

# The fun and thrill of 'catfish hoggin'

While working at an outdoor magazine in 2004, I had the opportunity to travel to several events and jump right in the middle. One such occasion was going Hawgin, Hoggin, Noodling, Grabbing, well whatever you call it, it was fun.

If big ole slimy, slick, catfish is what you are looking for then this is for you. It is a thrill seekers dream. You never know what you are grabbing in the hollow logs and planted barrels, but chances are it will not be happy when you bring it up to surface.

I envy these young folks still out there experiencing the raw outdoor adventures, like my neighborhood friend, Jordan McMillon, who is a 2013 ULM graduate with a bachelors in Agribusiness, and works at her parent's convenient store in the Cheniere Lake Dam area. She is currently searching for a job, but in her spare time, she is enjoying the outdoors.

I asked her to tell us about her recent trip; On

Sunday, July 14, Christopher Woodall and Lathan Shivers took Jamie Shivers and me, and a boat full of people out to the lake to do some catfish hoggin'. Catfish hoggin' is fishing for catfish using only your bare hands.

It is primarily done in the Southern United States. Although some holes are only big enough for your arm or maybe a leg, others require you to lie down and use your entire body to block the catfish.

The holes we checked ranged from about three and a half to seven ft deep. We got out there at about one thirty and stayed in the water until about seven thirty. Once we docked the boat, we loaded all of our supplies.

Chris and Lathan took turns with me and a fellow fisherman, Jamie Shivers, checking to see if we were able to properly

use the air supply that allows us to breathe underwater. Next, they told us how to maneuver underwater, what to look and feel for, safety tips, and also do not let your catfish escape.

Then we went to the first site. Being this was my first time hoggin', I was nervous but excited. All sorts of things were running through my head: alligators, snakes, turtles, etc... But as soon as Chris said "You ready?" I knew I could not back out then. Chris and I entered the water to check the first hole.

After checking the first spot, the fear and doubt was replaced with excitement and determination. I continued to check several holes with no success in catching a monster catfish. While I was taking a break and riding in the boat, Jamie tried his luck in a few holes.

After a long evening of empty holes, Jamie finally came across one that was occupied. Lathan quickly bailed off in the lake to assist him. Jamie had caught his first catfish.

From all the excitement and lifted spirits, you

would have thought the fish weighed eighty pounds, but we were all still pleased with the eight pound appaloosa.

Soon after, Lathan checked one of the last holes and pulled out a monster.

At the end of the day we had four catfish in the boat. Never in a million years would I have

thought I would have dove down to the bottom of the lake, block a hole not knowing what is in there, and attempt to grab a catfish. I must say I was skeptical at first, but quickly changed my outlook once I got in the water.

This sport is meant for strong swimmers, thrill seekers, and anyone else

who has what it takes to keep your catfish from escaping.

Now, I love river catfish and you can set up barrels, hollow logs and traps, but first consult your LDWF Handbook/Pamphlet to know the rules, regulations and licensing for your area. Have an adventure and enjoy the outdoors.



RENE HATTEN  
STORIES FROM  
THE OUTDOORS



LATHAN AND Jamie Shivers, of West Monroe



CATCH OF the day.

Citizen photos by Rene Hatten



LATHAN SHIVERS and Jordan McMillon, both of West Monroe, showing off their grab

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