

September/October 2010

Vol. 4, Issue 1

On Wisconsin *Outdoors*

with the
Dick Ellis Experts

- **Big-Time Buck Brawl**
What really happens in Wisconsin's woods
- **Salmon Secrets**
Eggs aren't just for breakfast
- **Thoughts From A Bruin Chaser**
Snaggle Tooth lives!
- **Veal Of The Woods**
Fresh venison recipes
- **Run, River ... Run**
Many fish species, one locale
- **Monster Muskies**
The transition condition
- **Deer Dominance**
Tagging an area's biggest buck
- **A Wisconsin Game Farm**
Views from both sides of the fence
- **Young Guns**
The building of a waterfowl hunter
- **Life On The 'Other' Side**
Thoughts from a hipster

Dick Ellis

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

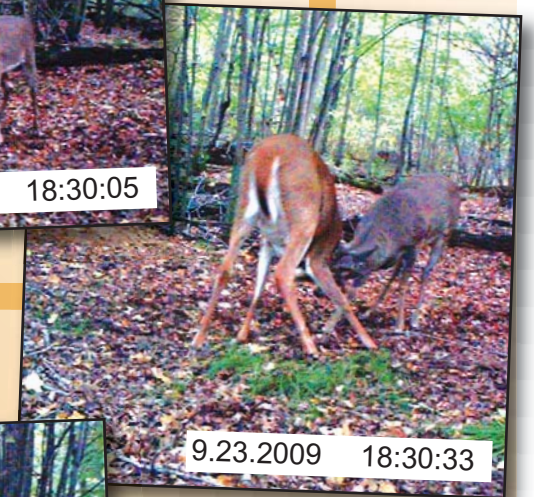
JJ REICH

The Reich Stuff

Bushnell's buck brawl: combat caught on camera



BUSHNELL




Released in 2009, the Bushnell Trophy Cam scouting camera sold out at many retailers because of its compact size, long battery life, high-quality photos or video and a reasonable retail price.

However, one standard feature that works wonders in the woods is Bushnell's generous trigger interval setting. This feature gives you the freedom to set the trigger timing from 1 second up to 60 minutes with 1-3 images per triggered event. Many other cameras on the market today restrict you to a 30-second delay between images.

I set up the Trophy Cam to photograph every 12 seconds once an animal activated the camera. This feature allowed me to catch a 5-minute buck fight in northern Wisconsin. Having 25 images of this buck fight made me feel like I was there! It also proved that I had chosen an excellent treestand location.

New for 2010, innovative technology has greatly increased battery life of the Trophy Cam (although it was already pretty good ...). Under normal use, this new camera will continue to take photos for up to one full year on the same set of Lithium AA batteries. Also, the camera can now accept up to 16GB SD memory card that can store more than

10,000 images when the camera is set on 3 Mega Pixels.

With 360 days of power and 10K of storage, my Trophy Cam is always set up in the most remote, hard-to-check areas of my hunting property. Three models are available: a standard model, a model with a built in color viewer, and the new Bone Collector in Realtree AP camo (pictured). Have fun "shooting!" 

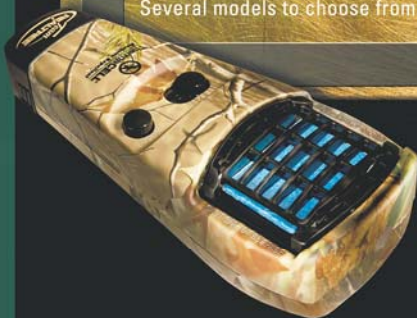
JJ Reich is an outdoor writer who contributes product-related articles to several national publications and is the author of Kampp Tales™ hunting books for children (www.kampptales.com).



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JERRY KIESOW

Fly Fishing In Wisconsin

A basic fly for salmon

“Anglers report having reasonable success in the Lake Michigan tributaries—Root, Menominee, Milwaukee, and Sheboygan—using spawn or egg flies.”

Words similar to these will begin appearing in local newspapers and on the DNR website very soon. The key words for us are “egg flies.”

If there is one type of fly that 90 per cent of all fly fishermen use during fall to catch salmon, both Chinook and Coho, it's the egg fly, in one form or another. This is a fly that is easy to tie. It ties quickly, takes very little material, and is not difficult to fish.

