

November/December 2008

Vol. 2, Issue 2

On Wisconsin *Outdoors*

With the Dick Ellis Experts

■ **Bayfield County Bear Hunt**

14 hunters, 13 bears ... but does Snaggle Tooth show?

■ **Badger Travel**

Edmonton Alberta waterfowl

■ **Deer Ambush**

The ground blind alternative

■ **Howell He Does It**

Ray Howell's monster bucks, Kicking Bear and cover scents

■ **Dog Talk**

Welcoming the Christmas puppy

■ **Heaven on Badger Turf**

Wild pheasant, cornfield mallards, winter steelhead, spotted musky, north country grouse...more

■ **Creating Your Own Environment**

Artificial structure means more fish

■ **Shore Bets**

Late Season Wisconsin walleye

■ **Wisconsin River Muskies**

North and south

■ **Bubba's Guns**

New Respect for a Reviled Character

■ **Open Water Northerns**

Cold Weather, Trophy Pike

Dick Ellis

■ Hunting, Fishing, Trapping, Travel & Outdoor Humor ■



THE HUNT FOR GREAT VALUES STARTS HERE!



WISCONSIN GANDER MOUNTAIN LOCATIONS

Appleton, (920) 731-9400
Baraboo, (608) 356-9800
Eau Claire, (715) 834-4594
Franklin, (414) 761-1500
Germantown, (262) 250-0600

Green Bay, (920) 491-9110
Janesville, (608) 757-2010
Kenosha, (262) 857-3757
La Crosse, (608) 783-2820

Madison, (608) 242-9532
Sheboygan, (920) 208-0800
Wausau, (715) 355-5500
Waukesha, (262) 798-0424

www.GanderMtn.com • 1-800-282-5993

JASON GAURKEE

ON WISCONSIN WATERS

Arti-fish-al intelligence

In today's high-tech fishing world, anglers are constantly seeking ways to gain that ever-important edge on the water or ice. In my thirty-plus years of angling experience, I was fairly confident that I had seen it all. Sure, some neat changes have taken place in the last decade and a half or so... space age materials have gone into the production of rods and reels, manufacturers have begun to color hooks, super lines have been born, and finishes on artificial lures have made them "virtual" fish.

Don't get me wrong; all these innovations have changed the way we fish, making us prolific fishing machines. However, the truth of the matter is that these rods and reels are still rods and reels. Hooks are still hooks, line is still line and fancy lures are still lures.

SUDDENLY, REEL WEEDS

In 2006 while filming for a television show, I was introduced to a new concept. It was one of those things that made me think, "I should have thought of that." This concept was Reel Weeds, produced by LaDredge Outdoors LLC, Mosinee, Wisconsin. Simply put, Reel Weeds are mobile artificial fish attractors closely resembling freshwater weeds, and while the use of artificial fish attractors isn't new, incorporating the idea into a portable system is.

There are two types of Reel Weed products. First there is Structure On a String, consisting of four feet of the weed structure, six feet on the Extreme version, attached to 40 feet of cord, with an adjustable ice-free float, all wrapped onto a lightweight, hassle-free storage unit. With this, anglers now have the ability to quickly create

Continued on page 4



A comfortable crappie near camera cable structure.

QUICKFISH 3

Eskimo

No. 1 PORTABLE ICE SHELTER

Pop-up portables ...

The next revolution in ice fishing!

The trend in ice fishing is compact portability and nothing beats a pop-up for portability

- Pops up (like a hunting blind) in less than 60 seconds!
- Light enough to carry, small enough to easily fit in a car
- Takes up far less space for travel or storage
- Ice anchors hold it secure in wind
- More room inside
- Snow skirt keeps wind out
- Storage pockets, Clear View windows, vents, reflectors, NEW heavy duty RED fabric, YKK zippers



For more information visit
www.geteskimo.com

Three Quickfish sizes:



2 man **18 lbs.**



3 man **23 lbs.**



6 man **38 lbs.**

Eskimo

HIGH PERFORMANCE ICE FISHING GEAR

Eskimo, Division of Ardisam, Inc.
1360 First Avenue, Cumberland, WI 54829
800.345.6007

GUARKEE, from page 3

Figure 1: Half moon configuration.



Figure 2: Inline configuration.



Figure 3: V configuration.



Figure 4: Shanty surround configuration.

their own mini-environment whenever and whenever they wish to.

The other product, Camera Cable Structure, is designed to mask the otherwise unnatural profile of underwater camera cables and camera head by making them appear to be an aquatic plant. This is accomplished by attaching four feet of artificial weeds to the cable. Not only does this make fish more comfortable, it pulls them in to investigate. These two systems utilized in tandem have proven to be deadly for most species of freshwater fish.

WHY IT WORKS

As juveniles, fish are drawn to aquatic vegetation for protection. Again, as adults, fish are drawn to weeds, this time for protection, cover and food. Weeds play a vital role in a fish's lifecycle. They must have weeds to survive. In the case of the frozen water period of winter, weeds play a particularly important role.

As winter progresses, weeds begin to die, going from green to brown and finally lying down on a lake's bottom, consuming vital oxygen from its ecosystem. An example of weeds' importance most anglers can relate to is finding that pocket of "green" weeds in a lake come January, usually spelling success for those fortunate enough to stumble upon it. Why? Pan fish, walleye and pike are constantly on the search for green, oxygen-rich weeds to provide their staples of life.

EMPLOYMENT

Fortunately, my initial experience with the Reel Weed products took place in South Dakota with the inventors of the products and professional Walleye Tournament Trail angler Dennis Foster of Moorhead, South Dakota. I must admit I was a little skeptical at first. After fishing with these guys, I realized there was a little more to this than just

popping some holes and dropping the weeds in. I also realized that LaDredge was on to something here.

We initially set up on a mid-lake mud flat devoid of any structure. Let me add that this spot was completely devoid of any fish too. To my surprise, thirty minutes later, we were in perch heaven. Since then, I and other anglers "in the know" have replicated this scenario many many times. What I have found is fish, especially those that are nomadic in nature like perch, will stop at these artificial weed lines in their travels, allowing an angler to get fish that would normally have just passed by. The lengths of these visits vary depending on the mood of the fish. Some will last minutes, others last hours.

Through trial and error (and help from the experts), I have found four ways to employ the Reel Weeds. The first is the half-moon set-up (Figure #1). This configuration works well when fishing alone. From my experience, fish seem to travel and hold on the inside of the bend. The next set-up is the inline formation (Figure #2) and works well with two anglers situated one on each side of the line. Then we have the V funnel (Figure #3). The V actually draws or funnels the fish to your location. This technique excels when an angler is fishing at the point of the V. Finally there is the shanty surround (Figure #4). With this set-up, you simply line the Reel Weeds around the perimeter of your portable or permanent ice shack. All four set-ups have their time and place.

Another trick I have learned after over-thinking a bad outing was to attach an oxygen tab, those tablets used to keep bait alive in a minnow bucket, to the bottom end of the Structure On a String. So far I have noticed that fish seem to stick around even longer when I do this.

Given a chance, Reel Weeds can work on any lake, open or hard

water, spring, summer, fall and winter. However, they truly excel on those lakes, during the frozen water period of winter, that lack adequate natural cover, or on those systems that have vast mid-lake mud flats. Wisconsin lakes that come to mind are those in the Winnebago system, including Winneconne, Poygan and Butte Des Morts.

One thing you will need to keep in mind is that Wisconsin's chapter 30 laws state that artificial structure like Reel Weeds cannot remain on a lake's bottom permanently, and if you're thinking of dropping your own structure like an old Christmas tree, think again. This practice is illegal in Wisconsin unless permitted by your local water management specialist with the Department of Natural Resources.

Need some more convincing? Go to www.reelweeds.com. This site has some awesome underwater footage taken of Reel Weeds in action. See you on the water. *W*

Jason Gaurkee has been guiding, writing and filming television shows on the waters of Wisconsin and beyond for over ten years. He can be contacted at jmgaurkee@yahoo.com or 920.851.6655.

On Wisconsin Outdoors

With the Dick Ellis Experts

Hunting, Fishing, Trapping, Travel
and Outdoor Humor

PUBLISHER/EDITOR:

Dick Ellis
ellis@onwisconsinoutdoors.com

PRODUCTION & ADVERTISING:

Karen Cluppert, Not Just Words
ads@onwisconsinoutdoors.com

Published bi-monthly by ON WISCONSIN OUTDOORS, LLC. Subscriptions are mailed first class.

©Copyright 2008 ON WISCONSIN OUTDOORS, LLC with all rights reserved. Reproduction or use without permission, of editorial, advertising or graphic content in any manner is prohibited by law.

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS: All advertising is subject to publisher's approval and acceptance without recourse. Advertisers and their agencies assume responsibility for the condition of the contents of advertising printed, and agree to indemnify the Publishers of OWO for any and all claims and expenses arising there from.

CORPORATE OFFICES LOCATED AT:

20240 West Rustic Ridge Drive
New Berlin, WI 53146

Phone: 262.549.5550

Web site: www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com

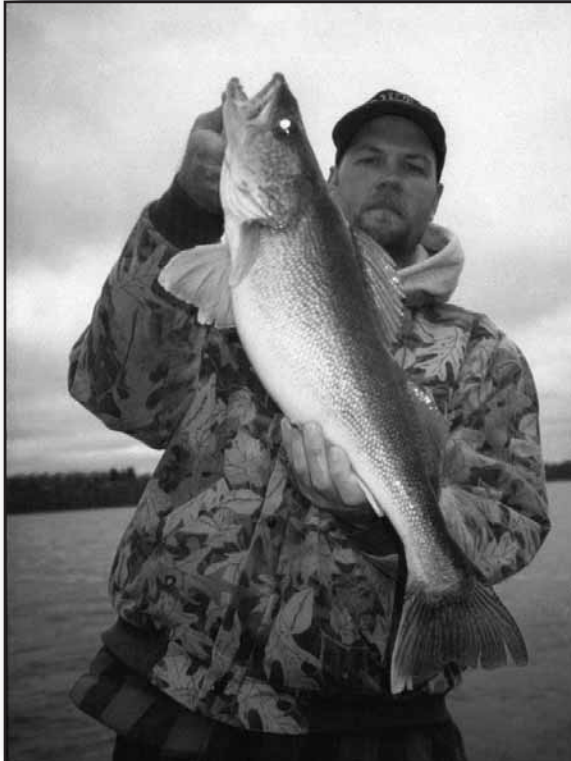
Postmaster: Send address changes to:
20240 West Rustic Ridge Drive
New Berlin, WI 53146

Jim Tostrud Wins First Place in DNR Stamp Competition



Wildlife artist Jim Tostrud of Kenosha won first place in the 2009 Great Lakes Trout and Salmon Stamp Competition with his rendering of a Seeforellen brown trout. Visit Tostrud's gallery at www.wildlifevisions.com.

DAVE SURA

SHORE BETS*Shoring up late season eyes*

Shore patrol: Dave Sura with a dandy fall walleye from shore.

When it comes to enjoying the outdoors in November and December, what usually comes to mind? For many, the answer is deer hunting. Although I spend some time chasing whitetails, I spend far more time chasing a different whitetail: the walleye. Next to spring, late fall can be the best time to target Ol' Marble Eyes because they're feeding heavily before winter.

TIMING

Now that the water is cooled down enough and lakes and rivers have turned over, walleyes will again move shallow to feed prior to winter. As with any other time of year when fishing for walleyes, low light periods offer the angler the best chance at catching them. This is especially true when fishing clear lakes such as Geneva, Mendota, and Delavan. Rarely do walleyes bite during the day from shore on these lakes or other clear water lakes like them. There are exceptions to that rule. Rivers like the Wisconsin and flowages such as Petenwell or Castle Rock have stained water due to tannic acid. Although they will bite at night, I have caught many walleyes from shore during the

day from these bodies of water. I actually prefer to fish them on sunny days. Whatever the reason, walleyes bite well under sunny conditions in stained water. Two years ago a friend and I landed more than 100 walleyes in three days, from shore. All fish were caught from a flowage during the day.

LOCATIONS

Locations vary depending on the type of water you're fishing.

Lakes: When fishing lakes, I look for several features. The first are creek entrances. These areas have slightly warmer water and current. Both temperature and current changes attract and hold baitfish, which in turn attract predators. Rocky and weedy shorelines adjacent to drop-offs are other areas to look for when fishing lakes. Walleyes

will move shallow at night in search of food. Look at a map of a lake and find these areas. Access can be an issue unless you're willing to wade long distances along the shoreline. Don't overlook wood either. Walleyes, like all fish, use wood. This is especially true when fishing flowages.

Rivers: When fishing for late-season eyes, look for traditional river structure. The most common are current breaks, holes, and dams. Wing dams, bridge pilings, and river bends all create areas with little or no current. Fish use these areas to rest and feed as bait holds here as well. Deep areas in rivers, or holes, also hold fish. River bends are excellent places to find holes. Dams, such as the one at the Dells, also hold fish. Fish will move upriver in fall as they do in spring. Dams concentrate fish as they prevent them from moving further upstream. Dams also create holes, areas of current and current breaks, all of which hold fish. As they do with lakes, creek entrances hold fall walleyes in rivers.

TACTICS AND EQUIPMENT

Tactics for catching late fall eyes are simple. Both lures and live bait can

be effective.

Lures: My personal favorite lures are stickbaits. Whether you prefer Rapala, Storm, Lucky Craft, or Dave's Kaboom baits doesn't really matter. They all work. I prefer the X-Rap to the others for one reason: castability. When fishing from shore, it can be crucial to make long casts in order to get your bait to the fish. Another good choice is swim bait. They come pre-rigged or separate; the best sizes are those in the three-to-five-inch range. These baits, like the X-Rap, are great for casting long distances.

Color options are endless. When fishing clear water, I prefer natural colors like perch, goby, and this spring's hot color, blue-black shiner. For stained water, I'll use natural colors as well as bright colors like firetiger or clown. Again, use natural colors in clear water and brighter colors in stained.

Plastic baits like the Gulp Minnow and Berkley Power Grub are other solid options. Rig these two-to-four-inch plastics on a 1/16 oz. to 1/4 oz. jig head, cast them out and work them back. Adjust your retrieve to find out what the fish want. On some days they prefer a slow jigging action and on others they might want an aggressive snap-jigging approach, so experiment with your bait. There are many color options for plastics. My favorites include pearl, chartreuse, and black, or combinations of them.

Live bait: Live bait can be an excellent option for fall walleyes. Minnows are the best choice this time of year, especially since leeches and crawlers are usually out of season. All will work if you can find them. Rigging them is simple. They can be fished under a float, off the bottom or with a jighead. How you rig them is up to you, but generally the type of structure you're fishing will help you determine which way to fish bait.

Generally I use a float when fishing lakes because I'm fishing weeds. Experiment with jigs and split shot rigs as the structure allows. All techniques work well on rivers. I'll mix it up depending on the amount of current or bottom structure of that particular section of river. When fishing at night, lighted floats are a must. If you can't see the bite, you'll miss fish or hook fish deep, possible injuring undersized fish. Any style hook will work, however I prefer

colored octopus hooks. Walleyes can be color specific so adding color to live bait can help fill the stringer. Live bait is a great choice under cold front conditions or any other time fish are in a negative or neutral mood.

When fishing from shore, keep the equipment to a minimum. I usually bring one rod. I prefer St. Croix rods in seven-to-eight-foot lengths combined with a Shimano 2500 series reel. Whatever brand you use is fine as long as it is lightweight and sensitive enough to feel the lightest bites.

Add eight-pound mono or braid to this combo, and you're ready. Be sure to tie on a mono leader when fishing braids in clear water.

Put together a small box of tackle. Include hooks, weights, jigheads, floats, stickbaits, and miscellaneous terminal tackle in the box. Place this and whatever plastics you want in a shoulder bag to make carrying it easy.

Remember that you may be walking or wading, so keep the bag light. Bring a headlamp instead of a flashlight. That'll make night fishing easier. A net isn't necessary but can aid in landing big fish. Find one that trout fishermen use that will clip to your waders or bag.

If you plan on wading, purchase a good pair of neoprene waders. They will allow you to fish longer and more comfortably than other styles, especially when the water is cold. When wading using minnows, choose a minnow bucket that can attach to your waders and drag along behind you. It's important to bring only the essentials when wading so that you're not weighed down by non-essential tackle. Personally, I don't use live bait when wading. I like being mobile and have caught plenty of fish without dragging along bait.

CONCLUSION

Remember if you're heading Up North for hunting or you just have the itch to fish and you don't want to get the boat out, fall walleye fishing from shore is a blast. If you haven't tried shoring up fall walleyes, give it shot -- you won't be disappointed! *WS*

Dave Sura has fished Wisconsin waters for over 25 years. He specializes in shore and tributary angling for perch, steelhead and salmon on Lake Michigan. He can be contacted at 262.930.8260 or steelheadsura@yahoo.com.

