

WOODS 'N WATER™

\$3.99

DECEMBER 2023

46TH YEAR 5TH ISSUE

**FWC's Deer
Management**

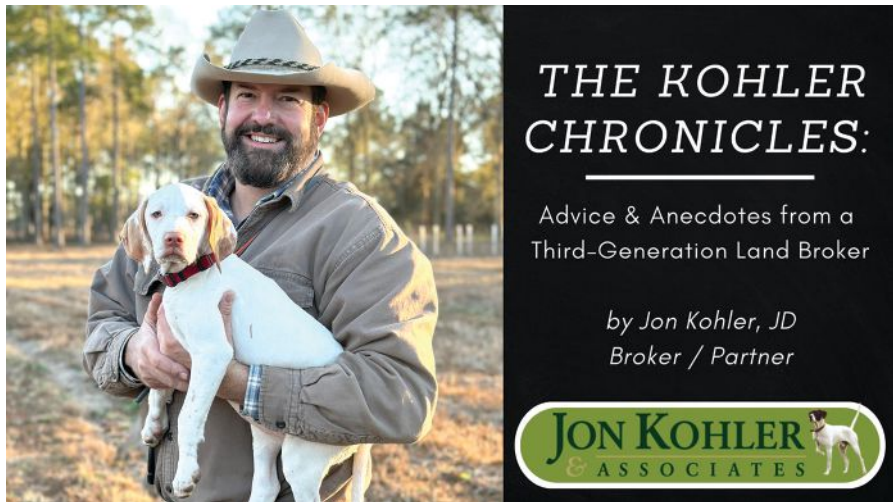
**Python
Pursuits**

**Fishing
Reports**

**Real
Estate
Listings**

**New Gator
Harvest?**





THE KOHLER CHRONICLES:

Advice & Anecdotes from a Third-Generation Land Broker

by Jon Kohler, JD
Broker / Partner



Quail hunting for everyone

by *Christiana Roussel*

If you've ever flipped through one of those uber-high-end sporting magazines, you've probably seen pages upon pages of advertisements and stories about aspirational quail hunting trips. Showing highly-covetable destinations (from here to Argentina), there are photos of guys decked out in all the expensive gear, flanked by guides, multiple canine flushers and retrievers, and shouldering gleaming shotguns.

Yes, those are great experiences to have. Some of us are lucky enough to have been on these types of hunts – with wagons and mules, seasoned guides

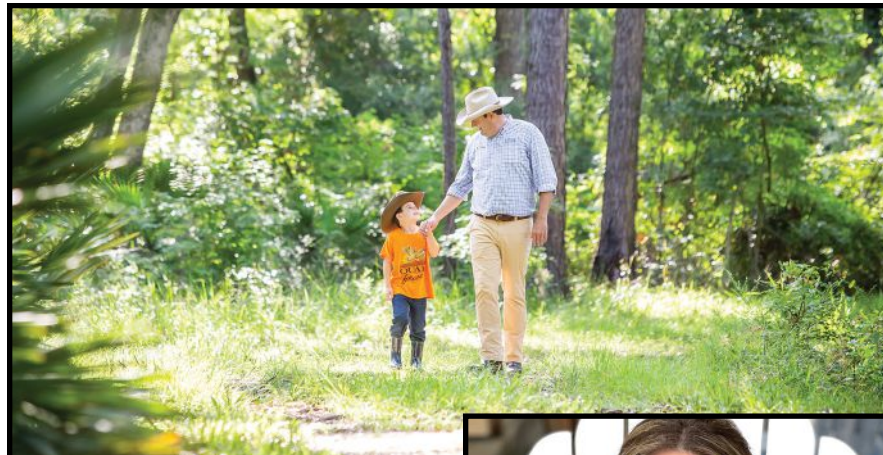
and dogs – but honestly, a great quail hunt doesn't have to be aspirational or break the bank. In fact, a great quail hunt is way more accessible than you might think.

Trending

Recent years have seen a serious rise in the popularity of the sport.

"Floridians should have enormous pride in the amount of recreational land we have available here," Jon Kohler shares. "Much of that can be credited to visionaries like Lawton Chiles, T.K. Wetherell, and George Wilson."