The Recipe

Figure 1: Note that the hook pictured is curved, like a caddis or scud hook, only heavier. It's not required. Many use straight hooks. I think the curve has a tad better hooking abilities. Here, I'm using a No. 8 Mustad C67S. Tie on the thread, preferably using the same or similar color to the egg you are creating. As shown, do not wind the entire hook. You're only using the middle of the hook, so you only need to pre-wind the middle.



Fig. 1

Figure 2: Take about an inch and a quarter of yarn, and using a figure eight tie, secure it to the hook, dividing the material equally on each side. Repeat with a second piece of yarn. Note: Some tiers tie each piece of yarn to the top of the hook, others tie one piece on top and one piece underneath. I prefer, for standard and oversized eggs, tying the yarn on the top and the bottom. For micro eggs I tie only one piece on top.



Fig. 2

Figure 3: After both pieces of yarn are tied in place, bring the thread to the front of the hook. Wind a few additional turns, whip finish and trim the thread. Add a drop of head cement if you like, but it's not required. Now, pull the yarn up and trim it off, leaving about 1/4-inch of yarn on top of the hook.

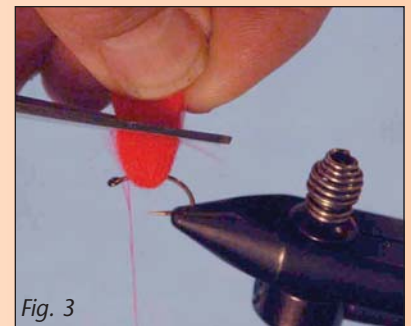


Fig. 3

Figure 4: The yarn will expand and form a ball, almost. Fluff the yarn to complete the ball, and you have your basic egg. (Trim to a more perfect round shape if you are so inclined. It'll look better, but likely won't catch any more fish.)

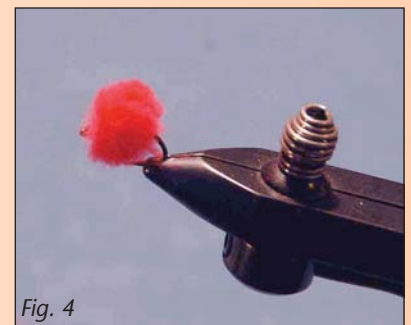


Fig. 4

Variations

Of course, eggs come in a wide variety of variations: sizes, colors, materials.

Continued on page 7

TOM CARPENTER

Stealth Pheasants

Treat ringnecks like big game and find more success

Would you conduct a big game hunt this way? Rumble right into your hunting area. Slam vehicle doors. Laugh and talk as you prepare gear. Scream at a dog and blast on a whistle. Clunk tailgates shut. Yell instructions to partners. Ignore game's daily habits. Charge through the best habitat quickly. Move on.

That describes many Wisconsin pheasant hunts. You'd never dream of hunting deer or turkeys like that, yet an experienced rooster is as cagey and paranoid as any buck or gobbler.

A pheasant's hearing and sight are incredibly keen. Just skin a rooster's head sometime and inspect those huge, bulging eyes and wide, deep ear canals: He was built for survival. Add well-muscled runner's legs and you have a bird that's not going to sit around and let you walk up and shoot him.

It all means you need to take a low-impact, stealthy approach for pheasants. Your best bet might be to hunt solo—just you and your dog. But the principles that follow also apply if you add a partner or two.

A Stealthy Start

Don't slam doors or tailgates. The thumps and vibrations will alert every ringneck in the area and send them running. Whisper softly as you get ready and plan a strategy.

Have your gear ready beforehand. The more lollygagging around you do at your vehicle, the more noise you will make. Get hunting as quickly and quietly as possible; it doesn't take pheasants long to figure out what's going on.

Dog Control

Work with your dog before the season to assure control. Nothing's worse than seeing your canine erupt through the very cover you want to hunt, before you even leave the vehicle. Giving your dog a little pre-hunt run, and keeping him on a check cord until you're ready to hunt, are also good ideas.

The best pheasant dogs are close workers. This is true for flushing dogs of course, but I prefer my pointing dog to stay within gun range while working hard. Many pointing dog experts disagree wholeheartedly, but those experts don't hunt the common man's birds—spooky, hard-hunted cocks on the limited tracts we're usually hunting here in Wisconsin. I want my little Brittany close so that if a rooster does flush while she's working it, I can shoot it. She'll point the ones that do hold.