DENNIS RADLOFF

THE STERLING APPROACH

Beating the elements

Fall musky fishing can offer some of the greatest opportunities of the season, and while we often strive to figure out the patterns, lures, colors, locations, moon phases, and all the other "musky math," one of the most important factors in November is your clothing.

Although the "musky math" factors are very important, they will do us no good if we are wet, cold, fatigued, and hungry. If we're chased home early because we're just not comfortable, we just may miss out on the small window of the day to catch the fish of a lifetime.

One of the first things I pay attention to in fall more than any other time of the season is the weather forecast on a day-to-day basis. Knowing what you are in store for will help you plan accordingly. Another precaution I take on a daily basis is to "bring it all" no matter what the forecast may be. I like to be prepared for any condition.

Staying warm is usually one of the

biggest challenges which can often be achieved by dressing in layers. You can always take a layer off on the water if you are too warm, but you cannot put on what you don't have with you. One of the greatest articles of clothing I use in the late fall is my rain gear. Rain gear offers a great "wind break" layer of clothing and helps keep your body heat in. With most November days being cold and windy, this can be one of the greatest assets in your clothing arsenal. Another great factor to staying warm is having good cover for your head since most of your body heat lost is through the top of your head.

Keeping your head warm can be achieved with a variety of hats, hoods, and head bands. I like the Mad Bomber hats. They have a good lining and can be altered to cover just the top of the head, ears, and even face. Keeping your hands warm is another challenging task. Good gloves and hand warmers usually provide the necessary protection and warmth to make it through the

day. The final warmth factor is your feet. Keeping your feet warm and dry can be the biggest challenge. Many times cold feet are the result of getting too warm and sweating, and wet feet get cold easier. While good footwear is important, having the proper sock combination can make the difference. I usually wear two different types of socks, with the first layer being a thin under-armor style sock to draw any perspiration away, and the second layer a warm wool sock.

Staying dry is another challenge at times and this can be achieved easily with a good set of rain gear. One of the main things I find helpful is wearing short-sleeve shirts on rainy days under my rain gear. The reason for this is to keep my arms dry. When you wear long-sleeve shirts under your rain gear, eventually the rain makes contact with the wristband on the long sleeve and continues to "wick" up the arm all day. The same thing can happen at the ankle, so what I like to do is wear my Muck Boots on rainy days with my pants tucked into the boots and the rain pants over the boots which prevents any water from getting into the boot, or up the pant legs.

When you can accomplish the task of staying warm and dry you will automatically eliminate the fatigue factor. When you are cold, wet, and uncomfortable, you get fatigued faster which will eventually make you surrender, sending you home early.

One final thing I like to do is pack some warm food and/or beverage items for the day. A thermos of hot coffee, tea, or chocolate helps take the edge off of a cold day on the water. Just holding the hot cup makes a great hand warmer! When I have the time I will



Being dressed properly in the late fall keeps the angler on the water longer and ultimately puts more fish in the boat. Dennis Radloff shows off another November musky taken on the Fox River, and released.

also pack a thermos of soup, chili, or stew. There's nothing like a hot cup of "grub" on a cold day. Another great way to make it through the day is to take advantage of any pub and grill establishments on the water. Going into a warm building for a cup of soup or hot burger can be a great "halftime" treat and help rejuvenate the spirits to make it through the second half of the day when the elements get tough.

Take the extra time this year to prepare for your day on the water as it gets colder and you will put more fish in the boat just because you were able to stay out longer.

Have a great fall and good luck to all! *WR*

Captain Dennis Radloff owns and operates Sterling Guide Service. He guides on the waters of Green Bay and Southeastern Wisconsin seven days a week April through November. Contact him at www.sterlingmusky.com, or call him at 262.443.9993.

"REEL" MEN BLEED

**Are You a Wisconsin Blood Brother?
Be a Hero.
Give Blood.**

Jason Guarkee
OWO Columnist



TERRY BITZ

OUTDOOR CONVERGENCE

Targeting cold water trophy pike

November is here and hunting seasons are in full swing, but if you're looking to catch big northern pike, now is the time to be on the water. While many pike anglers are waiting for ice to arrive, you can fish now and get to these fish before the early ice crowd.

Large northern pike, those longer than about 35 inches, prefer water temperatures of about 55 degrees, which is why the really large fish seem to disappear in the warmer months. Big pike spend much of their time from midsummer until late fall sitting in deeper water, often hanging around the thermocline and suspending over the lake's deepest sections. With water temperatures now falling into the fish's preferred range, these big pike are willing to spend more time in relatively shallow water, making them easier to find and target.

My experience is that the best big pike fishing in fall will occur when water temperatures are between 44 and 55 degrees. In the southern part of Wisconsin, that tends to happen from the last two weeks of October until about the middle of November. However, if weather patterns are mild, the best fishing may not occur until the start of November and extend all the way into December.

Fish location is very lake dependent, and considering that most lakes have already turned over, the fish can be literally everywhere. However, there are a few spots I tend to focus on. Look for weedlines with access to deep water and weedlines that mix with rocks. Points located near the main lake basin, especially those with deep water nearby, are also key locations. Don't be afraid to fish deeper water out from

weedlines, especially if the bite is slow. Sometimes these fish will be hanging out at the base of the first drop.

I mostly use muskie-sized baits when chasing big pike in fall. My favorites include Bull Dawgs, Slid'n Shads, Slippery Sliders, and Squirkos. You might think these baits are too large, but muskie anglers in northern Minnesota and on Green Bay can attest to the willingness of big pike to engulf these large baits.

I also use jerkbaits such as Husky Jerks, X-Raps, and Rattling Rogues. At times, these smaller baits can be more productive than larger lures.

If you're casting muskie lures, you need tackle heavy enough to cast and retrieve these heavy baits. I use muskie rods and reels spooled with 80-pound braided line. My leader choices tend to be either solid wire or 80- to 100-pound fluorocarbon. Make no mistake, you need a leader. The large teeth in these pike can cut through braided line surprisingly quickly. If you go without a leader, you risk losing a relatively pricey bait and killing a fish.

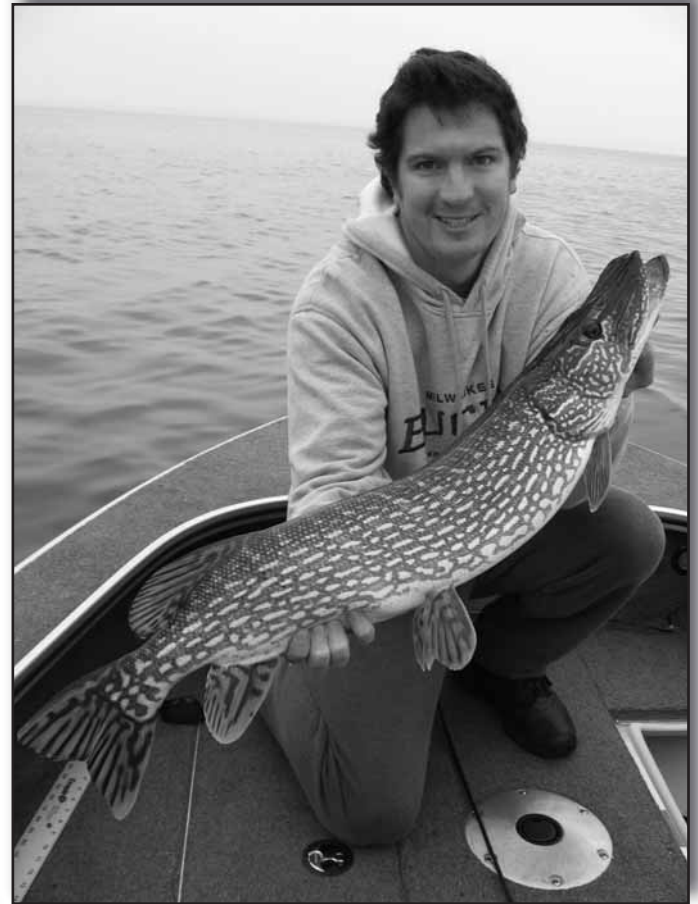
If you're using small jerkbaits, then I suggest more moderate weighted equipment spooled with lighter superline of about 30 pounds. Choose a thin-diameter wire leader of 20 to 30 pounds.

You'll also want to bring along some suckers for live bait because sometimes big fish want fresh meat instead of plastic or wood. Use suckers that are 10 to 12 inches in length and rig them up on a quick-strike rig. Quick-strike rigs allow you to set the hook as soon as the fish takes the bait. I tend to rig up two suckers: one set to run deeper under the boat and the

other set about 20 feet back under a large slip bobber. On lakes that allow trolling, you can tow the suckers behind the boat while casting to maximize your lure presentations.

Use a baitcasting reel with a bait-clicker that will warn you when a fish has grabbed the sucker. Make sure to set the reel to freespool so the fish will not feel any tension. The click, click, click of a bait-clicker is music to the ears.

While it might be tempting to keep these large pike, I recommend catch and release when you land one. Big pike are relatively rare creatures and they play a very important role in keeping smaller pike populations in check. They are literally almost too



Jeff Waltz of Watertown shows a nice pike just prior to release, taken with the author in late fall. (Terry Bitz)

valuable to keep. If allowed to, pike can grow well past 40 inches in length on many of our waters. ^{OW}

Terry Bitz is a freelance writer who resides in Pleasant Prairie, WI. He can be contacted at tbitz@wi.rr.com. His website is www.outdoorconvergence.com.



Hunting for the Right Web Developer?

Finding a Web Developer can be a lot like sitting patiently waiting out in the field or standing in your boat, ...only just not as enjoyable. The Orion Group can create your Website and take it to the point that it works for you. So come on in from the cold, Log-in or give us a call today!

*Creative and Technical Development / Quality SEO Compliancy / E-Commerce Packages / Data Base Web Development Solutions
Graphic Design and Flash / Competitive Web Hosting Plans on both Linux and MS Web Servers*

www.orionweb.net **262-820-9520**
N64 W24801 Main St Suite 104 Sussex, WI 53089

PHIL SCHWEIK

LINES FROM A HOOKSETTER

Putting together a pattern

As I drifted along with the Wisconsin River this week, casting as I have thousands of times before, a thought crossed my mind. We pattern fish, but do they pattern us? How many times have you raised a nice fish only to have it veer away at the last minute? How many times have you returned to the same spot and tried to raise that fish again only to have the musky repeat its show-and-go performance? Or maybe the fish never even gives you the thrill of another face-to-face at all.

I believe fish will often pattern us just as we try to pattern them, like an old buck that has learned to survive, patterning a hunter walking through the woods to his tree stand.

Let's risk looking at this from the fish's perspective: the hum of a boat motor increases audibly, and precedes a disturbance in the water, which precedes a close opportunity for prey wobbling by. The fish reacts to the lure, but instead of being rewarded with a meal, the strike immediately corresponds with pure shock; the fish strug-

gles against something it can't even see before being pulled from its own environment to a place where it can't even breathe.

Not to assume that a fish can think or reason, but surely it can sense, like any animal, a cause-and-effect when its repeated reaction to that wobbling meal in the same ambush spot precedes another violent displacement from the same environment in which it had been king. Like any living creature on land or water, the more it's hunted or pursued, the more it begins to evolve from predator to prey. Of course it has to eat, but maybe it moves from the spot of so much discomfort. Maybe it takes on a more "cautious demeanor" in what it stalks, when and where. Maybe it becomes conditioned to "know" that a certain shock experience corresponds with the same audible and visual impressions, like the sound of a boat motor and specific colors or movement of a lure.

You may return to the same location time after time only to find yourself without any action, at least until a



Another big Wisconsin River musky falls to Phil Schweik. The guide questions whether pressured muskies also pattern anglers. (Hooksetters)

new fish moves into the area. The fish that originally lived there has moved. She may still be in the general area but she's not on the spot, and still "remembers" or is "impressed negatively" with the lures that took her before. Maybe what had been reason for unbridled pursuit of "baitfish" becomes instinct to refrain, temporarily, from eating.

The more the fish is taken from its environment by more and more lures, the more it evolves to survive. Maybe, as the fish ages and grows and survives, even the "follow" becomes a rarity. Eventually, in attaining the status of trophy, as one example, she may be found only in deep water, eating only on occasion, and only the largest prey or at least those meals she doesn't associate with extreme discomfort. It will be hard to trick her on the same baits again, but with time, if we use a new lure and find the musky's new location, she can be fooled again.

Time and time again we try to pattern fish, and year after year we find ourselves questioning just how much we really know. Over the years, many of us have become very successful at putting fish in the boat, but that success comes from many, many hours of being on the water. We spend a lot of time concentrating on locations that held fish in the past, but we also spend an equal amount of time searching out new locations in anticipation of finding fish that might have moved off spots where we previously caught them.

One thing to remember is that just putting together a pattern is only half the battle. Once you establish a pattern, whether it's a bucktail bite over weeds, a jerkbait bite on the rocks, or maybe a bulldawg bite over deep water, the next step is to narrow it down to color.

Color is vital. Every year I seem to have better luck on one specific color over any other. One year it may be yellow, the next year it may be sucker pattern, and the next year it may be an orange bait that produces the most fish. The key is to find that most productive bait and color combination and to stick with it.

By being on the water almost every day with clients, I have a distinct advantage over most anglers; I have people running several different lures with different colors at any given time. It is a lot easier to put together a pattern when everyone in the boat is throwing something different. Once a pattern is established, I'll have the anglers in my boat throwing similar but different variations of the "one" lure I believe to be the hottest bait for the day.

Trying to pattern fish is part of this great game. But are the fish patterning us? We don't really know. We do know though, if she's not home when we knock, like she used to be, it's time to move, or to try a different approach to take her. *W*

Contact Phil Schweik and Hooksetters Fishing Services at www.hooksetters.biz.

Built Just For You

RMA
CONSTRUCTION, DESIGN
& LAND DEVELOPMENT, INC.

Building sites Available

262-367-3671
www.rmaconstruction.com

MBA
METROPOLITAN
BUILDERS
ASSOCIATION

TODD BOHM

RETURNING TO OUR ROOTS

Fall beaver trapping

Some of my favorite memories growing up as a teenager in Central Wisconsin were trapping the many beaver ponds and streams surrounding my house. Trapping not only provided my brother and me with some extra income but also helped sharpen our outdoor skills. These outings allowed us to gain access to lands as we trapped problem beavers for landowners while finding hidden duck hunting spots and big buck hideouts.

Returning to those trapping roots over the past few years has created new memories and experiences. With the liberal trapping season available for beaver in Wisconsin, opportunities abound for the serious or weekend trapper. Beavers are not difficult animals to trap, but concentrating on two major types of sets will allow the trapper to find success.

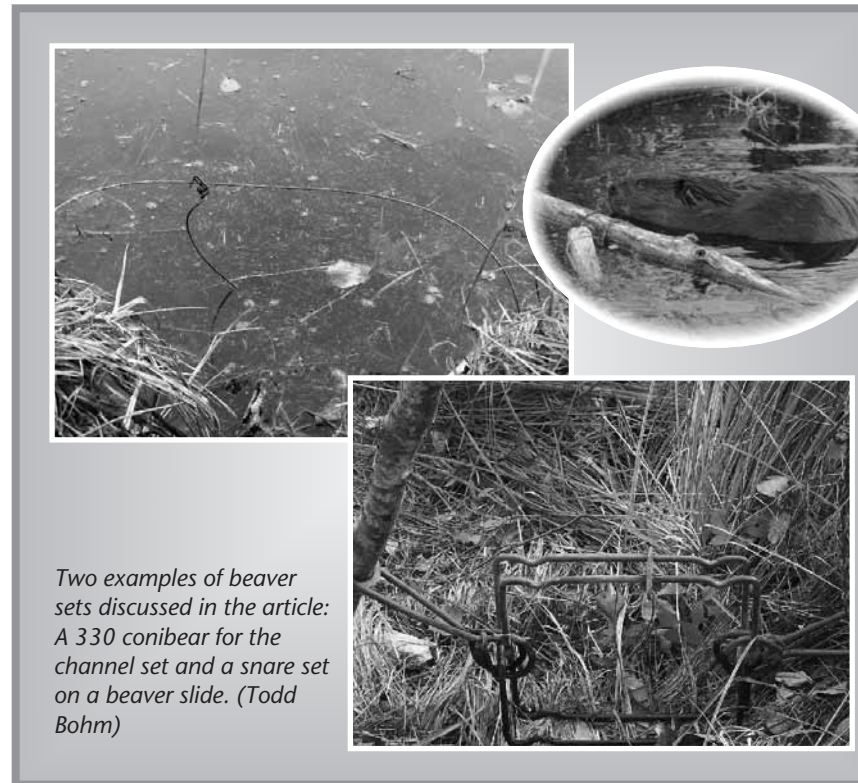
THE CHANNEL SET

My favorite set when fall trapping for beaver is the channel set. Most adult beavers in the colony will use channels like highways in the pond. Channels can be found leading to stands of poplar that beavers cut for their winter food supply. In addition, channels may be used throughout the pond for travel or to check the condition of the dam. Trapping these channels away from the lodge is the best way to eliminate catching young beavers and to avoid spooking the adults in the pond. My favorite beaver trap is the 330 conibear.