He goes on to give credit to present-day conservation leaders such as

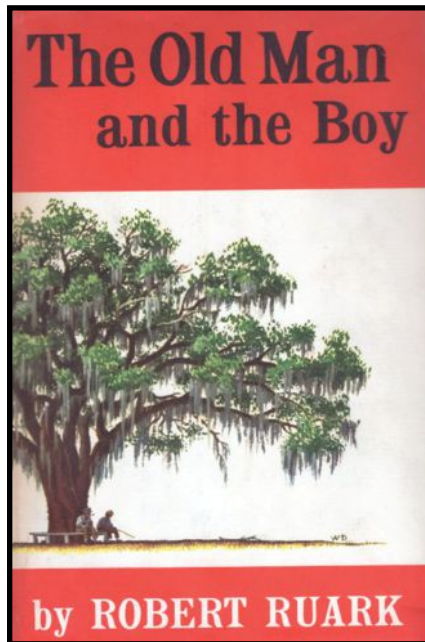


SPECIAL MOMENTS – Jon shares a special moment with his son, Ashton, at Deep Creek Plantation (*above*). Erica Kohler, director and partner at Jon Kohler & Associates (*right*), displays the family's beloved hunting dog, Pax.



Shane Wellendorf at Tall Timbers, Julie Morris and Jim Strickland of Florida Conservation Group (FSG).

"FSG is instrumental in the state, buying conservation easements that allow the landowner to both monetize their property's development value today while preserving it for the use of future Floridians," Jon says.



IT CAN BE SIMPLE – "It can be as simple as walking a fence line with a good dog by your side," Brett said, referencing the line in Robert Ruark's book, "The Old Man and the Boy."

Plantation manager, guide and Jon Kohler & Associates broker Brett Bryan will be the first to tell you he is seeing this increased renewed interest in quail hunting firsthand.

"You know, it is not unlike what Robert Ruark wrote about in his book 'The Old Man and the Boy' – it can be as simple as walking a fence line with a good dog by your side," Brett says. "More and more people are seeing that you can return to a smaller piece of family property – even just 100 acres – and if it is well-managed, you can have a great place to hunt quail all season."

When asked what he attributes the renewed interest in the pursuit, Bryan shares, "Even before COVID, we were noticing more people taking up all kinds of outdoor activities. Whether it is fishing or hunting, people want the experiences of being in the places where these

(Continued on page 10)

FLCAMO
PALMETTO PATTERN

CAMO MADE FOR FLORIDA AND THE SOUTH

HAMMOCK PATTERN

GLADES PATTERN

Lightweight
Breathable
Original Patterns

WWW.FL-CAMO.COM

CUSTOM OUTDOORS OF GEORGIA

Made in the USA

DEERSTANDS
Available in 5', 10', 13', 15' & 20'
ONE MAN OR TWO MAN

Dealer Inquiries Welcomed

Find us on: **facebook**

229-769-5339
584 Davis Road • Norman Park, GA 31771

The lifestyle draws people in

(Continued from page 8)

things happen. You may not catch a fish, but if you are out on the water with a beautiful rod and reel, it just feels great. There is something about this lifestyle that really draws people in.”

Visit Charleston in February for the annual Southeastern Wildlife Exposition (SEWE) event, and you can tell there is a serious fever about all things related to the outdoor life. To be candid, some of these attendees may acquire the German Short-Haired Pointer and Barbour Be-dale before they ever see a covey rise. Upland hunting is a decidedly social activity, and the good news is that there is no shortage of ways to become engaged.

Plantation Optional

The truth is, the best quail hunts take place on property that is well-managed and maintained, regardless of size. The science of proper land management – through organizations such as Tall Timbers, who make their research available to everyone – is proving that out.

“One of the major setbacks to the quail population in the region was that period of time when people were afraid to put fire to the landscape,” Bryan says. “Some people grew up hearing about Smokey Bear and were afraid of fire in wooded areas, but the land, the habitat,

the quail need that fire to thrive.”

And, quail are not the only wildlife that benefit from these prescribed burns – deer and wild turkey populations thrive in the same landscape as the quail. So, when you improve even a small parcel using proper methods, you reap the benefits again and again.

Removing the Barriers

Contrary to what you might see in some of those fancy hunting magazines, you don’t need much to get out there and have a great quail experience with friends and family. States like Florida and Georgia have links on their websites directing residents to their WMA resources and instructions on purchasing licenses. Through the dedicated work of so many landowners and stake-holders, the quail are here.