Practice low-impact dog work all summer.

Teach her to come back in, or redirect, to a light toot on the whistle or just a soft, "Hup," from your voice. Whistle blasts and shouting send roosters running.

Moving Out

In pheasant cover, always take a slow and thorough approach. Many pheasant hunters want to cover lots of ground, attacking quickly, carelessly and without stealth ... which will send birds scurrying before you get anywhere close.

A better approach is a cautious and meandering one—a strategy that gets the birds nervous but doesn't send them sprinting, confuses them some so that they hold better, and gives your dog time to work cover thoroughly.

◆

"It all means you need to take a low-impact, stealthy approach for pheasants."

Quarter back and forth. Zig-zag. Don't walk a straight line. Loop back and re-work good territory again. Swing through corners and edges of cover that might hold birds. Take your time. Weave around and through habitat. Stop often to let the dog work. Wander this way and that. Check out likely tangles. It all works to keep the pheasants guessing at your whereabouts.

If you hunt with a buddy or two, don't shout or talk loudly. Instead, work out a set of hand signals for "straight," "left," "right," "slow down," "bird ahead," "dog's birdy" and other essential communications.

Finally, make plenty of pauses. Pauses make birds edgy, stop birds that are running, and give your dog time to unravel scent trails the pheasants laid down earlier. If you don't hunt with a dog, frequent pauses are even more essential for holding birds and keeping them guessing.



Pheasants might come in a smaller package than whitetails or turkeys, but to outsmart wild and wily old roosters like this, you need to respect their defenses and take a stealthy approach.


Choosing Cover

Good pheasant cover is diverse, containing grassland, cropfields, marshes, cattails, fencelines, brush, woodlots, abandoned or lightly-used pastures, and fallow or forgotten fields.

Know what kind of cover to hunt at different times of day. In the morning, start near feeding areas of harvested cropfields and open meadows, working the edges between cover and food source. As the day progresses and morning starts becoming afternoon, shift your attention to the marshes, cattail swamps, brush and other thick cover.

In the early afternoon, work grassy fields. Pheasants like to loaf here and dust their feathers as they while away some time until evening feeding. When the sun starts descending, head back to the feeding ground edges.

Conclusion

Don't treat pheasants like chumps. Study them, respect them, hunt them with the stealth they require and the effort they deserve. A mature rooster may weigh only three or so pounds, but the long-tailed, resplendent-feathered, hook-spurred glory of a Wisconsin rooster makes for one of hunting's finest trophies. 

Native son Tom Carpenter writes about the outdoor world for a variety of national and regional publications.

MIKE FOSS

Diary Of A Bear Guide

Snaggle Tooth, 2010

Last year, with patches of snow still on the ground, I started baiting mid April. It took 3 weeks for the bait station to get hit, and I had all but given up on Snaggle Tooth—the Bayfield County monster bear—when he finally showed July 25.

Then ...

Just before December 10th (the deadline to apply for a Wisconsin bear tag) the calls started pouring in. With my packets of information ready, I answered all questions and was fully booked before the permits were even in the mail. But the phone didn't stop ringing. I sat there, thinking: We could have a big problem here.

For years I've been saying, "We have too many bears in Wisconsin; why doesn't the DNR give out more bear permits?"

After a multiple-year study, the DNR has come out with a new population estimate and has added more permits. The Problem: supply and demand. Suddenly, it seems there might not be enough guides out there to handle the increased tags.

I started receiving e-mails and more frantic phone calls, "I can't find a guide, can you help me out?" I did manage to help out a few with reputable guides, but there are still more hunters that I had to turn away with nothing.

I advised bear hunters wanting or expecting a Wisconsin bear permit do their homework a few years in advance. "Don't wait 'til the last minute. Make the phone calls. Find your guide. Secure your spot." That's the best I could do.

The bear hunting season in Wisconsin lasts for about a month. Most bear outfitters (just like me), do to work or limited vacation time, run the first week of the season and then are all done. I do keep some bait stations going just in case one of the hunters needs to come back up to try his luck again.

This year, for the first time ever to accommodate more hunters, I've added a second week of great hunting and will do it again for 2011. The second week can be a great week for bigger bears.