When setting the channel set, I first locate the worn areas on the bottom of the channel. These areas are relatively easy to find while wading the edges of the pond. Naturally-created narrows, feeding channels, or pinch points are hot spots to place your conibear. When necessary, I lightly fence the channel to encourage the beaver to swim through the trap. Too much fencing may spook trap-wise beaver. The secret ingredient in the channel set is about eight feet of snare cable that allows the trapped beaver to swim away from the channel but not spooking the other beavers of the colony. I will use steel rebar stakes driven into the mud to secure the trap and drowning wires. Properly set, I have been able to use one or two channel sets to eradicate entire problem colonies.

THE SLIDE SET

The second set I have used in the fall to effectively trap beaver is the



Two examples of beaver sets discussed in the article: A 330 conibear for the channel set and a snare set on a beaver slide. (Todd Bohm)

slide set. There are spots where beavers are exiting the pond to travel or cut wood for the winter supply. These spots are easy to identify by the pressed-down grass and muddy trail exiting the pond. For this set, the trapper has two options for traps. I have used #4 long springs but recently switched to snares.

Snares, much lighter to carry and inexpensive, allow the trapper to make numerous sets. Prior to using

snares, trappers are encouraged to check their regulation pamphlet. When making the "slide set," the trapper must locate and secure the snare. Most often, I will use light wire or even monofilament fishing line to prop up the snare in the desired location.

Remember in Wisconsin, snares used for water trapping must be at least half-submerged. Snares are placed in the water in front of the

slide-in areas that beavers have to swim through to get out of the pond. Fencing should be used sparingly to guide beavers into the snare. I try to make the loop of the snare about 10 inches in diameter. The key is to make the snare big enough for the beaver to get its head in the loop but not so big that it can swim right through. Bumping the snare as it swims through doesn't seem to bother the beaver as I'm sure it commonly brushes against branches as it swims. Multiple snares used in the slide set can sometimes result in multiple catches. The key again when making this set is to securely anchor the snare in water deep enough to kill the beaver and not allow it to reach the shore.

Whether you are a seasoned trapper or someone interested in giving trapping a try, these two sets may help you put many beaver pelts on the stretching board. Give fall beaver trapping a try. It can be hard, cold, and wet work but the outdoor experiences are well worth it. ^{OW}

Todd Bohm is a lifetime educator and principal in the D.C. Everest School District. He is an avid fisherman and hunter who guides the waters of Central and Northern Wisconsin specializing in all species of fish including trout. He can be reached through Wisconsin Angling Adventures. Contact Todd at 715.297.7573 or at www.wisconsinanglingadventures.com.

Advertise here
where a few bucks
turn into big bucks.

Contact
jason@onwisconsinoutdoors.com
www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com



GARY ENGBERG

GARY ENGBERG OUTDOORS*Muskies on the Lower Wisconsin River*

The Lower Wisconsin State Riverway (LWR) was created in 1989 by the State of Wisconsin to protect and preserve the scenic beauty and natural character of the Wisconsin River valley, to manage the area's resources for the benefit of the state's residents, and to provide a quality public recreation area.

The Wisconsin River flows unimpeded by any man-made structures for 92.3 miles from the Prairie du Sac dam downriver to its mouth at the Mississippi River. Many anglers have already put away their boats or are out hunting, so you rarely have any competition this time of year. Often, you'll have the river to yourself.

The Lower Wisconsin River has a good population of muskies that can be found anywhere from the dam and its tailrace area close to the dam downriver to the Highway 12 bridge and the mouth of Second River. These muskies aren't stocked in the river and have either come from Lake Wisconsin (on the other side of the dam) or up from the Mississippi River. My guess is that they came from muskies stocked in Lake Wisconsin and somehow made their way through the dam and the turbines. I've caught muskies in the Wisconsin River for years and their numbers seem to be increasing with possible natural reproduction.

I recently had a conversation at the VFW boat landing just below the prairie dam with Sauk County Warden John Buss, who just happens to be a muskie fisherman. Buss commented that the Wisconsin River had been producing muskies all year with numerous fish in the low 40-inch

range and some bigger. The minimum size on the river is 34 inches.

If you intend to fish the Wisconsin River for muskies, the best place to launch your boat is at the VFW Park in Prairie du Sac. The park is located past the Highway 60 bridge off Water Street. Turn right at the VFW sign and go down the hill to the park. The parking fee is only \$5.00 and you can see the dam from the launch. There are campsites available for \$12.00 a night, on the river and with a fire-pit. So for less than \$20.00 you can have a campsite, launch your boat, be close to the dam and within a few miles of all the good fishing.

Slowly motor your boat toward the dam and stay in the channel because the river can be low in the



Guide Gary Engberg prepares to release another musky on the Lower Wisconsin River. (Engberg Files)

the gizzard shad. This means that silver/black and white/black are the colors to start your river fishing with. Other colors to use are perch, orange/black, and blue/white. The best blade colors I've found over the years are silver, gold, and copper.

The east shore right below the dam is a hot spot for muskies with a

fall. Then, put down your trolling motor and work the east and west sides of the dam casting bucktails, jerkbaits, and shallow-running crankbaits. Baits that have worked well for me include Smity baits, Bucher Depth Raiders, and Grandma baits. The best colors seem to be consistent with the river's main forage fish,

back eddy along this 150-yard stretch. There are large numbers of shad and rough fish that congregate in the more-than-35-feet-deep scour hole right below the dam's main gates. This deep water gives muskie a place to rest after feeding on shad on the shoreline feeding flats.

This time of the year the temperature of river water is still in the 50's, and rivers with their moving water and current don't experience turnover. The Wisconsin River has abundant wood, rocks, islands, and sand bars which all provide ample structure for big muskies. They have it all in the dam area: forage, deep water, and structure. I recommend that you work both sides of the river to the Highway 12 bridge and then work your way casting the other shoreline back to the dam area. Drifting and casting works now with the low flow and current, but working off a bow or transom trolling motor is the best way to go if you keep casting while moving.

Fall is a time of year when live bait can be the key to catching fish. When casting, make sure to put a sucker out near your boat. Quick-set rigs are now the way to go because they allow you to set the hook quickly and not gut-hook and kill a fish.

Give the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway a chance next time you're looking for a new place to fish musky. *W*

Contact Gary Engberg Outdoors at 608.795.4208 or gengberg@chorus.net. Or visit www.garyengbergoutdoors.com.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

Up to six lines for \$25 - Mail Check or Money Order with your ad to OWO, 20240 W. Rustic Ridge Drive, New Berlin, WI 53146

TAXIDERMY MOUNTS**Bucky the Badger Taxidermy Mounts!**

Kirk Dressel of Preserving The Memory Taxidermy in Baldwin, WI has access to badgers, legally harvested in western states, for taxidermy purposes. Mounted animals could

be dressed in a UW-Madison "Bucky The Badger" apparel upon request. Two different species of badger, and either standing or lay-down versions are available. Call for prices. Legal paperwork is included with mounts. Will ship finished mounts at an extra cost. Call: (715) 688-4044.

VEHICLES

2002 XT225 YAMAHA DUAL SPORT MOTORCYCLE, 1900 miles, electric start, very good condition, great gas mileage, asking \$2200 OBO. Menomonee Falls. Call (262) 844-2801.



DAN MOERICKE

AN "UP NORT" REPORT*Fish Psychology 101: How to trip their trigger*

A lot has been written about finding the magic lure or secret presentation that will trigger a fish to strike. Most of these tips and tactics tend to focus on appealing to a fish's sense of sight and/or smell: lure color, speed of retrieve, special scent, flutter, secret bait... yada, yada, yada.

Sitting around the campfire the other night, cold Leinie's Oktoberfest in hand, I started reflecting on the fact that there just might be a whole other level of fish awareness that is failing to be addressed by all of these pedestrian methods of getting fish to hit.

What the hot-shot experts seem to be missing is the psychological aspect to fishing...the fact that fish have a sixth sense about what's going on in the boat floating above their noggins. Over the years, I've compiled a pretty comprehensive list of tactics that can trigger a fish to strike when all the flash, glitz, and gimmicks would otherwise fail. While I'm somewhat reluctant to share these for fear of the resulting damage to the resource, it would be selfish to keep them all to myself.

CALLING "LAST CAST"

Fish can have a remarkable resistance to even the most skillfully presented lures when they know that time is on their side. Loudly announcing "LAST CAST" before departing from a

fishing spot, however, puts them on alert that, if they're going to strike, it had better be now. This limited-time-offer ploy nearly always results in a strike. (Car salesmen have been doing this for years.) In the rare instance when "last cast" doesn't work, following it up with the "bonus cast" and "double-bonus cast" declaration will often seal the deal.

"OUT OF BAIT"

This is a variation of the last cast scheme. Announcing loudly that you

EQUIPMENT MALFUNCTION

This one is so obvious that it's amazing that more hasn't been written about it. As kids, all we ever used were the old Zebco spincast reels. We almost never had any line issues and had to work like dogs for every strike.

Since switching to open-face spinning reels, I've found I can nearly always trigger a strike by creating some sort of bird's nest with the line. This takes less practice than you might think. Almost anyone can do it. Once you've done it, fish will immediately

fellow angler, or in another line. They all work.

EATING/DRINKING

You can fish with laser-like focus for hours and catch nothing, but you know that the second you put your rod down to crack a beer or grab a sandwich, you will have a strike -- and probably miss it. Sometimes just crinkling a candy bar wrapper can trigger a strike. This is a great decoy maneuver.

DOGS IN THE BOAT


We've all seen the guys with their dogs beside them in the boat. Rover didn't just come along because the guy has no friends. This is pure strategy. Bringing your dog along in the boat increases exponentially your chances of an equipment snafu...if not before the strike, certainly during the fish playing/netting/landing process. My black lab Cleo has launched herself into the lake numerous times during my battles with fish. She has yet to catch any, but her leaps have resulted in me "releasing" a few.

OTHER ROD SYNDROME

Using multiple rods is crucial to triggering strikes from fish. Invariably, the strike occurs on the rod you do not have in your hands at the time. In addition, if you have several identical rod/reel setups going, you'll end up grabbing the wrong rod when a bobber submerges. Fish love this. This tactic also gives you the opportunity to tangle multiple lines together (see Equipment Malfunction above).

NATURE'S CALL

Many anglers make the mistake of reeling in their bait prior to taking care of business when nature calls. Big mistake. Answering nature's call is the sure-fire strike trigger. It's a 99 % certainty that any fish in a three-cast radius will practically swim out of its scales to hit your bait when you're preoccupied in this manner.

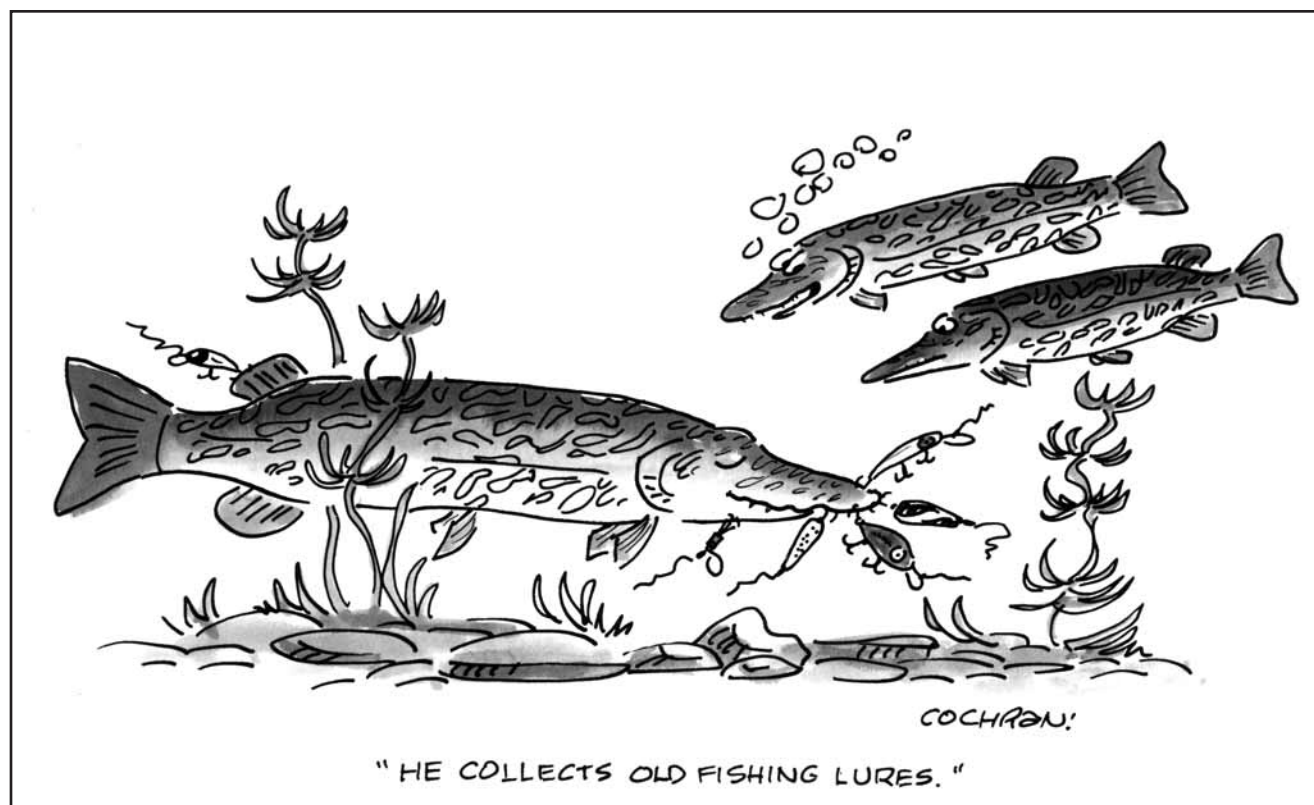
If the above list doesn't trigger a strike, then they're just not biting. Grab a cold Leinie's and re-spool your reels. Just sayin'. 

"I've compiled a pretty comprehensive list of tactics that can trigger a fish to strike when all the flash, glitz, and gimmicks would otherwise fail..."

only have one minnow/leech/crawler/etc. remaining frequently punches a fish's greed button and causes him to hit with abandon for fear that a competitor might beat him to it.

sense this sort of cluster and seize upon the opportunity to steal your bait.

Variations of this include getting your line wrapped around your trolling motor, transducer, boat cleat,



Dan Moericke is an avid and successful Wisconsin fisherman from Wausau and an occasional guest on outdoor fishing programs. On the water, he always tells us some version of the truth.

The Deer Stand Alternative

A case for ground blinds

By William F. Kendy

It's pretty much a given...tree stand hunters have a better chance of seeing deer than ground hunters. Since they're higher, they have a better field of view. If they remove hindering branches and if they clear shooting lanes, they'll be more aware of movement and can spot a deer before a hunter in a ground blind could see one.

Having said that, tree stand hunting isn't for everyone. Hunters may be apprehensive about heights, a bit overweight, have a physical problem like weak ankles or a bad back, or they may simply want to hunt with another person. If so, a portable blind may be just the ticket. Or a hunter can take advantage of what Mother Nature has to offer in terms of cover and embellish it a bit. Just because you're hunting deer "eyeball to eyeball" doesn't mean you won't be successful. In fact, if you're hunting from the ground, you're not dependent on having an appropriate tree in the right spot to hang from.

I'm not going to address commercial or handcrafted permanent blinds in this article. There are a

ton of them on the market, ranging from the inexpensive to the luxurious. And any industrious land owner, with some plywood, two-by-fours and a little bit of time can build his own hunting shacks. This article is about hunting from portable blinds and using what the terrain has to offer.

Hunting from ground blinds isn't a new thing...it dates back to prehistoric times. Cavemen discovered they could be more successful ambushing food for the tribe if they hid behind a fallen tree or boulder or in a clump of tall grass. Native American Indians used brush, foliage or even animal skins to cover themselves as they snuck up on their prey. Even though that's really stalking, it's probably the first example of a portable ground blind and taking advantage of the terrain.

"Because of the mobility and maneuverability of portable ground blinds, a hunter has access to any type of ground," says Bill Wiesner, president of Full Force Bows, author, seminar speaker and recognized deer hunter. "If you're just hunting from a tree stand, you're limited to timber and finding the right tree to use. If



(Bill Kende)

there isn't an appropriate tree where deer are patterned, you're out of luck."