If you are interested in your own private spot, Bryan says Jon Kohler & Associates has clients come to them all the time seeking smaller parcels where they can get a toehold on this lifestyle. He has even had groups of friends buy property together, sharing the legacy they will create together.

And, back to the topic of dogs: while having a kennel full of well-trained pointers and flushers might be nice, sometimes all you need is a really

great family dog.

As a board member of the national Quail Forever organization, Jon notes, “It is funny how people used to get a dog because they wanted to shoot quail. Now we are seeing bird hunters shoot because they want to work their dogs. A lot of great dogs were acquired during COVID. I’d say roughly 80% of our 140,000 Quail Forever members own hunting dogs.”

Reaching down to pet his own cocker spaniel, Bryan says, “This is a dog who can keep up with my 3-year-old, hang out on the couch while we watch football and still do great in the field.”

Jon adds, “It’s never been a better time to be a sportsman in Florida.”

Resources

Hunting in Florida:

<https://myfwc.com/hunting/>

Hunting in Georgia:

<https://georgiawildlife.com/hunting/>

hunter-resources

Tall Timbers:

<https://talltimbers.org>

Quail Forever:

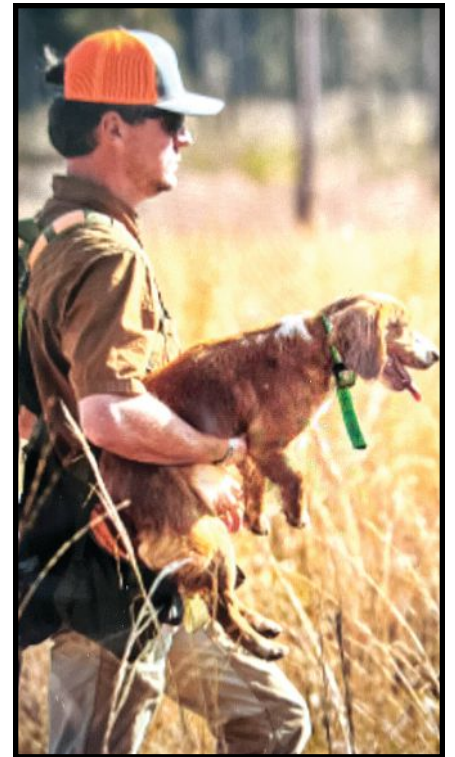
<https://quailforever.org>

Book a Hunt:

<https://www.ultimatequailhunting.com/>

usa/georgia/

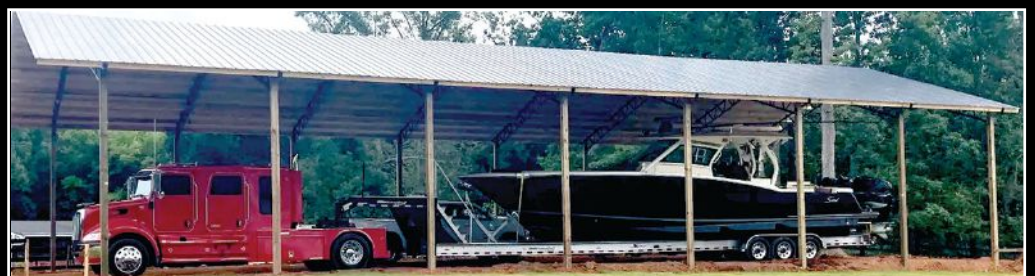
Christiana Roussel is a Birmingham-based award-winning food + travel + lifestyle writer whose work has appeared in *Garden & Gun*, *Covey Rise*,



BRETT BRYAN ENJOYS TIME IN THE FIELD with his family’s cocker spaniel, Romeo.

Good Grit, *Sporting Classics*, *Bourbon+* as well as a number of regional publications.

She is a proud member of the Birmingham chapter of *Les Dames d’Escoffier* as well as the Industry Advisory Board of Auburn University’s Horst Schulze School of Hospitality Management.



- Pole Barns
- Metal Buildings
- Carports
- Trusses



We’re an Experienced & Reliable Team Ready to Help You with All Your Pole Barn & Building Needs. We Only Use Quality Products & Take Pride they’re Made in the USA!

Proverbs 22:1 A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, and loving favor rather than silver and gold.