Like I said before, most outfitters run only the first week of the season and then they're all done: The baits dry up, making those big hungry bruins search out the bait pits that are still active. In

fact, my past records show that when one of my clients does come back up to hunt that second week, the majority of bears harvested are mature animals.


... And Now

This year is totally a different year than last: It's warmer, wetter and there are lots more bugs. The snow was long gone when I first started baiting this April; the bears had been up and roaming the country side searching for food for weeks, so it didn't surprise me that it only took a few days for each bait station to get hit.

I have invested in more trail cameras and the pictures are starting to pour in. To my surprise, one of the first bears to show up on camera was a beautiful and rare light cinnamon-colored bear. My wife and I filmed him—along with two of his siblings—3 years ago. I captured him last year with only one picture, and now he's frequenting two of my bait stations. What a trophy.

Many of you that have been following the past stories on the monster bear Snaggle Tooth are probably wondering if he has survived yet another winter. Well, on July 5, that smart old bear came back, potentially giving us another shot this fall.

Still a giant bear, Snaggle Tooth has lost some weight and looks old. Out of his prime now, he's trying to keep his rank and dominance in his territory. He has battled many other bruins and has now added another noticeable wound to his many scares—his left ear is split. It's amazing how he still uses his same pattern and times when he visits "his" bait station.

I look forward to telling you the adventures of this bear season. Hopefully this is the year of Snaggle Tooth. 

Mike Foss was born and raised in Washburn, Wisconsin. As a guide and owner of Northern Wisconsin Outfitters, has harvested bear and many deer, including several record book bucks. Off season, Mike spends time with his family and constantly scouting for new hunting areas and adventures. Northern Wisconsin Outfitters is now booking for the 2010 bear season. Go to www.northernwisconsinoutfitters.com or call them at 715.373.0344.



Snaggle Tooth lives! Despite the fears of Outfitter Mike Foss, the legendary bruin has survived another Wisconsin winter and will be out there once again come bear season.



Every bear is a trophy, but a cinnamon color-phase bear is exceptionally rare. Oddly enough, this bear is also working Snaggle Tooth's bait. (Photo taken 5/21/2010)



DAN MOERICKE

An 'Up Nort' Report

Row, row, row your boat

For those used to the Great Lakes version of trolling for trout and salmon, this is going to seem like a lot of work. For those of us trying to catch a lake trout in Vilas county or other places where motor trolling is illegal, it's really the only viable alternative. I'm talking, of course, about row trolling.

There's just something special about being in a small boat or canoe, totally silent except for the sound of the line slicing through the water, just waiting for a laker to hammer your lure. Somehow, it doesn't seem like work although at the end of a long day of paddling, your muscles may tell you otherwise.

Row trolling for lake trout is a passion of mine. The basics needed to effectively put lures in front of these deep water submarines include a canoe/rowboat, rod holders, two rods with reels loaded with 10- to 15-pound test low/no stretch line, a decent locator unit, a couple of Dipsy Divers and a handful of trolling spoons.

In addition to lake trout, you'll also likely hit some big smallmouth bass. It's been my experience that, once the

water warms up, the truly giant smallies are deep—sometimes 40-feet or more below the surface.

Paddling Tackle

The first and most important step in trolling for lakers is to "see" them on the locator and learn what depth they're holding at. The key then is to know how much line you need to let out to get your baits running at that depth. Once you do those two things, it's up to them.

Some days it seems like every fish you mark will hit your lure. From experience, I know it takes about a "10-count" from the time I go over a fish until the time my lure gets there. I've impressed more than one canoe partner by starting a countdown at 10 only to have one of our rods double over when I got down to zero. (For the sake of full disclosure, some days it doesn't work.)

But row trolling isn't just for trout. Although I personally don't chase muskies, there's a small group of guys who use row trolling as their method of choice, especially in fall. In particular,



From monster lakers to panfish, row trolling can be an effective technique. The author, along with his family, prefers row trolling methods to most others.

there's a fella named Tom Gelb out of Conover who has boated some of the biggest muskies in the state the past few years by putting in time between the oarlocks.