Then there's the debate about scent. Some hunters maintain that because they're higher up in a tree stand, some of their scent will rise, alerting and alarming fewer deer. Other tree stand hunters say that because they're in "the air," their scent can be distributed in all directions and even downward, depending on the temperature and wind currents. Of course, if you're hunting on public land on opening day, "elbow to elbow" with other orange-coated hunters, human scent is everywhere.

Wiesner believes that when it comes to scent alerting deer, ground blind hunters aren't at a disadvantage. "Scent is less of an issue if a hunter is in a portable ground blind because the blind itself blocks its dispersal, while in a tree stand you're at the mercy of whichever way the wind is blowing," he says. "Since scent rises in the morning and sinks in the evening, it makes sense to hunt high ground early and lowland late. But it depends on the pattern of the deer movements."

Okay...you're sold on hunting on the ground from a blind. What sort of portable blind should you hunt out of? Just as people come in all shapes and sizes, so do portable blinds. There are even blinds that incorporate a chair...you just sit down and pull the blind over you. That's really portable.

According to Wiesner, there are some things hunters should consider

when shopping for a portable blind:

- Look for mobility of the blind and ease of transport. Weight is a factor.
- Check for ease of putting up the blind. When it's pitch black in the morning, you need to be able to pop up the blind without making so much noise that you spook every deer in the county.
- Make sure the material is a tight fit. If there is a slight breeze, you don't want your blind walls flapping in the wind.
- If possible, buy a blind with a black interior because a hunter won't show up as easily.
- Depending on your physical size, buy a blind with a door that is large enough to allow you to get in and out with a minimum of effort and racket.

Wiesner has three other tips for portable ground blind hunters: "Bowhunters need to make sure that they practice shooting out of the blind sitting down," he says. "It's a lot different than taking a shot from a tree blind."

"Make sure that the window opposite of the one you're shooting out of is closed. I guarantee that if it isn't, the deer will see your silhouette."

"Have a comfortable chair so you're not fidgeting around and making noise. I have a swivel chair that easily allows me to pivot around and get into shooting position quietly without a lot of movement."

There is no lack of ground blind



"I'M NOT BLOWING A GRUNT CALL. I'M SICK!"

Continued on page 27

DICK HENSKE

GOLDEN ROADS*This old dog can hunt*

Everyone has their dog stories and it's time to talk about old Maggie. She's an English setter who has hunted it all. Her rewards for thousands of hours in the field have been retrieves too numerous to even begin to try to estimate. Her field badges, though, include many scars. Our wonder dog at age 10 is worn out and arthritic.

When we ordered Maggie from Good-Going Kennels in Baldwin, Wisconsin, Jason, the owner, told us she'd be a great hunter and a wonderful family pet. She indeed has been both. What he didn't tell us was that she would become a hunting addict. Fur or feather, her motto is, "Get um!" In hunting season she's curled up in the closet where the gun is kept, waiting to go. I couldn't leave without her even if I wanted to.

Why would I? Maggie does have some bad habits such as selective hearing and a tendency to swim after geese, ducks, or loons all over the lake during summer months. But each fall she's a great pointer and retriever with

a great nose. If I shoot a bird, she finds it. She's hunted the Dakotas, Canada, Iowa, Nebraska, and Missouri. We've had a great run. Her fun but tough life has left her hindquarters still and sore.

Our vet recommended a prescription dog food plus two medicines that help keep Maggie going. She can handle two hours of hunting each and every day in the northern forests close to our home in Manitowish Waters. Then she needs to be lifted in and out of the truck and she sleeps the rest of the day. Our son Steve and daughter-in-law care for Maggie each winter while we fish and enjoy the Florida sunshine.

I've owned six Irish setters and one white English setter in my life. How lucky I am! How lucky? The good news is that my "wonderful" wife has given the go-ahead for "one more dog." This means more hair, paw prints and dog messes to deal with. But it also means more of our endless chases of grouse, pheasants and waterfowl.



Another English Setter will join Maggie and retired principal Dick Henske in the field next year. Before Maggie, Henske hunted grouse and pheasants in Wisconsin and western states over four decades with five Irish setters. (Dick Ellis)

... HISTORICAL WISCONSIN ...

from the archives of *The Echo*



Pete Turney, Chris, Bill, Tim and Gregg Lee, and Ken Koosmann stood in front of the "buck pole" over two decades ago at their deer hunting camp near Mellen. The "old-timer" of the group, Bill Lee, has hunted northern Wisconsin his entire hunting career, and is a WWII veteran. (Photo by Jeff Peters)

This fall, just two weeks into the season as this is written, Maggie has already retrieved more than a dozen grouse and woodcock. On a trip to North Dakota duck hunting with our regular group of old timers, she also retrieved more than 50 ducks. Not bad for an old dog on limited time duty.

I called Jason at Good-Going Kennels and ordered a female English setter that has the same Ryman breeding lines that Maggie came from. Next year you'll read stories about that

pup's development as Maggie and I train her.

Remember to make extra time to enjoy the wonderful outdoor experiences this state has to offer. Keep the rust out! *W*

Retired principal Dick Henske of Manitowish Waters hunts and fishes Wisconsin, Canada and the western states. Rarely does he miss a day in the field.



RAY HOWELL

KICKING BEAR*Full circle*

Growing up on the wrong side of the tracks, having to live in foster care, and always doing farm work never allowed me the freedom to get into the outdoors. Being at school and listening to other kids talk about their outings with their families was like a nightmare to me. I couldn't figure out why I wasn't lucky enough to have a family to do things with. I lived my boyhood dreams through my imagination while reading hunting magazines; dreamed about hunting all over the world with a bow. But when a mentor

me that if deer can't see, hear, or smell you, you've got them at a serious disadvantage.

I started using products from Wildlife Research Center®. With that change, even if the wind shifted unpredictably when I put myself in the right place at the "golden hour," I was still able to place the shot without being detected by a wary buck. Wildlife Research Center® products became a permanent part of my "game bag" as I chased my dreams and a multitude of trophy animals all over the world.

to become bored with anything when they're not successful.

I was invited many years ago by the Wildlife Research Center® team to be involved with their pro staff because of the hunting success I've had in the field while using their products. WRC owners John and Brian Burgeson are perfectionists at everything they do. I've always felt very fortunate to be a part of their team because their products give me the confidence I need to outwit my prey.

Kicking Bear® is a program that has been growing tremendously throughout the United States. John and Brian joined Kicking Bear® several years ago and have helped develop it into the program it is today. There are thousands of under-privileged and at-risk youth who come through the Kicking Bear® camps every year. Just like I was, they are offered the opportunity to see a better way of life and to have their lives changed through a mentor, the outdoors, and the sport of archery. These campouts and shoots are an absolute life-changing experience for kids who would otherwise never have had the opportunity to be involved in God's outdoor creation. Now, their nightmares are gone—they can go back to school and tell their stories right along with the rest of the kids.

John and Brian's vision is not only to grow the outdoor sports we love and help make hunters successful in the field, but to give back to others through programs such as Kicking Bear®. Even before Kicking Bear was born, I was proud to be a member on the Wildlife Research Center® team. Now, to be involved with a company whose leadership is that of great men who care for others, that pride is greatly magnified. It's one of



Ray Howell, center with John and Brian Burgeson, owners of Wildlife Research Center. (Ray Howell)



Two days after returning from the Oregon elk hunt where he arrowed a nice bull, Ray Howell tagged this Minnesota buck gross scoring 189 on October 2nd, 2008. Howell chose his stand after catching the buck on a Predator trail camera set prior to the season. (Ray Howell)

"Kicking Bear not only helps change these young lives for the better, but it also helps prepare them properly for their own future families..."

took me hunting only four times during my high school years, he changed my life forever and helped turn those dreams into reality.

When I first began hunting white-tails more than three decades ago, for many years I went through the school of "hard knocks." There wasn't much written on the dos and don'ts of white-tail hunting. All I knew from my boyhood dreams was that I wanted to harvest one of those magnificent bucks. Many times when I was younger, I put myself into the right location or funnel only to have the wind shift at just the wrong time and I'd lose another opportunity for that dream come true. My in-the-field learning experiences taught

Throughout the years I've been involved with mentoring youth in the outdoors, and I've found that Scent Killer 99 is also the perfect kids' tool for success. It doesn't matter what they're wearing—spray them down and the human odor is gone!

Kicking Bear® has developed into a nation-wide program geared toward getting kids into the outdoors by introducing them to mentors. Kicking Bear not only helps change these young lives for the better, but it also helps prepare them properly for their own future families. Being successful in the field at a young age is an important key to ensuring they become long-term hunters. It doesn't take kids very long

the most incredibly humbling feelings I've ever had. Scent Killer may be 99%, but the Wildlife Research Center® team is right from the heart of the fire—they're 100% -- the real deal!

John and Brian and the Wildlife Research Center® team know how to help make you successful in the field no matter what you're hunting. More important, they're also some of the greatest "fishing" partners I'll ever have. Matthew 4:19 *W*

Recently honored by Outdoor Life, Ray Howell is founder of Kicking Bear, a national organization dedicated to enriching the lives of troubled and at-risk young people through outdoor experiences. Connect with www.kickingbear.org.



Ray Howell tagged this buck during the 2007 Wisconsin archery season. Howell learned the importance of proper cover scents while learning to hunt and many failures often associated with changing wind direction. (Ray Howell)

Proven!

**100% Money-Back
Guaranteed!**

**Continues to
Work for Days
After Drying!**

Genuine Scent Killer®
Spray it on your clothes
to kill human & other odors!

Look for the
99%

Odorless Formula
If you can smell it, a deer
can smell it!

WILDLIFE
RESEARCH CENTER®
America's Top Brand®



www.wildlife.com

Quart/Combo with filled 12 OZ field bottle - shown



QUAD FAIR 2008

STORE HOURS

SUN - 10AM - 5PM
SAT - 9AM - 6PM
FRI - 9AM - 8PM

QUADFAIR IS HERE.
But we're guessing you already knew that.

It's the deal you've been waiting for all year.

Right now is the best time to score the lowest financing* of the year on Suzuki's complete lineup of KingQuad and sport ATVs. Plus, you'll get a free Warn Winch† with every KingQuad purchase. But hurry, an offer this tempting won't last long and you won't find it anywhere except your local Suzuki dealer.



Black River Power Sports
Black River Falls, WI 54615-5463
715/284-2600

Pro Motorsports
Fond Du Lac, WI 54937-9444
920-922-8521
ProMotorsportsSuzuki.com

T. A. Motorsports
Francis Creek, WI 54214-0244
920/682-1284
TAMotorsports.com

Wild River Sports Cycle
Grantsburg, WI 54840-8505
715/463-2548
WildRiverSportCycle.com

Ken's Sports
Kaukauna, WI 54130-9327
920/788-0220

Steiger Suzuki
La Crosse, WI 54601-7984
608/788-4514
SteigerPowersports.net

Sportland 2
Oak Creek, WI 53154-1816
414/764-2800
Sportland2.com

Ecklund Motorsports and Marine
Oshkosh, WI 54901-1046
920/233-3313

Bearpaw Motorsports
Rice Lake, WI 54868-1379
715/234-8174
BearPawMotorsports.com

Southeast Sales Corp
Milwaukee, WI 53223-5004
414/463-2540
SoutheastSales.com

Northwoods Worknsportz
ATV Only
Minocqua, WI 54548-9035
715/356-5400
WorkNSportzSuzuki.com

Leisure Time Sports
Tomah, WI 54660-1705
608/372-5939
LeisureTimeSportsTomah.com

Schauer Power Center
Union Grove, WI 53182-0186
262/878-3344

Action Power Sports
Waukesha, WI 53189-7928
262/547-3088
ActionPS.COM

Glenn Curtiss Motorsports
West Bend, WI 53095-9107
262/338-3684
GCMsport.com

Country Sports
WI Rapids, WI 54494-8558
715/325-5381
CountrySportsInc.com



Official
Motorcycle &
ATV of
ROAD AMERICA *Road Racing at its Best®*

Offer available on select models. Financing available on approved credit. Offer subject to change. Sweepstakes ends 11/30/08. Offer ends 12/31/08. Warn Winch offer applies only to new, unregistered KingQuads, Vinson and Eiger models. Good while supplies last. Installation not included. See dealer for details. Suzuki ATVs with an engine size of 90cc or over may be used only by those aged 16 and older. Suzuki highly recommends that all ATV riders take a training course. We'll even pay for it. For safety and training course information, see your dealer or call the SVIA at 1-800-852-5344. ATVs can be hazardous to operate. For your safety, always wear a helmet, eye protection and protective clothing. Always avoid paved surfaces. Never ride on public roads. Never carry passengers or engage in stunt riding. Never ride under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. Avoid excessive speed. "Tread Lightly®" on public and private land. Suzuki, the "S" logo, and Suzuki model and product names are Suzuki trademarks or ®. © American Suzuki Motor Corporation 2008

SUZUKI MOTOR CORP.

NOTHING LIKE AN ORIGINAL*Suzuki celebrates 25 years of ATV manufacturing*

The rumors began in mid-1982, and the spy photos appeared in the major ATV magazines shortly after. Shocking at the time, the photos showed – as the rumors hinted – an off-road vehicle with a fourth wheel. In days dominated by three-wheelers, Suzuki Motor Corp. decided to change the game. And by 1983, the Suzuki LT125 4x6 became a reality. The 4-wheeler was born.

It was an immediate hit with *Dirt Wheels* magazine. “It’s much more stable than a 3-wheeler, and therefore easier to ride. You don’t have to remember any complicated lean this way, lean that way techniques — just turn the bars... if you’ve ridden your buddy’s 3-wheeler and didn’t like the

steer, climbs hills better, brakes a little better and most of all, proves that there certainly is a growing market for 4-wheeled ATVs.” To assist with its recoil starting, the LT185 featured an industry-first handlebar-mounted compression release.

A big step for Suzuki in 1987 came in the form of its first 4-wheel-drive Quadrunner, the LT-4WD (\$3,298). This 246cc machine was a groundbreaking model in several ways, especially for its industry-first independent rear suspension and highly versatile transmission, which offered selectable two-wheel/four-wheel drive modes, plus a three-speed subtransmission (high, low and super-low ranges) which worked

that would eventually grow into the renowned Suzuki KingQuad family.

THE KING IS BORN

The 90s saw the creation of one of Suzuki’s most notable ATVs, and one upon which Suzuki is building its current 4x4 model dominance: the 1991 King Quad. Engineers started with the Suzuki LT-4WD – introduced in 1987 – and added a number of features to make this new ATV the King of 4-wheelers. Engine displacement was increased from 246cc to 280cc (that was a big engine at the time), and a locking front differential was added. The King Quad also got larger tires — 24 inches in front

a level of sport-utility performance that could match the well-known Suzuki standards. The all-new LT-A700X KingQuad — with an industry-first electronic fuel-injection system — made its debut in 2005. Upon its release, this ATV earned more “ATV of the Year” accolades than any single model in recent memory. It delivered a level of performance and innovation that set it as one of the most important products in Suzuki’s history.

The KingQuad helped prove that Suzuki fuel injection – known for delivering championship-winning performance to Suzuki motorcycle roadracers for many years – could fuel ATVs with strong and reliable performance. The



1991 King Quad



LT-125

way it handled... try one of the LT125s down at your local Suzuki shop. It’s exactly what you’ve been looking for.” The suggested retail price for this unit was \$1,188. And by the end of 1983, Suzuki had sold more than 25,000 LT125 4-wheelers, an amazing tally in the machine’s first year. Why was it called “LT125 4x6?” This 125cc four-stroke had four wheels and six gears – five forward plus reverse.

The first four-wheeler quickly began to change the off-road vehicle industry. And Suzuki wasted no time up front. In 1984, the manufacturer increased the model line with the LT185 (MSRP \$1,579). This was the first ATV with a double A-arm front suspension system. According to 3Wheeling, “...the new 185 is a much better recreational vehicle than [the LT125]. It’s easier to

with its five-speed gearbox to provide a total of 15 gearing choices (plus reverse).

To top things off, it also offered the first front differential lock – a feature found today on the most full-featured ATVs. “The bike’s suspension and handling are super, and the addition of a fully independent rear end reduced much of the usual body roll we encounter picking through rocks and off-camber terrain,” said *ATV Sports*. “It has an exceptional amount of ability due to its unique transmission setup and has a torquey powerplant to make them all work.” This model would be the seed

“In 25 years on four wheels, Suzuki delivered a number of innovations ... not the least of which is the 4-wheeler itself.”

and 25 inches in back — plus a standard oil cooler, all for a suggested retail price of \$4,699.

