flowing underneath the landscape of the area.

“The area has lots of sinkholes,” said Rebecca Littleton, southeast region public lands biologist for the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources. “The streams on the area do not flow constantly. At low water, they flow underground.”

A big rain in the Sinking Valley Creek drainage causes groundwater flowing under the surface to sprout from the sinkholes, creating lakes in the low sections of Ping-Sinking Valley WMA that disappear back underground nearly as quickly as they form. Monies from the Kentucky Wetland Stream and Mitigation Fund purchased this property to protect this exceptional network of underground streams.

Hunters can chase white-tailed deer,

wild turkey, squirrels and rabbits on this area. “It is mostly wooded of the typical mixed hardwood forest you see in southeastern Kentucky,” Littleton explained. “I’ve seen deer and turkey on the area myself and plenty of squirrels. Squirrel hunting should be good, there are acorns everywhere.”

Deer hunting is open for archery, cross-bow and youth deer seasons. Ping-Sinking Valley WMA is open under statewide regulations for all other hunting seasons. “We have some good sized openings that we are converting from fescue to clover for wildlife,” Littleton said.

Ping-Sinking Valley WMA holds a good population of songbirds with excellent access for hiking and bird watching.

“The previous landowner constructed a lot of trails through the property,” Littleton said. “The trail system makes this a great spot for birding or just hiking. You can walk from one end of the property to the other end pretty easily.”

Interior rails are maintained for foot travel only. No ATVs, camping or horseback riding is allowed on the property.

The area has three gravel parking areas:

one off of Public Road (KY 1677, known as Dahl Road for much of its length) in the southern end of the property, another off Bullock Cemetery Road in the middle of the property and another off Upper Line Fork Road in the northern end of the property.

“We now have signs at roads around the area and at intersections to direct people,” Littleton said. ■

HOW TO GET THERE

From Somerset: Take KY 80 east and turn left at Shopville School. Take a quick right onto Shopville Road. Go approximately one-third of a mile then turn left onto Dahl Road (KY 1677). Follow signs to area.

GPS Coordinates
37.1958 -84.3885