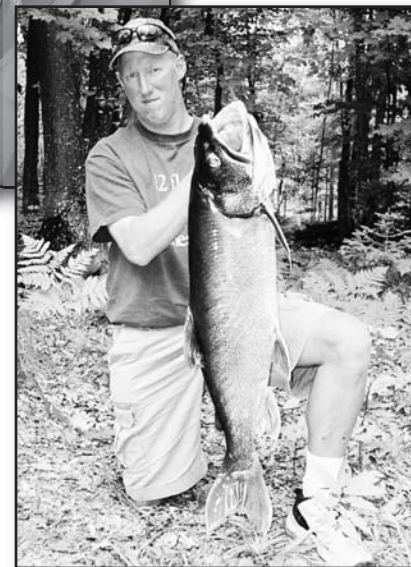
When it comes to walleyes, there are lots of books out there covering the fine points of trolling. Virtually all of these books assume that you're motor trolling, but most of the techniques and concepts will also work when the craft is being powered by a set of oars.

While trolling for muskies and walleyes gets a ton of ink, I'm not sure I've ever seen anything on trolling for panfish. The past couple of years I've started using row trolling to locate schools of crappies and perch. Once located, I often stop and switch to more conventional means to catch these fish fry favorites, but rowing/paddling is an effective way of locating them.

With deep-water crappies, I'll generally put on a tube jig and a big enough sinker to get the bait down anywhere from 10-20 feet. Rowing for panfish involves bringing your boat speed way down, as these fish are not going to chase down a lure passing them at 3 mph the way a lake trout would.

The 'hits' are also a lot different as the crappies like to inhale the tube jig and just swim with it. So, using a light-action rod, all you'll notice is the rod tip start to load up a little. When you do, set the hook—it's crappie time!

Over weed beds, the approach is similar, except I'll clip on a bobber and have the bait suspended just so it slides over the tops of the weeds. Watch for



that that bobber to either "pop" or to just slowly start to veer to the side. When that happens, you've found the crappies.

The same will work for perch. Use a small tube, twister-tail, or Gulp minnow on a jig and weight it enough to put it near the bottom. If the wind happens to be blowing the right direction and speed, you can simply drift and cover water. Row trolling is a way to effectively make sure that the "wind" is always the right direction and speed since you're controlling it.

With panfish, trolling is basically controlled directional drift fishing, since it's that drifting speed you're shooting for.

So save a little money on gas, get a little exercise, and catch a lot of fish. Give row trolling a shot. With a little fine tuning, it'll work for about anything that swims. *W*

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.



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PUBLISHER/EDITOR:
Dick Ellis
ellis@onwisconsinoutdoors.com

MANAGING EDITOR:
Luke Hartle
hartle@onwisconsinoutdoors.com

PRODUCTION & ADVERTISING:
Karen Cluppert, Not Just Words
ads@onwisconsinoutdoors.com

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BILL CUNNEA

Man's Best Friend

Mick, the new, used dog

My wire-haired pointer, Young Bert, tore a ligament back at the end of the 2008 hunting season. Surgery would be dangerous and cost more the \$2,000. He's more than 10 years old. Even though he would hunt himself to the point of agony, my hunting buddy has to be retired. This bothers me a lot ... but, it happens.

But I'm 64, and not as fit as I once was. So I started looking at smaller dogs that might hunt.

I looked into the only small hunting dog that points ... Brittanys. Most of those I've seen in the field have not been entirely in control. Yes, I take into account the owners' responsibility.

I searched the Wisconsin chapter of the American Brittany Rescue Association website. I searched for a long time to find a dog close enough in age and apparent disposition and finally went to pick up "Mick," a 3-4 year old neutered Britt, taken in in Southern Illinois, and shipped up to Wisconsin. He has a long tail, a sweetheart disposition and absolutely no training, except housebreaking. He seemed completely ignorant about life outdoors, but sweet.

I've gone to the creek about three

times with Mick on leash. He'd never seen moving water before. I figure he had to be a city dog; he goes nuts when a tractor or skid-loader goes past.

I got a new shock collar for him. He'd never seen cows before, and was bracing off to either chase or run. Dogs that chase cows in dairy country are called "dead" dogs.

I've started worked on house commands: sit, come. Sit, come. Treat-reward sometimes, No treat other times. We're doing play retrieves in the house for now. I'll get more serious once he realizes that a command means "now." He must have been an apartment dog, or fenced yard, and gotten away with absolutely no demands on his behavior. He is pretty. Pretty dogs, like humans, get away with a lot.