Suzuki’s original King Quad ruled the utility ranks for many years following its debut in 1991. The manufacturer did eventually pull this King Quad from its lineup in 2003.

Bringing the KingQuad name back into action was an important step for Suzuki. The original KingQuad set a very high standard for utility performance and overall versatility. A new KingQuad would have to deliver equally impressive utility strengths, plus

sport ATV segment was the next recipient. In 2007, Suzuki began its expansion of the KingQuad family with the new LT-A450X KingQuad. Other new Suzuki KingQuad ATVs followed right behind the 450 – including the KingQuad 400 series of ATVs, as well as the 2009 Suzuki KingQuad 500 featuring electronic power steering.

FIRST ON 4 – AND MORE

In 25 years on four wheels, Suzuki delivered a number of innovations – from the first youth ATV to the first locking front differential – not the least of which is the 4-wheeler itself. This should be no surprise, considering the manufacturer’s innovative motorcycle technology. Suzuki will surely continue to deliver new performance capabilities in the years ahead.

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

DICK ELLIS

ON WISCONSIN OUTDOORS

If I were you ...

It would be interesting to know how many decisions unrelated to pulling the trigger or not, are made on Wisconsin deer stands. We spend hours, days, weeks, months, years, decades...lifetimes... in those stands. Some of us plod to the same permanent stands year after year, on the ground or in the air. It's familiar. We like it. We've built memories there.

Some of us carry our stands in on our back, and we have over time come to call a hundred trees home for at least a few cold hours over a Wisconsin fall or winter. Some times we guess right, and we remember too, mostly the ambushes that have led to special bucks down. But, on stand we think about more than just deer. Sometimes, we think about what's coming next on the water or in the fields of this great outdoor state of Wisconsin.

My wife Lori, set a Lone Wolf and new safety harness in front of me on Christmas morning two years ago. The maker of the old plywood climber I had carried to carefully-selected trees far back in northern Wisconsin over 20 years had gone out of business a decade before. I reluctantly hung up the ancient and battered stand; this wing nut not matching that one anymore and the long, black blood streak dried on plywood reminding me that I had not been so careful one afternoon as a young man on stand with a very sharp broadhead.

There are photos of me and the stand in old cabin albums without gray hair. It reminds me that, although I feel like 30, I am 50. And so now, not only do I plan the trips ahead, I remember trips already taken. I say often that I am the only non-expert in this Ellis Experts brigade of OWO writers who



This old treestand and old bow helped build memories for the author. (John Ellis)

tell you how to catch this or how to tag that. I am a reporter, an outdoor columnist armed with a camera more often than a gun, a bow or rod, and I met these boys in the field across the decades. They live, hunt and fish from Superior to the Illinois border. They have all been my "sources of expertise". These professional relationships very quickly deteriorated into deep friendships.

I am not a field expert. But I do have something that can help you now, as we immerse ourselves in another November and December. Literally, I have written more than 1,000 columns from the fields of Wisconsin. More

than 20 years writing a column for Wisconsin newspapers, 52 weeks annually. You do the math. With those columns are about 5,000 corresponding Wisconsin field photos tucked safely away.

If I were you, this November and December, this is what I would do....

DEER

Wisconsin deer hunting is rooted in tradition and heritage, and I'm not going to

waste much of your time here. You already know where you're going to be with a bow when the bucks are rutting and you know where you're going to be when first light breaks opening morning November 20.

It's never easy to get permission to hunt private land. But don't be afraid to hunt some of the 6.5 million acres of Wisconsin's public land with a bow. I cut my teeth and tagged my first deer with a bow in the Kettle Moraine northern unit. I have had close encounters with huge bucks on public land. On October 14, I saw the big buck taken with a bow by my friend Darren Behling in the Kettle Moraine southern unit. If you do your homework you're not going to find another hunter behind every tree.

Because I did learn on public land, when you gun hunt...run young man, run to the Wisconsin north woods. Find the big forest, learn it, and be patient. Mr. Big is out there. You will tag him with time. But I clearly remember the sun coming up on the northern unit of Kettle Moraine as a 15 year old gun hunter.

Five other hunters were on the same ridge, an average of 50 yards apart. When a doe stepped out, the guns shifting left and lowering on that animal was like some military exercise. Run....

PHEASANT

58,000 "put and take" pheasants raised at the state game farm in Poynette specifically to provide hunting opportunities were stocked on 71 public hunting grounds statewide throughout the 2007 season. That annual effort does provide great opportunity for bird hunting and dog work, as is the opportunity provided at Wisconsin's privately owned game farms. I've done it all with friends and dogs. But, if I were you....

Chase Wisconsin's wild birds. It is not necessary to go west for great wild pheasant hunting. Concentrate on the counties of Wisconsin's southwest. But you will also find excellent hunting as far northwest as the Eau Claire-Hudson region and as far east as the Fond du Lac-Oshkosh region. It is necessary to do your home work, and maintain rela-

tionships with landowners by taking proper care of the land and leaving proper thank you gifts as a token of appreciation for their generosity.

Connect with the DNR and find out where the wild birds were stocked after the most important ingredient, habitat, was put into place over the years. Drive and look for that habitat. It doesn't need to be endless tracks of grasslands. It can be crops, brushy hedges with migrating "spillover" pheasants or the offspring of first birds from original stocking efforts. When



In 2005, Charlie Wolden could tell you about productive wild pheasant hunting in Wisconsin northwest. This bird was taken in Burnett County. (Dick Ellis)

you find it, very often you will also see birds eating gravel on side farm roads. I've been there and done this. I started with no special connections. Ask permission. If you get a "no", move on. When you get the "yes", take care of that farmer.

RUFFED GROUSE

I was introduced more than 30 years ago to ruffed grouse hunting in Sauk County. The hunting was fabulous in the rolling hill and farmland of southern Wisconsin. It was not unusual to have 30 flushes on public land during one day of hunting. As a 15 year old on my first day ever of grouse hunting I put three birds in the game bag, something I have not equaled since. Largely due to the loss of undergrowth habitat coinciding with the natural aging of prime grouse forest and urban sprawl, that southern heyday is long gone.

It's a simple reality; head to the big woods of Wisconsin's northland to find

Continued on page 20



Dan Potrykus of Boulder Junction knows the payoffs that can come from hunting public terrain in Wisconsin's north country. (Dick Ellis)

TOM CARPENTER

BADGER BIRDS*Downy woodpecker*

Because its body is half tail, downy woodpeckers look bigger than they are. With a body sized like a sparrow but leaner, this tiny hunter works his way up a tree trunk using tail as prop and balance as he pecks, prods, pokes and probes for insects and larvae. Downies grace backyards, parks, gardens and feeders in all seasons, across Wisconsin. They also entertain lonely deer hunters as we wait on stand. Downies are our most common woodpecker, but they are uniquely handsome and interesting.

Look for a striking black and white bird: black wings spotted with white, a white back, creamy belly, and white stripes above and below the eye. Males have a red nape (back of the neck).

Listen for the downy's descending, rattling slur of notes. They also call "pik" when feeding.

Feed downies sunflowers seeds. A better attractor is suet, but best of all is real, unrendered fat (such as the trimmings from butchering your deer). Offer either in a hanging suet basket or bag.

Spare dead trees or snags on your property. Downies love the associated insect life, larvae and eggs found there.

Tell downy woodpeckers apart from look-alike hairy woodpeckers by size (downies are much smaller) and bill (a downy's is much slimmer).

Did you know that a downy woodpecker sports four toes? And that two face forward and two backward? This helps him acrobatically cling to tree trunks and feeders. *W*



TOM CARPENTER

CUB'S CORNER*Rabbit hunt means pure and simple fun*

We all know the statistics on small game hunting. In Wisconsin, as in the rest of the country, participation is declining. It's not so much that kids aren't hunting anymore. In fact, I am heartily impressed by the numbers of young hunters I see hitting the woods, fields and marshes these days. Special youth hunts for deer, turkeys and waterfowl are no doubt part of the draw.

But what I don't see is much small game hunting going on among the young hunters. In particular, rabbits just don't seem to make the radar screen anymore. And that's too bad. They're abundant, fun to hunt, easy enough to hit, and they taste great on the wild-game dinner table.

How many of us reading this story started out with a .410, 20 gauge or .22 in our hands and a few shells or cartridges in our pocket, with cottontails on the agenda? The quarry fit our developing hunting abilities, creating the perfect training ground for bigger (but not necessarily better) things to come.

So why the shift away from small game these days? As adults, we need to take most of the blame. Sure, computer chat, electronic games, challenging academics and intense youth athletics keep our kids beyond occupied. But somehow we find a little time to take them hunting. When we do though, it's usually in pursuit of what we think is exciting or want to hunt ourselves: deer, turkeys or maybe upland birds, all of which are inherently difficult for a

beginner to hunt.

Why not set up the young hunter for success instead? Here's my suggestion. Put your own agenda aside for a day and take a kid—maybe yours, maybe someone else's—out for some good old-fashioned rabbit hunting fun. It's about as easy and simple as can be, and it's the perfect way to pass a cool November or December day. In fact, bunny hunting gets better and better as a little snow falls and the weather gets colder. It's also a great way to get out in the field later in winter, when most other hunting is just a memory.

Equipping the young hunter is simple. Any old shotgun will do, but my favorite for young hunters is the 20 gauge, ideally in pump action for safe and quick follow-up shots. A .410 is okay, but it does have a limited effective range. Bigger kids can go with a 12 gauge. A modified choke is about right, but improved cylinder works well too; it takes only a few pellets to roll a cottontail. Load up with low-brass 6's or high-brass 7-1/2's.

Thick jeans will work, but put long johns on the young hunter too, to help fend off thorns. (This is where one piece of specialized equipment—canvas-fronted brush pants—can come in



(Dick Ellis)

handy.) Wear light gloves. Otherwise all you need is a pair of comfortable boots for walking, a light jacket or comfortable hooded sweatshirt, hat, and a vest to carry items like shells, something to drink, a snack, and any bunnies you shoot.

Getting permission to hunt rabbits on private land is easy, especially with a kid in tow. Much public land offers good rabbit hunting too.

Here's where to look for rabbits. Open woods don't do you any good. Think thickets, and low-to-the-ground cover. Hunt in the thick brush along the edge of a woodlot. Work a cutover with young saplings, brush, brambles and berry canes. Explore a logged-out woodlot that is teeming with downed treetops, brush piles and vines. Wander an idle pasture, a fallow meadow or grassy Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) field. Follow a brushy fencerow or ditch between agricultural fields. Try an old, abandoned farmstead or overgrown gully full of retired farm implements and other junk.

If a place is thorny, thick, seemingly forgotten and pleasantly messy, rabbits will love it. But make sure food is nearby. In farmland areas, look for hayfields, cut cornfields, harvested soybean or wheat fields and other agricultural residue, all of which make for

perfect rabbit food. Where field and pasture is scarce, rabbits feed on the succulent growth, soft bark, juicy buds and supple twigs of young, sprouting brush.

Here's how to hunt. Basically, it's a stroll. You want to mosey along. Zig, zag and use random patterns of starts, stops and pauses to make rabbits nervous and more likely to flush. Kick brush piles and other cover: One of my favorites is a downed treetop grown up with grass. Keep the young hunter with shotgun at port arms, ready to shoot at all times!

A rabbit hound isn't necessary for this kind of hunting—half the fun is being your own dog. Young hunters love the activity, and those memories can go a long way toward helping them sit still when you hunt that bigger, more glamorous stuff later.

No, glamour isn't what rabbit hunting is about. It's a about fun—pure and simple. Reading signs (tracks and droppings tell many stories), finding the right habitat, working hard, shooting decisively and straight...it's all good training for bigger things to come. And, truth be told, when you look at the pictures celebrating a special hunt, it's hard to tell the difference in grins between a hunter posing with a deer or hoisting their first rabbit to the bracing blue sky. *W*

Native son Tom Carpenter watches birds across the country and writes about the avian world for many publications.

ELLIS, from page 15

great grouse hunting. The 10-year population cycle is on the upswing. From personal experience in 2008 the birds are waiting in numbers. Although there are numerous hot-spots on public terrain to be found, think of Price, Sawyer, Ashland and Bayfield Counties as a start. Although a dog offers a distinct advantage, don't let being dog-less stop you. Grab that compass, walk, flush and shoot.

CORNFIELD MALLARDS

A special paradise arrives with migrating Canadian waterfowl, pushed south by severe weather. It doesn't take a boat or water. Cornfield mallards offer



Joe Porten knows how to find cornfield waterfowl in late season and three time Wisconsin goose calling champion John Volkman makes it double trouble for greenheads, geese and black ducks. (Photo by Dick Ellis)

one of the most superb hunting experiences a Wisconsin waterfowler could ever hope for. Although conditions must be right including no deep snow that could hinder the birds accessing cut corn, being able to find those birds in the first place, and a season that remains open, when the stars align, look out...and up.

Picture black clouds of mallards made up of literally thousands of ducks spiraling down right over you. You wait among field decoys in a layout blind, and rise in unison with your partners to literally pick and take only the fat greenheads. I experienced this in the north-east around Green Bay and again north of Beaver Dam. We literally followed swarms of ducks in our truck for miles coming off of the only open water in the region to find the harvested crops where they would eat. In route, when a flock lost us, we stopped, looked up and waited for the next flock. Eventually, we found their "diner", asked permission, and hunted. Unbelievable...but true. Even better, ask your regional DNR waterfowl expert for updates on late-season migrating birds feeding locally.

FALL TURKEY

You can find and hunt turkey now virtually anywhere in the state. The bird's adaptability even fooled DNR experts when they migrated north of Stevens Point. As much as I prefer the farmlands of the south during the spring hunt, I also enjoy hunting Tom in the region of the state where the big woods of the north meet the agriculture lands of the south. Big woods hunting around Wausau on public land has been very productive. Although the fall game is more about



Eric Haataja takes another steelhead fishing the Milwaukee River in December. (Photo by Dick Ellis)

knowing food sources and setting ambushes or scattering flocks of hens and juveniles and sounding a reassemble call, expect the unexpected.

I have called in two Fall Toms with calls simulating a spring hen. The hunt included several answering "gobbles" and fastening a tag on a 20-pound, double bearded bird that came right to me after a bigger Tom "caught" me. It was spring déjà vu all over again.

MUSKY & WALLEYES

Like the whitetail deer hunter, Wisconsin musky addicts know where they want to be during this coveted trophy time. If you don't, consider the Fox River in Green Bay for a chance at a true November Spotted Pig. Warm water discharge from industrial plants draw baitfish to the river from the big

bay, and the predators follow.

You don't need to be an expert to land these fish. On my first trip, in bitter cold November temperatures, on dead flat water with John Kubiak, we caught and released a 42 inch fish. On my only other trip to the Fox as a guest of Captain Dennis Radloff and Musky Hunter Magazine, a 36 inch fish was caught and released. But this is the time and place for a fish of 30 pounds, 40 pounds...or larger.

They are here, and ongoing DNR shocking excursions prove it. While targeting musky, don't forget to look for walleye. Although of course not routinely as big as the spawning fish of Spring found on the Fox, expect good action and good sized fish.

STEELHEAD

Winter steelhead isn't a sport that draws crowds and must be approached carefully on Lake Michigan tributaries due to cold water and slippery rocks. But given the right conditions without ice of course, it can also produce great rainbow action and rivers literally void of the competition unavoidable during the spring run. As a guest of expert steelheader Eric Haataja in December, I watched fast and furious action on the Milwaukee River.

Do not try this on your own. Contact *On Wisconsin Outdoors* for connections to reputable guides familiar with winter steelheading when the tributaries are open.

With 1,000 field columns in the can, you might say these ideas just scratch the surface. And you would be correct, sirs...and madams. After all, this is Wisconsin. And you can spell that H-E-A-V-E-N. Regardless of the season. *W*

"STRIKE TWO"

—Muskie by Melinda Schnell

The exciting image featured on the cover of the September issue of *Muskie*, the Muskies Inc. magazine is now available.

Gicleé prints of the original water color reproduced on heavy art paper with certificate of authenticity, unframed, are for sale in two sizes:

Standard Image: 24" x 16"
\$120.00, plus \$15.00 S&H

Large Image: 32" x 21"
\$240.00, plus \$20.00 S&H

Order by mail and make check or money order to: Melinda Schnell, PO Box 29, Boulder Junction, WI 54512.

WI residents please add 5% sales tax.



MIKE FOSS

DIARY OF A BEAR GUIDE*Will Snaggle Tooth show?*

SUZUKI
KINGQUAD 750AXI 4x4

Wisconsin guide Mike Foss chooses the Suzuki King Quad 750 AXI 4x4 Camo ATV when guiding clients for black bear and whitetail deer in rugged Bayfield County.

Beginning in May, Foss baits several times a week for bear clients spread over 20 square miles of tough back-country near Washburn, and twice daily as the September season approaches. He needs a machine as tough as the country. For endless chores from scouting to tree stand placement, to hunter transport and retrieval of tagged game, Foss depends on the King Quad 750.

"I'll take my Suzuki," Foss said. "I also manage wildlife food plots including spraying herbicides, tillage, seeding, and fertilizing, and I transport ice fishing clients far out on Lake Superior. I need a reliable machine because Wisconsin hunters rely on me. I need the best."

Mike Foss works hard for his clients 12 months a year. Hard enough that his black bear clients enjoy a success rate of 88 percent and his deer hunters know from history that a buck for the record book is always a distinct possibility.

His Suzuki works as hard as he does.

SUZUKI
Way of Life!

As the first hunters entered our Washburn-based camp to hunt Wisconsin black bear from some of our 30 stands placed over active bait stations in Bayfield County, I could see the excitement in their eyes. I could also feel a high level of anxiety that only a hunter who has waited years for that precious Wisconsin bear tag knows.

Many questions were answered, bait stations were assigned and the hunt was on. Most of the 15 hunters were already very familiar with our quest to tag "Snaggle Tooth," the massive black bear that I had seen just once over the years, but had more recently photographed over bait station #01 with a motion trail camera. Although we have cautiously estimated his weight at over 500 pounds, I believe the big boar nicknamed due to the large tooth jutting from his jaw will in reality tip the scales at over 600 pounds. I am comparing his mass to many bears tagged over the years in this camp at over 300 and 400 pounds, and by comparing photos of other bears taken over the same bait pile, and in front of the same trees in which we photographed the monster of Bayfield County.

Also high on our hit list was Holyfield, caught on motion camera too while gorging at one of our bait stations and so named after the boxer due to a large piece of one ear torn out. Holyfield will weigh over 400 pounds. Other bears in our target territory near Lake Superior will match him in size. For our reader's comparison, an average Wisconsin black bear will weigh 125 to 150 pounds.

Black bears wander and we were ready for Snaggle Tooth at stands where we knew he had visited before. Hunting

from portable tree stands to minimize the effect of undesirable wind direction, Eric McGuire from Wonder Lake, Illinois drew Snaggle Tooth bait station #01. Don Solberg from Dousman, Wisconsin would hunt over Snaggle Tooth bait station #02. A logging crew began operations on neighboring land three days before the season was to start, one of the unfortunate realities in the world of guiding that led to our decision to abandon Snaggle tooth bait station #03.

With all the hunters on stand by 2:00 p.m., it was time for more work at bear camp. Bait buckets were refilled for the next day's hunt, the camp kitchen was cleaned, and the menu prepared for breakfast. With chores done it was time to relax and wait for the first successful hunter to return to camp. The hunt itself concludes months of daily baiting and hard work making sure the baits are active and the bears in a habit of returning for meal they learn to expect. This week though, the hunters with bow and arrow or firearms would be waiting.

In my hammock sound asleep at one point, I could hear a fast-approaching truck coming down the driveway. Without opening my tired eyes, I thought, it's still too early for a hunter to be back at camp. I could hear the shuffling of rubber boots coming my way. I slowly opened my eyes to find Eric McGuire standing before me, his voice shaky and heart still pounding as if he had just taken the shot.

"I think I just shot Holyfield," he said. As his story poured out, and I looked at Eric's face, I thought, "This is what it's all about." The days, weeks and months of hard work were coming together over a few days in Wisconsin early fall. Eric had made a well-placed shot with his arrow but was not comfortable going after what he knew was a very big bear without help. In fact, our hunters are instructed to come back for the guides after a shot for assistance with recovery.

Back in the field and pointing to the spot where the big bear had stood just 45 minutes before, we found first blood. Slowly, quietly we followed a good blood trail through the thickest cover imaginable. Kneeling down, Eric



Sean Puccinelli held off for an hour waiting for a certain vital shot before taking this 466-pound black bear with his Marlin 45-70 at 75 yards while hunting over a Mike Foss bait station. (Dick Ellis)

looked ahead. "Mike..." he asked in a strained whisper, "what is that?"

The bear had traveled only 50 yards but it seemed like a mile. I walked up to his bear and confirmed that it was indeed Holyfield, a Wisconsin Pope & Young black bear that would take the scales back at camp to 411 pounds with a green scored skull of 19-8/16.

Eric secured the tag to a once-in-a-lifetime bear. Overwhelmed with excitement, he began a combination dance and shadow box worthy of Holyfield. With some help from camp, and a lot of sweat and muscle power, we were back at camp just in time to watch another hunter pull in.

Eric had driven north with his cousin, Sean Puccinelli, who had also drawn a Wisconsin black bear tag after eight years of applying. Sean jumped out of his truck and stumbled over to us with excitement. "I just shot a really big bear," he said, pointing at Holyfield. "And it's bigger than that one."

Big indeed. Sean had used a Marlin 45-70 to make a perfect shot on a tremendous bear. It took five men one exhausting hour to drag the 466-pound boar that would green score 20-8/16th just 60 yards from the deep ravine adjacent to the bait station.

Finally in the sack at midnight, I reflected on another opening day in northern Wisconsin. 14 hunters had already tagged seven bears. 13 bears would soon be tagged. In addition to the two massive boars, a sow would weigh in at more than 300 pounds. Not bad. As I drifted off to sleep, my mind drifted back to Snaggle Tooth. The patriarch was a no-show when it really mattered. There is a reason he's an old, great bear.

Will a lucky hunter get him or will I have another chance at this cunning big old boar next year? That...is a bear tale yet to be written. *W*

Contact Mike Foss, Northern Wisconsin Outfitters at 715.373.0344 or at www.northernwisconsinoutfitters.com



Eric McGuire with the 411-pound Holyfield harvested with bow and arrow. The bear traveled only 50 yards from the shot. (Mike Foss)

Faster, smoother!

High performance from top to bottom!



Exclusive Viper Engine

The only engine built specifically for ice augers

- High torque/high RPM design for unmatched cutting speed
- Designed for dependable starting in cold weather
- Balanced power that won't rattle your teeth

Exclusive Quantum Blades

For unmatched cutting speed, control and smoothness

- Serrated blades cut faster, resists ice/snow build-up
- Dual symmetrical blades for a balanced, controlled cut and smooth operation
- Hold a sharp edge much longer



Four models:

Z71

Z51

Mako

Stingray



71cc

Most powerful auger made!



51cc

Feature filled workhorse



43cc

All-around performance



33cc

Powerful yet economical

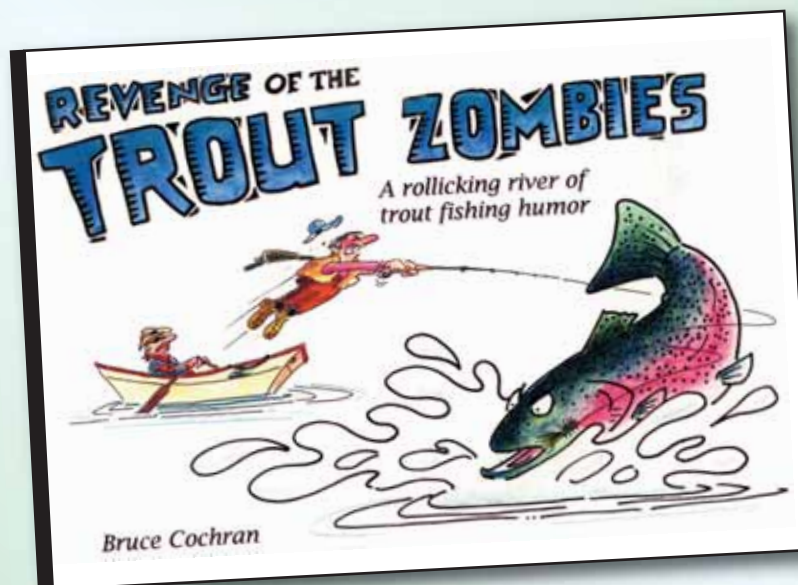
Eskimo

HIGH PERFORMANCE ICE FISHING GEAR

Eskimo, Division of Ardisam, Inc.
1360 First Avenue
Cumberland, WI 54829
800.345.6007

For more information visit
www.geteskimo.com

Ninety-six pages of **trout fishing** satire, parody, **and cartoons**



Revenge Of The Trout Zombies by Bruce Cochran, published by Willow Creek Press, Minocqua, WI, \$9.95. *Revenge Of The Trout Zombies* is available at bookstores or can be ordered online from Amazon.com. Personalized copies can be ordered online from the author at bcochran@kc.rr.com.

To learn more about Bruce Cochran's cartoons, stories, and illustrations visit
www.cochranscartoons.com

theridge
community church

love God. love people.



You're Invited!
2 Services



Sundays
9:00 & 10:30AM

@ the Ridge Cinema
5200 S Moorland Rd
New Berlin, WI 53151

(262) 432 - 0228 | www.theridgecc.com

DICK ELLIS

ON WISCONSIN OUTDOORS

Forest Gumption...with a southern squirrel dog

The urgent call of the rat terrier somewhere in the distance pulled Terry Mihlbauer up the sloping oak forest and over a barb-wire fence to the lone hickory standing guard over a patented LaValle landscape. Down the fence line, the open hillside melted away into a valley checker boarded with the browns and greens of harvested farm fields resting and waiting now for the spring plows. Then climbed again in the distance to another oak-shrouded bluff.



Terry Mihlbauer of LaValle maneuvers for a shot with his .22 caliber rifle after his squirrel dog, Mo, a rat terrier, treed a squirrel high in an oak December 19. Mihlbauer bagged two of four squirrels treed by Mo. (Dick Ellis)

At the base of the hickory sat Mo, a southern-bred squirrel dog bringing a whole load of forest gumption to the northern oaks. And a full dose of trouble to Wisconsin's gray squirrel.

"He's up this tree, for sure" Mo seemed to yelp at Mihlbauer even as the master's keen surveillance of the hickory showed no hint of bushy tail or wisp of moving gray. "I believe you, Boy," Mihlbauer answered in turn. "I believe you."

And trust he should. On three occasions, Mo had sounded off in the oak woods over the previous 30 minutes. A first gray squirrel had "timbered" tree to tree to tree to finally escape into a hole near the forest floor. The next two squirrels were now in the game bag with .22-

long rifle rounds placed just behind the shoulder from Mihlbauer's precisely-sighted, 35-year old German-made Anschutz.

"When Mo barks, I'm 99 percent sure there's a squirrel in the tree where I find him waiting," he said. "But I didn't always believe him. It wasn't until I started hunting more with partners that we could see how many squirrels were hiding in the trees."

Hunting with squirrel dogs, according to Mihlbauer, is an immensely popular tactic in southern states and north through Indiana to central Illinois. The sport is gaining more and more participants in northern regions of the country, including Iowa and Wisconsin.

Mihlbauer, a LaValle native and lifelong resident of Sauk County with the exception of his college years at UW-Madison, was introduced to hunting coons with dogs by his father and uncle as a five-year-old. Squirrel hunting with dogs also was a family tradition with roots to yesteryear.

Mihlbauer continued coon hunting and still owns a Bluetick today. Eight years ago, he decided to get back into squirrel hunting more seriously and purchased a Feist in Mondovi, Wisconsin. That dog had previously been purchased in Illinois.

"I hunted squirrels with that dog with a couple boys from Oxford," he said. "Those boys just loved that dog. Eventually, I gave the dog to them."

In the late 1990s, Mihlbauer traveled south to Texas specifically to buy a squirrel dog. He ended up in Arkansas, where he purchased Mo, a rat terrier of just 13 pounds, and Patches, a one-half Feist, one-half Finish Spitz female. According to Internet information, other popular squirrel

dogs include Mountain Curs, Jack Russell Terriers, and even Newfoundlands.

Since their return to Wisconsin, Patches has taken up residence as the Mihlbauer house dog. Mo has continued to earn his keep in the oak and hickory forests as the first leg of a hide-and-seek tag-team tandem that often ends with Mihlbauer's knock-out punch.

The tactic is a simple one. The dog is released upon entering the woods to search out a squirrel, at times roaming hundreds of yards ahead of the hunter. Without a "cold tracking" nose that allows some dogs to shadow a coon or squirrel long after the animal has frequented an area, if Mo lets loose with his "got one going boss" call, Mihlbauer is certain the track is relatively fresh. The hunter then hurries forward with high expectations.

Supplementing his sense of smell, once




A Gray Squirrel falls to the ground in Sauk County after being treed by Rat Terrier, Mo (above), and taken with a well placed .22 caliber round by Terry Mihlbauer of LaValle. The squirrel dog treed four bushy tails in an hour, with Mihlbauer bagging two. (Dick Ellis)

located Mo uses his vision to stay with a squirrel working the tree-tops. In the case of the "timbering" squirrel that started our hunt December 19, Mo moved to the base of four different trees, sat, and spouted off to let Mihlbauer know exactly what was happening.

Upon arrival at the scene, Mihlbauer

waits patiently for a good shot, often using a tree to steady his aim with the scoped rifle to ensure a quick kill. As often, no shot at all concludes the chase as the squirrel escapes into a tree hole or nest.

Mihlbauer couldn't care less. It's the chase, after all, that brings a hunter back again. And Mo, apparently, with one-part Energizer Rabbit to blend with southern heritage and 13-pounds of heart, shares the sentiment. Regardless of each outcome of each individual chase, he just keeps going and going and....

"For me, the hunt has always been about running the dogs," Mihlbauer said as he prepared two squirrels for a future meal. "I coon hunted for so long. These squirrel dogs do the same thing, but they do it in the daytime. If this was just about killing a lot of squirrels, I would just sit here and wait. This is about me and Mo. Just working together." 



Forest Gumption... To get his squirrel dog, Mo, to stop the pursuit, Terry Mihlbauer of LaValle either has to leash the rat terrier or pick the dog up. This hunt in Sauk County ends December 19 on the edge of an oak forest with four squirrels treed, and two in the bag. (Dick Ellis)

TODD LENSING

OBSERVATIONS FROM A WATERFOWL GUIDE

Safety first on the big water

The world of waterfowling is a very equipment- and gadget-driven sport that allows us to enjoy one of the most exciting forms of hunting. It can also be one of the most dangerous, especially if you're hunting out of a boat.

Here are the 10 most important things I'm sure to have on my boat everytime I go out. Keep in mind, I personally hunt Pool 9 of the Mississippi River which is three miles wide, but I really recommend all hunters have these as well to insure a safe hunting experience:

1. Common sense.
2. Knowledge of current weather conditions.
3. Marine radio.
4. GPS and/or compass.
5. First aid kit, along with portable thermal blankets.
6. Flare and signal kit, including basic survival items (i.e. waterproof matches).
7. Extra dry clothes in a waterproof bag.
8. Cell phone.
9. Destination plan, including general hunting area and how long you'll be out. Make sure someone always knows where you are and when to expect you back.
10. Tools and supplies such as duct tape, electrical tape, spark plugs, zip ties, spare drain plug, push pole, etc.

It's also worth mentioning that you'd always want to include mandatory items such as life jackets for everyone, fire extinguisher, and sounding device. These would fall under the heading of item number one above.

Equipment and gadgets aside, I strongly recommend that you don't overload your boat. It's also imperative that the size of your boat matches



"Safety first when hunting waterfowl on big water," says Captain Todd Lensing. His boat is properly rigged for a day on Pool 9 of the Mississippi River. "The most important thing you bring home is yourself. Just ask your family." (Todd Lensing)

the size of the water and conditions you'll encounter. In other words, if you plan to hunt the "big water," be prepared for anything and everything.

Be safe out there! *W*

Captain Todd Lensing is a professional guide and U.S. Coast Guard master captain who takes clients out daily during the Wisconsin waterfowl season. Contact Todd at Flyway Fowling Guide Service, Ferryville, WI, www.flywayfowling.com, phone 608.734.323 or www.grandview-motel.com.



- Read the Ellis weekly syndicated column
- Check out archived OWO issues
- Review biographies on the Ellis Experts
- Preview upcoming issues
- Check for news and press releases

www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com

JJ REICH

THE REICH STUFF

Waterfowl paradise is pronounced Edmonton, Alberta



JJ's eight-man hunting group complete with guide, dog and 64-bird limit. (JJ Reich)

Edmonton, Alberta has long been renowned as a duck and goose hunter's paradise. For those of us reared as Badgers, too often familiar with playing the waiting game in the marshes of Wisconsin, the stark difference just in the number of birds seen makes this Canadian trip a rare experience indeed.

Not only did I witness unimaginable shooting opportunities, there were also hot barrels, good camaraderie, great retrievers, tasty dishes, new firearms products, cabin walls adorned with eight-man limits, and...one funny guide surely cut from the mold of Rodney Dangerfield.