Mick is more work than I thought. He has to un-learn all his background, and then re-learn new stuff. I don't think he's ever just been allowed to run and scent things. I'll teach commands, and hope he can learn about smells. We've had our first pheasant wing on the string play-period. Curious and cautious at first, Mick ended up winding the lead around my legs as he

whimpered and barked to get at the wing. He's interested. It's a start.

Mick and I have taken sporadic walks on lead. He will walk at heel, sit, stay and come ... on lead. I'm not ready to attempt such without lead. Five or six times I've taken him on lead up to a feed lot my neighbor has for his heifers, staying on the concrete pad of 15 feet in width, with cows on either side, leaning out to the feed troughs. The cows are skittish or curious or indifferent. Mick is still in the flight/chase/curiosity stage. My verbal reassurance and petting may be having some effect, but not conspicuously.

Mick is still slim, but I can't see his ribs anymore. He's an unrepentant food thief, and will finish his milk-bone without dropping a crumb and scurry over to get the bigger pieces Young Bert drops. He will stop on command. (Well, on command and collar restraint.)



There's never been a dog owner who's not learned a thing or two from his or her dog while trying to give that dog an education. And for the author, the learning curve with his new Brittany, Mick, has been steep.

He is starting to get the relationship he and I are going to have. He is slowly moving from "I'm a pet" to "I'm expected to actually do something."

In the fifth week, a heartening trip outside involved me taking Mick, the Brittany, over to a neighbor's property ... to a former pasture, now in CRP ... for a trial off-leash romp. It was the first time I let him out of my physical control. I think the dog understands he and I are part of a home ... perhaps in time Mick will accept that we are part of a team.

He moves like a dream. Dog owners will understand what I mean: nice crisp movement and head up in

Continued on page 19

KIESOW, from page 3

Figure 5 shows a few. From the left: A micro egg which was made of colored hot glue. A micro egg made by dubbing lime green yarn (you can also use chenille). A "no-tie" egg made by simply taking a commercially packaged styrofoam egg and pushing it on a hook.

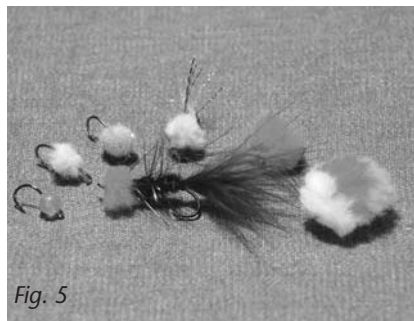


Fig. 5

The center egg has been tied with red hackle in front of the egg and a few strands of Krystal Flash for a "tail." This represents an egg that is very fresh and still "bleeding." Then there is the normal, simple egg, which we just tied, and, far right, an oversized, multi-

colored egg, which is about the size of a nickle.

The fly in the middle of all these variations is an egg-sucking leach (love that name). This is simply a Woolly Bugger that's tied with a shorter than normal body to allow for finishing the fly with an egg tied directly behind the eye. It's the second most used fly for salmon.

I recommend you tie your eggs in a variety of colors: hot pink, peach, lime green. There's a wide variety offered in the shops and catalogs. Also have several sizes, and tie some of each weighted.

Often during the fall, especially in the early season, the waters are quite low. However, invariably, the rains will come, which is a good thing because the increased flow of water bring fresh fish into the rivers, but higher, faster water means you need to get the flies down deeper, faster, and if you do not use weighted flies, you'll need those dreaded

split shot sinkers. (They hang up so often.)

How do you fish an egg?

Much of the fun when fly fishing for salmon is that so much of it is sight fishing. You see your quarry. Often times, when the run is really on, you can stand in one place and let fish come to you. Fish after fish after fish. Some days, not always, they just keep coming. If you have stationed yourself in a spot where they rest, or spawn, you may not have to move for hours, if that's what you like. Personally, I like to move from fish to fish, but that's just me.


When you see fish, the challenge, as least with chinooks, is to get the egg down, close enough to their nose, so it sees the egg and for whatever reason, they are not feeding, it opens its mouth and sucks in the fly. Then the fun begins. Often, drifting the fly close and not having the fish take it can be

frustrating, but be patient. It will—maybe. If not, go check out another fish.

Cohos are much more aggressive. I've had coho charge three feet or more to inhale my fly. I like coho. They fight better too.