In this adventure I met up with Scott Grange from Browning, Jonathan Harling from Winchester Ammunition,

and Kevin Howard from Mossy Oak, along with four other outdoor writers for early-October duck and goose hunting. The eight of us were guests at Dog 'N Duck Outfitting, 80 miles north-east of Edmonton, Alberta. Three company reps showed us a few new products for 2009 in action. (Note: be sure to check out "Product 6-Pack" in future issues of OWO to get the scoop on some I tried during this hunt.)

During the course of two-and-a-half days, we had three morning hunts and two afternoon hunts. Despite the bright clear skies and unseasonably hot, 80-degree weather, (century-old, early-October records for warm weather were shattered while we were there), we did pretty well.

On the opening morning's honker hunt, I took my first-ever "specklebelly" goose, with the eight of us ending up with almost two dozen geese and a half-dozen ducks. The hunt was done in a feed pea field using some unique stand-up blinds. The blinds were made of collapsible, hinged fencing that was completely brushed in and surrounded by a mix of both full-body and silhouette decoys. Think of them as above-ground pit

blinds. We sat on five-gallon buckets and stood up to shoot. The waterfowl certainly flew comfortably into the set-up, ignoring the three-foot structures.

On the second morning's duck hunt, all eight of us at camp hunted together in a different grain field using the same stand-up blind set-up. We had an unbelievable morning by limiting out with 64 ducks in just 53 minutes. We then spent an hour watching hundreds of other ducks continue to land into our decoys while we took in-your-face photos of the ducks and got some great video footage.

On the last morning, we split up into smaller groups for more duck hunting. This time we set up over water on one of the many prairie potholes available to Dog 'N Duck. My foursome capped our limit of 32 ducks in less than 43 minutes, with one huge mallard boxed for me to take home and mount on the wall.

The hot afternoons proved unproductive, yet relaxing. We saw both ducks and geese by the thousands in the air, but only a handful worked with us and came down.

Going on far-from-home hunts is always fun because you often see beautiful scenery, new-to-you wildlife species and interesting people. But every once in a while, you'll meet a true character -- someone everyone at camp remembers long after the gear is unpacked and cleaned.

Meet Spoonbill Bob. Think of him as a 70-something, Canadian version of Rodney Dangerfield. His self-degrading jokes, R-rated one-liners, and constant wisecracks kept us rolling our eyes and chuckling in the duck blind. "Why do they call you Spoonbill Bob?" I asked Bob during the first night at camp. "Spoonbills are horrible ducks... and I am a horrible man," he replied with a smirk and a wink.

The Spoonbill Lounge was my favorite building on the property. It's a wood-stove-heated shack named in honor of the "horrible" guide. It's dotted with comfortable chairs and a poker table, and decorated with antique game calls, beer signs, knick-knacks, and mounted trophies that many years of satisfied, return-visit guests donated.

Every hunter staying at Dog 'N Duck has to sign the walls of the Spoonbill Lounge with permanent marker before leaving. Some of the guests add humor to the walls by writing down one-liners (AKA Spoonieisms) they heard him spout during their hunt. Some prime examples include:



JJ Reich with his Alberta limit of pintails and mallards. (JJ Reich)



J.J. holding huge Canada and white-fronted geese. (JJ Reich)

"My ex-wife was an excellent housekeeper.... She kept the house!" And, "I came into this world with nothing, and it looks like I'll go out with most of it left." Meeting Spoonie certainly was a humorous highlight of my Alberta trip.

Learn more about the outfitter at: www.dognduck.ca. If you've never spent some fall harvest days in Canada getting up close and personal with wild waterfowl, then you must put it on your bucket list. *W*

JJ Reich is an outdoor writer who contributes product-related articles to several national magazines and websites. He is also the author of *Kampp Tales Outdoor Adventures* hunting books for kids. Learn more at www.kampptales.com.



Stand-up blinds used in Alberta's grain fields. (JJ Reich)

S. WILKERSON

SURPLUS FIREARMS

Bubba's Guns, then and now

Among serious firearm collectors, there is no more contemptible creature than that known as "Bubba." Bubba is the knuckle-dragging Neanderthal that would disfigure a Luger by chrome plating it, "sporterize" a bring-back Nazi rifle by drilling holes in its receiver for a scope, and shorten the barrel on a Buntline Colt. Bubba, in other words, was the amateur gunsmith that, in personalizing his firearm, ruined it for today's collector. Guns improved by him and his ilk are said to have been "Bubba'd."

Bubba was primarily a product of the 1950s and '60s. This was a time when surplus firearms were plentiful, cheap and unappreciated. New Winchesters, Remingtons and Colts were expensive. About the only guns that were being collected at the time were Lugers, single action Colt revolvers and lever action Winchesters. Surplus rifles were an attractive option to hunters on a limited budget.

The typical Bubba of the day worked with his hands and made things at one of the nation's many manufacturing concerns. He hunted and he fished and was often a veteran. He didn't have the leisure time to submerge himself in the arcane knowledge of proof marks, serial numbers, and pedigrees of his favorite kind of gun. Today, people will argue such fine points for pages and pages on web-based forums. Bubba had better things to do, like hunting and fishing with friends and raising a family. And he didn't need (or could afford) an expensive Browning or equally reputable brand flyrod to enjoy those pursuits.

What he needed was a shotgun, maybe a .22, and perhaps a deer hunting rifle. For fishing, well, a Zebco would do just fine. If the area he deer hunted offered shots at more than slug range, he just might get himself a centerfire rifle. A lot of times, that rifle could already be found in his closet. That's where it landed after its long trip back from Europe years ago in his duffle bag.

A lot of times, the rifle was a German Model 98K bolt action repeater. It might have been surrendered in Germany to Bubba in person, found in a ruined home, or taken from a pile of captured munitions. Having seen firsthand the havoc and destruction wrought by the Nazis, Bubba, who may still have been carrying the emotional and physical scars of his tour of duty, didn't have the appreciation of

German craftsmanship and history so appreciated by today's collectors.

In other words, Bubba's conscience wasn't bothered at all when he removed and threw out his Mauser's handguard and shortened its stock to make it lighter and handier for hunting. Most Japanese rifles escaped Bubba's handiwork, by the way. Softpoint hunting ammunition wasn't readily available in the Japanese calibers, so the guns were relegated to the closet. There they often remain until Bubba passes away and unsentimental family members sell it and other memorabilia from his service days at his estate sale.

Bubba wasn't the only one who

pride they were to their original owners.

No doubt, the long-ago owner of my Italian Carcano felt a certain amount of pride when he finished sporterizing it or bought it as such. Whoever he was, he wasn't very wealthy, or maybe he was just frugal, not seeing the need to expend a lot of cash on a rifle that would only be sporadically used. Carcanos were pretty much a bottom-tier surplus rifle option in the fifties and sixties, and one can almost feel sorry for the Italian soldiers that carried them into inglorious defeat during the Second World War. They have fixed sights and hold



TOP: Italian Carcano in military guise. BOTTOM: Bubba'd Carcano. The Carcano made for a better hunting rifle than it did a military weapon. (Dick Ellis)

"Bubba, in other words, was the amateur gunsmith that, in personalizing his firearm, ruined it for today's collector. Guns improved by him and his ilk are said to have been 'Bubba'd'..."

felt that his surplus rifle could be improved. Firearm magazines of the era often featured "how to" articles on sporterizing surplus rifles. Many gun distributors specialized in converting Springfield 1903s, Mark IV Enfields, and, of course, 98Ks into "hunting rifles." They could easily be bought cheap through the mail or at the local Woolworths, Montgomery Ward, or Sears department store.

Some Bubba guns exhibited better handiwork than others. Masterly sporterized 1903 Springfields, featuring target sights, beautifully figured French walnut stocks and highly polished blue finishes were held in high regard in the 1950s and '60s. No matter how exquisite the craftsmanship, they are now objects of ridicule, not the source of immense

only five rounds of ammunition. Operating their bolts feels like the receiver rails are embedded with sand. Trigger pulls are heavy, gritty, and long. Carcanos are, however, fairly accurate, short, and light. Not bad attributes for a deer hunting rifle in a heavily wooded Wisconsin forest.

My Carcano was not drastically sporterized. Its handguard and bayonet lug were removed. The stock appears to be original, but was shaped into a semi-sporter configuration and stained in walnut. A nice job, too. My original intent was to return the rifle to its original military configuration, but original parts are now hard to find and the two stocks I ordered from "Stinko" were defective and obviously so except to the drug-addled monkeys that filled the orders. That escapade

still really fries my chicken. I threw in the towel on that particular project and moved on to other costly pursuits.

After I aborted the restoration project, I gradually came to appreciate the old Carcano for what it may have been—the long-ago tool of a now deceased hunter (the rifle came from an estate sale). Most hunters back then were blue collar employees, so it is easy to assume that he probably spent long hours as a machinist, tool and die maker, or assembler in one of Wisconsin's long extinct factories. The Carcano might have been with him while he and his buddies entertained each other with jokes and tales around a deer camp. It might even have taken a few deer in its day.

Collectors believe that those who sporterized old military rifles despoiled them, robbed them of their history and heritage. I have come to believe that such firearms have their own history which should be respected. They are historical artifacts from a time we will never see again. A time when Americans made things and hunters were not viewed as barbarians. Guns were tools to be used, not artifacts to be collected and stored in safes by elitist snobs with too much time and money on their hands.

Yes, I collect firearms and cherish the few matching number "artifacts" that I own, and until recently, I also held Bubba in some contempt. But I realize now that there was a lot to admire about him. He put his rifle to good use without any pretensions. He didn't purchase it to add to a collection; he enjoyed it in the company of his friends and family. He had better things to do with his life than waste hours at a keyboard debating the attributes of his guns on the Internet.

Bubba came from an increasingly forgotten and unrecognizable era of American history. His guns are a reminder of a time when America actually produced and sold things, hunting and fishing were not considered exotic pastimes, and gun owners were not objects of derision in the news media. Someday, as our country's golden age becomes the stuff of legend, Bubba's guns may come to be appreciated.

Maybe even collected.. 

S. Wilkerson is an award-winning Wisconsin journalist, firearms expert and student of the Second Amendment.

CURTIS

LAW OFFICE

TRIAL LAWYERS

2905 Universal Street (Hwy 44 West & Universal Street)
Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54904
(920)233-1010

1-888-818-1010

Email curtislw@execpc.com

**We represent injured people,
not insurance companies.**

GEORGE W. CURTIS

(Also Licensed in Florida)

BETH D. OSOWSKI

(Also Licensed in Minnesota)

BRIAN P. BEISENSTEIN

MICHAEL J. KUBORN

(Also Licensed in Arizona)

FREE INITIAL CONSULTATION

- INJURY AND DEATH*
- ACCIDENTS*
- WORKER'S COMPENSATION*
*No Fee Unless We Collect For You
- PROBATE
- REAL ESTATE
- FAMILY LAW
- GENERAL LITIGATION

*DUE TO OUR REPUTATION,
MOST CASES SETTLE WITHOUT A TRIAL*

GROUND BLINDS, from page 12

manufacturers. Just go online and type in ground blinds and you will find a wide selection of portable blinds, ranging from one man blinds to deluxe multiple person blinds. It all depends on what you want and how much you want to spend.

NATURAL BLINDS

Obviously natural blinds are not portable, but you can still have them in different areas to take advantage of deer routes and the wind factor.

Look for deadfalls or blow-downs that, with a little massaging and enhancement, will conceal you and allow you some protection from the elements. You can use "dead on the ground" bark or branches to enhance the concealment.

In one area where I hunt, we have a natural blind we fondly call "the condo." Basically, it's a huge pine at the corner of woods, which gives us a clear 180-degree line of fire in two fields. There is a natural dip by the pine and we've piled up bark and logs so a hunter can stand up, walk around and literally be completely out of sight of any deer in the two fields. Plus the pine keeps most of the rain and snow out. Good natural blinds are there if you



(Bill Kende)

look for them.

If you can't find anything to your liking, you can always build a blind. It can be as easy as buying some camo material and stapling it to stakes. Easy to do, inexpensive and not a big deal. If you feel like doing some work, you can stack deadwood in a "V" (two sides) or semi-"U" shape (three sides). Use a tree as the rear center point, stack wood like

you did when you played with Lincoln Logs as a kid to the height you want. Ideally, the only thing a whitetail would be able to spot is your head, and that should be camouflaged with netting or a face mask. The tree not only offers something to lean against, it also helps break up your silhouette. Since you're using material that is anything but uniform, the blind will have gaps where

deer may be able to detect movement. An easy way to solve this problem is to use commercial camo netting or brown burlap bags. Cut the bags apart and staple them to the inside of the blind.

In fact a few burlap bags along with some black zip strips tucked away in your backpack make a perfect quick-up portable blind. It's not elaborate but can help hide your presence in areas of sparse cover. If you're building a blind, try to set it up at least a couple of weeks before the season so deer can get used to its presence. It's the same thing as if you drove home from work and found an empty beer can in your driveway. Since you and your wife don't drink beer, obviously you would wonder where it came from. It's the same for deer. If they suddenly see a structure in their "driveway" with human scent around it, they'll steer clear until they know that it's not a danger. *W*

Bill Kende has a passion for the outdoors and has written articles for Michigan Out-of-Doors, Michigan Woods and Waters, Fishing Tackle Retailer, SHOT Business, Shooting Sports Retailer and On Wisconsin Outdoors. He can be reached at adorjan@aol.com.

Kuehl Kids Photo Contest

And the winner is Jacob Schwartz, age 3

Additional Submissions ...



Jacob Schwartz, age 3, of West Allis, caught this bass in a county pond in West Bend, and he is our Kuehl Kids Photo Contest winner this issue!



Ryan, age 5, of Green Bay, caught this Largemouth Bass on Shawano Lake.

Great photo!

Kyle, age 8, of Green Bay, caught this sunfish on Shawano Lake.



Kuehl Kids PHOTOS



Submit your photo of a kid in the outdoors!
Winners will receive a caricature drawing of their photo.

Submissions will be printed in *On Wisconsin Outdoors*, and the winner will be mailed the original caricature artwork as our gift!

Photos scans or digital files must be provided at high resolution 300 dpi and emailed to submit@onwisconsinoutdoors.com. If we select your photo, the original caricature drawing will be mailed to you at no charge.

Interested in purchasing a caricature drawing made from your photo?
 Contact artist Johnathan Kuehl directly at kuehlarts@gmail.com or call (612) 812-9600.

MIKE HART

SWING ... AND A MISS

The hunter's never-welcome reality

How many of you have missed that healthy doe, trophy buck or long-beard gobbler? If you hunt often enough and as my wife Kerry would say "He's gone hunting every weekend," you undoubtedly have had to face the question: "How did I miss?" There are times where a word or two of profanity may be added to that question. Now some of you are nodding in agreement and those of you who aren't probably don't hunt often enough. Missing an opportunity was the theme song of my 2007 hunting season.

As an avid hunter, the end of summer means school starting and back to work as a physical education teacher, yet bow hunting is just around the corner. This is a bittersweet time, but I'm sure you can guess which one I'm looking forward to most.

I start shooting with my bow in late July and continue throughout the season at my range. The weeks leading up to the bow opener I spend shooting at deer targets from distances of 10 to 35 yards. I'm very consistent and comfortable in this range and would take these shots in the field.

However, 2007 was a season of missed opportunities. My first miss was a big doe the second week of the season standing broadside at 25 yards. My seven-year-old nephew Peyton was on stand with me. The look on his face spoke volumes when he yelled "You got it!" and I had to inform him that I had cleanly missed the deer and that it

was all his fault because he picked out the wrong arrow. To this day when this story comes up, he still blames it on bad arrow choice. I don't have the heart to tell him it was the shooter's fault, so we'll just leave it as it is.

My second missed opportunity came during my first-ever muzzle loader hunt. My son Jason had presented me with a Thompson Encore as an early Christmas present in October. I began practicing with the smoke pole immediately. Shooting with open sights, I consistently hit the circle at 100 yards. On the last day of the season, my brother Tom and friend Jon Thome drove three nice does toward me. At 40 yards I picked out the biggest one, aimed and fired. After the smoke cleared, I watched three deer run across two massive corn fields and continue out of sight. I was shocked. Standing there helplessly with an unloaded muzzle loader didn't help, either. Once again, I had practiced with the gun, yet when the moment presented itself, I whiffed.

A final missed opportunity occurred during the sixth period of the spring turkey season. A gobbler was in full strut on a farm field. After a brief "meeting of the minds," Tom and Peyton entered the field opposite my position to entice the bird in my direction. It worked. The gobbler covered 300 yards, closed in and stopped at 40 paces. I aimed at his head, fired and watched him skedaddle. My shot was low and so was I. The opportunity to

tag him had come and gone.

Why would I write about a hunting season like this? You are either thinking This guy shouldn't be hunting or I know exactly how you feel and I feel your pain. I wrote the article for all the hunters who have felt the disappointment, embarrassment and agony of their own missed opportunities. For now that hunter is me. As an ethical and responsible hunter, I know the importance of practice with the bow or gun we choose to use. We owe that to the animal, to the shooting sports, and to ourselves. Routine practice means being as prepared as possible to harvest the animal as humanely as possible.

Just like in life, however, we will on occasion miss an opportunity. If you know you were ready, try to determine why you failed and learn from it. Was it miscalculated distance, a flinch, buck fever or something else? Take your missed opportunity and the experience to make yourself a better hunter.

You never want to enter the woods with the idea that you cannot miss; missing is part of the hunt and always a possibility if you are a hunter. As long as it's the proper shot, never be too afraid of a miss or embarrassed over the memory of a past miss to take the ethical opportunity again.

I look forward to a fresh start in 2008. The practice is ongoing and I once again feel prepared for the season. The clothes are clean and the quiver is full. I know my equipment and what I am capable of doing with it. For now, the



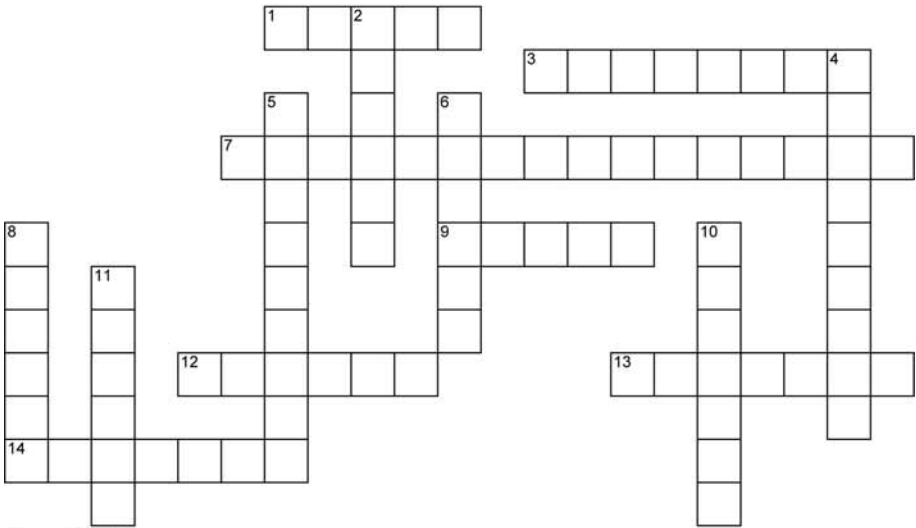
After missing too often during 2007, Mike Hart places the crosshairs of self-evaluation on himself. The author also is very familiar with the field celebrations that come only with a well-placed shot. (Tom Hart)

last season is in the books and the experience I gained from this, successful or not, has provided me with knowledge to continue my quest to become a better hunter.

Ready or not, here comes the 2008 hunting season. For me, it couldn't get here fast enough. *W*

Mike Hart is a former professional baseball player currently teaching Physical Education in the Greenfield School District. He mentors students wishing to learn how to hunt on family property near Wisconsin Dells. Contact him at Mhart3631@yahoo.com.

Outdoor Criss Cross



ACROSS

- 1 Hunters follow ____ trails.
- 3 An aerosol-can deer scent (2 words).
- 7 Record book for gun hunters (3 words).
- 9 Dogs use ____ to find birds.
- 12 A muzzleloader brand.
- 13 Turns steaks into burger.
- 14 Tip: hunt near food ____.

DOWN

- 2 A hunter safety color.
- 4 Red-dot scopes need these.
- 5 Michael Waddell's TV show (2 words).
- 6 A Gander Mountain location centered in WI.
- 8 Plastic ploys set out by hunters.
- 10 "Big Ape" treestands.
- 11 More-powerful ammo.

Answers on page 30

On Wisconsin Outdoors Board of Directors

Dear Hunter Daily,
Who should I vote for in the presidential election?

—Dan Roberts, Kenosha



Hunter Daily

Dear Dan,
OWO is a non-partisan publication. But, there is a never-fail compass I use for direction in many of life's difficult decisions, political or not. Listen to the Editorial Board of the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. Then do the opposite. You'll have a great life.

—Hunter Daily



Conibear Smith

Dear Conibear Smith,
I'm a 20 year old trapper who is getting married in June. I get nervous when some of my friends say all hunting and fishing stopped when they got married. Any advice?

--Pete Andrepeatagin,
Superior

Dear Pete,
So the trapper is trapped is he? I'd say introduce her to the joys of the field and trapping. Share it with her. Let her set a good beaver trap. Traps are so much

better today that she probably won't even lose a single finger like my third wife did during her introduction to the field. Let her smell the swamp. I know you'd be giving up a lot...but if you really love her you'll let her skin the rascals. Finally, what's wrong with you guys these day? If I hear, "my wife won't let me..." one more time I'll scream. Your friends sound like girly-men.

—Conibear Smith

Dear Rex Rodsalotta,
Minnesota license plates boasts of 10,000 lakes. Is that a better state than Wisconsin for fishing?

—Kyle Davis, Waupaca



Rex Rodsalotta

Dear Kyle,
Actually, Wisconsin has 15,000 lakes. You gotta remember that Minnesota also boasts about being the home of the Vikingsso go figure. Wisconsin has lakes with names like Machickanee, Shishebogama, Pokegema, Nemadji and Minnesuing. Lakes so good half of us can't even pronounce them to get directions to them, which leaves them under-fished, under-pressured and simply better than can be offered by any other state around. And when we actually find someone who has actually found them, and fished them, we'll have a more detailed report.

—Rex Rodsalotta

On Wisconsin
Outdoors
With the Dick Ellis Experts

**A Great
Gift Idea!**

MAILED TO YOUR HOME
6 ISSUES (1 YEAR)
Only \$23.95

PRINT CLEARLY

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

E-MAIL ADDRESS

☐ PAYMENT OF \$23.95 ENCLOSED Payable to On Wisconsin Outdoors LLC

Mail to: 20240 W. Rustic Ridge Drive, New Berlin WI 53146
ALLOW 4-6 WEEKS TO PROCESS

KEVIN MICHALOWSKI

DOG TALK*Planning for the Christmas puppy*

When it gets to this point, you should already know you're going home with a puppy. (Photo by Kevin Michalowski)

A Christmas puppy can be a wonderful addition to the family if you plan it right and know in advance what you'll be getting into. Don't believe the hype that Christmas is a terrible time to buy a dog.... there are no bad times to get a dog, just ill-prepared dog owners.

Oh, there's plenty to think about and lots to do, too. Yet none of it is overwhelming. Planning is the key. You just need to think ahead. Here are a few tips to help you get off on the right track. The top few tips are for Christmas dogs; the remainders are true anytime you buy a pup.

PURCHASE CARE ITEMS AHEAD OF TIME

Get everything you will need before you bring home the puppy. Dog food, water dish and chew toys are important. You'll also need a portable kennel, leash, collar and training treats. You can wrap these up and put them under the tree to really set the mood.

PREPARE TO SOCIALIZE

Christmas time is a great time to begin socializing your pup, even your very young pup. What you need to do is control the amount of activity around

the pup. Keep a portable kennel in a room away from all the commotion and bring the puppy out to meet people for short intervals, then return the pup to the crate. You have to ignore whining and barking when the dog is in the crate; this teaches the dog to be quiet when alone. Also, using the crate begins the housebreaking process. Make sure all guests who meet the new pup are kind and gentle, especially kids.

PLAY, BUT TEACH

With lots of people around for the holidays, you can reinforce that pup must listen to and obey all people. Encourage others to help teach the pup to sit, working gently with a calm voice. After a few minute of this, you can put pup in the crate in another room for quiet time and to start teaching the rules of housebreaking.

BEGIN HOUSEBREAKING RIGHT AWAY

Don't forget to take the pup outside every couple of hours, because this starts the housebreaking process. Use that crate. Don't train the dog to go on newspaper, which can cause problems with the housebreaking schedule. Use newspaper only in emergencies.

NO TABLE SCRAPS

Puppies need puppy food. If you get a Christmas puppy, make sure everyone, especially kids and grandparents, know what the pup should eat. Again, just puppy food.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT DOG

You've heard this before. You want to know a bit about the breed of dog before you bring it home. All puppies are cute; so don't buy one based solely on how it looks. Think

about what you want the dog to do and where you live. Do some research. Ask questions and make an informed choice.

ESTABLISH A ROUTINE

Be sure to plan activities according to a routine so the dog becomes accustomed to eating, sleeping, playing, bathroom breaks, and training. If you're not the type to adhere to a schedule, this may shift your thinking.

KEEP THE DOG HEALTHY AND HAPPY

You must provide the proper food, shelter, training and medical care. Get a shot record booklet and adhere to the schedule. Regular visits to the vet can catch problems early.

SPAY/NEUTER

Unless you intend to include your dog in a well-planned and monitored breeding program, call your vet after buying the pup and discuss spay/neuter options. Dogs need to be about five months old and females should be spayed before their first heat cycle.

Finally, what may be the single most important thing to remember when considering buying a puppy is this: have the decision made before you take the kids to look at a puppy. You don't get to "think about it" anymore after one of your children gets hold of a puppy.

Kevin Michalowski is author of "15 Minutes to a Great Dog" and "15 Minutes to a Great Puppy" (Krause Publications, \$12.95 each) and has been training dogs for 10 years. If you have questions or comments on dog care, email him at askdogtalk@hotmail.com.



Share Your Passion for Hunting!
Hardcover Children's Books

Kampp Tales™
Outdoor Adventures

Kampp Tales™ Outdoor Adventures help sportsmen and women share hunting traditions with kids! These wonderfully illustrated books entertain children through humorous stories that teach safety, hunting techniques, animal facts and a respect for wildlife.

www.kampptales.com



Getting a Royal Flush shouldn't be a Gamble.



**Mail-In
REBATE!***

Valid on purchases made
6/1/08 to 12/31/08.

Photo courtesy of www.christinanelsonphotography.com



Todd Agnew
- Craney Hill Kennel, IL

"We recommend the H2O series because they are waterproof, durable and proven to be reliable in the toughest conditions. I always sample different collars, but D.T. Systems still make the best available in the market."

* Please visit www.dtsystems.com for full rebate Terms & Conditions.

H2O 1800 Series



The excitement and joy of a hunting trip can all hinge on the performance of your dog. Why gamble on such a wild card? D.T. Systems can help you get control and consistency from your dog in every hunting situation. Our H2O 1800 series with up to a 1 mile range is waterproof (*the transmitter actually floats!*) and has 16 levels of stimulation to help you find the exact level for your dog. You can add optional features like Vibration, a Beeper/Locator, or our new Jump and Rise Stimulations. Each model is also available in a 2-dog system. All these great features will help increase your odds of having a successful hunting trip. Start training with our gear and start bringing out the best in your best friend.



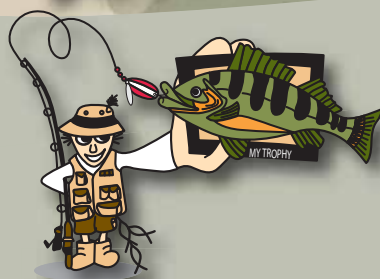
"Bringing Out the Best"

1-888-588-8364

www.dtsystems.com

WIN! Free Trips & Gear

"SHOW 'EM WHATCHA GOT!" PHOTO PAGE



Submit your photos online!

To submit your photo and brief story for **On Wisconsin Outdoors**, log onto **www.MyHuntingPage.com** and register. It's free and easy.

By submitting your entry, you will become eligible to WIN trips and prizes! Send a message to "Bigshot" from your profile page requesting your submission to **On Wisconsin Outdoors**. A limited number of photo submissions can be published in OWO, but all are published online at **www.MyHuntingPage.com**, and categorized into your local county areas too! Come on' ...

Show 'em whatcha got!



"Lucky Lee" Albrecht's first bow buck at 80 yrs. old! Waukesha County, 8 pt.



Eric Stocking of Richfield scored this heavy mass 10 pt. last season "up Nort".

**Enter to win the
BIG BUCK
PHOTO CONTEST**

SPONSORED BY

www.MyHuntingPage.com **www.MyFishingPage.com**



Great gear for the woods, fields and waterways

By JJ Reich

Here's the rundown on six hunting and fishing products you may find useful in the woods, fields and waterways. We did.

ROSSI YOUTH-SIZED MATCHED PAIR

For \$239, this matched-pair, single-shot rifle and shotgun combination is excellent for young hunters who are just starting out. This set includes a .410 shotgun barrel and a .22 LR barrel with adjustable sights, but several other caliber/gauge combinations are available as well.



This is a great first firearm for many reasons. One, you can teach both shotgun and rifle skills with just a swap of the barrels. Two, it's sized right for kids. Three, it's simple to operate and maintain. Four, it has extra precautionary features like a safety lock on the hammer.

Rossiusa.com
(305) 474-0401

NITE IZE BACKBONE CASES

For \$16 to \$26, these durable cases will carry and protect your portable electronic devices and accessories. Each case features a molded backbone structure for increased rigidity, and sports water-resistant zippers, sure-grip pulls, strong flex-clips and multiple pockets to organize all items. Several sizes are available.



I like the fact that these cases are available in a matte black too, because my wife hates it when I tote around almost everything we own in camouflage cases and packs. I also like the fact that the inside of the case has a soft liner that doesn't scratch the screen on my GPS and has durable elastic to hold and organize gear.

Niteize.com
(800) 678-6483

AMERISTEP NON-TYPICAL AVENGER

For \$150, this compact, hang-on stand has a slim platform size of 29-by-20-inches with a flip-up, padded seat. It weighs in at only 14 pounds and also features backpack straps, plus Ameristep's Accessory Port System allows you to use plug-in accessories like a bow holder.



I really like the "Super Cam Leverage Lock System" on this thing. Just lift the platform, take slack out of the hanging strap and push the front of the platform down. The platform bites into the tree and the hanging strap stretches to secure tightly. It's simple, stable, quick, and quiet.

Ameristep.com
(810) 686-4035

MUZZY ZERO EFFECT GEN 2 ARROW REST

For \$72, this arrow rest has a drop-down design that has zero effect on

arrow flight, which increases arrow speed and bow performance. It comes with an instructional DVD for easy and correct installation. Muzzy now



produces several different versions of this product. The 600 is their standard, universal rest and works better on older compound bows. The 600-Hoyt and 600-Mathews are made especially for those brands. The 600-PC is their most recent arrow rest made specifically for newer, parallel-limbed bows that tend to have shorter string-slide travel.

Muzzy.com
(770) 387-9300

REMINGTON GUN SAFE SUPER PLUG

For \$20, the Moistureguard Super Plug stops rust and corrosion using



Inhibitor VCI rust-preventative technology. It protects all metals during storage, leaves no scent residue, and covers up to 216 cubic feet for up to one year.

I am not a smart guy, so I like "no-brainer" products, especially ones that provide peace of mind. This one is definitely a no-brainer; just hang it in your gun safe and your firearms will be protected for six months or more.

Remington.com
(800) 243-9700

SWISS ARMY FISHERMAN

For \$40, the Victorinox Swiss Army multi-tool features a comfortably-shaped handle, large blade, small blade, can opener, small screwdriver, bottle opener, large screwdriver, scissors, fish scaler, hook disgorging, ruler, reamer, Phillips screwdriver, tweezers, toothpick and more.



Hey, another great pocket tool from Swiss Army... what more do I need to say? But this one is especially cool because its tool selection is great for avid fishermen. Field-testing the bottle opener while sitting at the campfire was my favorite part of the evaluation!

Swissarmy.com
(800) 442-2706

JJ Reich is an outdoor writer who contributes product-related articles to several national publications and is the author of Kampp Tales™ hunting books for children (www.kampptales.com).



Nutty and Nice.

The holidays are a time of warmth and good cheer. A time to celebrate traditions old and new. They're also the perfect time for new Leinenkugel's® Fireside Nut Brown. Brewed with caramel-roasted English two-row malted barley and just a touch of hazelnut, Fireside Nut Brown has a comforting aroma that will take you back to holidays past. So gather 'round the Fireside this holiday and start a new tradition with your friends.



Experience our beers and 140 years of brewing tradition at leinie.com.
©2008 Jacob Leinenkugel Brewing Co., LLC, Chippewa Falls, WI



World Famous Hunting & Fishing Boots

GET THE BEST **PRO LINE** YOU CAN GET.

When you're
looking for the
best, most
dependable
waders and
footwear...
look to the best!



Available At
Fine Sporting
Good Stores.
Call For Nearest Dealer.



Pro Line Manufacturing Co. • 186 Parish Drive • Wayne, NJ 07470
Phone: 1-800-334-4612 • Fax: 1-973-692-0999 • www.prolineboots.com