Generally, the chins come into the rivers first. After a few weeks of catching these "kings," as they are also called, most rivermen look for coho and steelhead and browns. "I've caught enough chins for this year," are words heard quite often as October slips by and the leaves fall.

So get on your tying bench. Whip out a few eggs in a few colors—some weighted, some not—and hit the rivers. By now, the fun should have begun.

Keep a good thought! 


Jerry Kiesow fly fishes in Wisconsin year round, and teaches fly tying and fly fishing in the Grafton area. If you have questions about his classes, contact him via email at mrmrsprg8@wi.rr.com.

SUZETTE CURTIS

Recipes By Suzette

Veal of the woods

I've been asked to share my favorite venison recipes for this issue, which means you might have seen some of these in past issues. Venison has always been my preferred game for cooking because of its versatility. And because it's much healthier than beef, it has become a staple in our household.

Whether simply substituting venison in our own favorite beef recipes or creating new recipes that are meant to specifically enhance the flavor of venison, the possibilities are endless. 

Suzette Curtis of Oshkosh cooks for a family of hunters and fishermen, and says she tries to fill their menu with recipes for meals made with venison, upland birds and fish. She does just that with great expertise. recipesbysuzette@onwisconsinoutdoors.com

Venison Liver Pate

by Suzette Curtis

1 lb. venison liver	2 tbsp. olive oil
1 stick butter, softened	1 medium onion, chopped
¼ c. mayonnaise	2 hard-boiled eggs, chopped
½ tbsp. sugar	2 cloves garlic, minced

Heat olive oil in large skillet. Cut liver into small pieces and sauté in olive oil until cooked through but still tender. Meanwhile, combine remaining ingredients in medium bowl and mix thoroughly. Place in food processor and add cooked venison; blend until smooth.

You can do this in a blender also (which is how I usually do it because my food processor is too small), but be careful not to burn out the motor on your blender. I speak from experience; I am on blender No. 3 with this recipe. This makes a great appetizer with crackers, bread sticks, or crostini.

• www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com •

Venison Curry

by Suzette Curtis

2 lbs. venison, cut into cubes	3 tbsp. olive oil
1/3 cup flour	2 onions, sliced
½ tsp. ground ginger	3 tsp. curry powder
2 -14½ oz. cans diced tomatoes	2 c. beef stock

Heat olive oil in Dutch oven over medium heat. Dredge Venison cubes in flour and sauté in oil just until browned. Add remaining ingredients. Bring to a boil; cover and simmer for 1½ hours stirring occasionally. If liquid is not desired thickness, continue to cook uncovered for 10-15 minutes longer.

The key to this dish is the quality of the curry. I try to buy small quantities at a time because curry tends to lose its rich flavor very quickly if left on the shelf.

• www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com •

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Venison Kabobs

by Suzette Curtis

2 lbs. venison, cut into cubes	2 onions, quartered
2 green peppers, seeded and quartered	1 c. dry vermouth
1 lb. whole mushrooms (try baby bellas)	1/3 c. olive oil
2 cloves garlic, minced	

Place venison chunks and whole mushrooms in a large Ziploc bag or covered container. Combine vermouth, olive oil, and garlic; pour over meat and mushrooms to coat completely. Refrigerate 2-3 hours.

Alternate meat and vegetables on skewers; discarding excess marinade. Place skewers over hot coals or high temperature on a gas grill. The trick is to cook them quickly to sear the meat and allow the vegetables to remain semi-crisp. It only takes about 5 minutes for rare, so adjust your timing according to the desired doneness of the meat.

• www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com •



Venison Roast

by Suzette Curtis

Venison roast (2-5 lbs.)
Onions, sliced in rings (two onions per every pound of roast)
1 can whole cranberry sauce

Place sliced onions on bottom of crock pot. Top with roast and spoon cranberry sauce over the roast. Cover and cook 8-10 hours on low.

The meat comes out very tender with this recipe, and the flavor from the cranberries is a wonderful compliment to the natural flavor of the venison.

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JOEL "DOC" KUNZ

On Wisconsin Rivers

Run, river ... run!

Fishing "the run" is usually associated with spring walleye and white bass on Wisconsin's rivers. In fact, most anglers don't understand how the dynamic of a river creates a fall run that's usually more consistent than its spring counterpart. That's because fall outdoor activities are dominated by the fur and feather crowd, leaving much of the river to those who prefer to fish.

The reasons fish populations move in the fall is pretty simple: food. Water temperatures and flow also work as part of the dynamic that bring fish in to the river in the fall. On rivers where there are dams, fish movement is limited for obvious reasons. That means structure within the first few miles below the dam will usually hold fish as they move back and forth between the dam and other deep water spots down stream.

The first action of the fall is always near the mouth of the river at the lake below those dams. Fish move from the lake in to the river drawn by the flow of the oxygenated water and baitfish that are moving from the cooling tributaries and backwaters in to the main river. Instinct puts them there and if Mother Nature provides food, they will stay.

Lake Wisconsin is the feeder lake to the "Dells" area in the fall, and I suggest hiring a guide to show you some of the seldom-fished area between River's Edge and Lake Wisconsin. Sand bars and other obstructions make access to this area from the boat ramps near the Dells something left to those who know the river. Believe me, the fishing can be phenomenal.

The Mighty Wisconsin

From the pool at the Dells upstream there are numerous opportunities for some excellent fishing. Crappies start the action on the Wisconsin. I've seen some nice catches of crappies fishing out of River's Edge in the early fall.

My discussion with other local bait shops up stream at Castle Rock, Petenwell, Nekoosa and Lake DuBay all talked about the potential for some good catches of crappie starting in mid September. They can show up in the

river along cover or in the back bays and sloughs. Like here on the Wolf, crappie fishing can be great one day and slow the next, but fall is a good time to find them stacked up in places looking to feed. A small minnow below a slip bobber is my favorite tactic but pitching light jigs will work well also.

White bass are another fall run fish that usually show up on Wisconsin's river systems in good numbers. Again, from the "Dells" upstream to Lake DuBay, white bass are present and often show up in the fall in good numbers. At Four Seasons Mini Mart in Friendship, the well informed young lady I talked to spoke about catching quite a few at night along the rocks on the Castle Rock Flowage. That sounds like fall white bass fishing on the Wolf River to me, making believing the rest of the report quite easy.

Seems big news in the area is the Muskie population and fall is a great time to catch one. Bob Stoiber at Sunrise Bait and Tackle in Nekoosa, Wisconsin, echoed the often excellent fall white bass fishing on the upper end of the Petenwell Flowage. Smallmouth bass, too. White bass from 12-14 inches can be expected and offer an excellent meal and a great fight. On Lake DuBay Kim Gross from Lakeview Log Cabin Resort talked about a few white bass up to 16 inches and also mentioned the fall Muskie and northern pike fishing.

I always seem to find a few walleye and sauger any time I go fishing on the Wisconsin River, but that gets better as the water cools. In fact, the best walleye and sauger fishing of the year comes just as the ice starts to form and again after any thaw that opens the area below the dam. Same with the Wolf and Fox. Walleye fishing gets better as the water cools and is best as shoreline and back water ice starts to form. Access is excellent all along the Wisconsin River with many boat ramps open all year long when conditions allow. Castle Rock, Petenwell and Du Bay all provide excellent early fall run fishing for crappie, walleye and sauger. Being in



Craig Keuler holds a dandy fall Wolf River white bass. RIGHT: Kevin Wright poses with a smile and a beautiful fall walleye.



contact with the local bait shops is the key to being in the right place at the right time. Each system has a dam at it's head and boat ramps fairly near the dams. Flowing water keeps them open well in to the fall where walleye and sauger dominate the fall run fishing. The Howling Wolf

My home waters of the Wolf River also offer a vast variety of fall run fishing opportunities. Crappie, perch and white bass start the action. Smallmouth bass also become more numerous in the river as days shorten and the waters cool. Coming out of the sloughs, feeder creeks and tributaries they look to bulk up for winter in the main river before retuning to the lower lakes.

Northern pike fishing is also quite good and there have been some muskies caught over 50 inches on Lake Poygan and the Wolf River. Of course the walleye fishing is what guys are looking for and September can be a good time to start looking. I've followed schools of resident fish as they move up and down stream with the rising and falling water levels. Walleye can be found anywhere from the mouth of Lake Poygan to New London this time of year but once you find them, they usually don't go far.

Crappie fishing is best when the water is high enough to cover the many windfall trees in the river. This looks like a good year for that. The higher water levels also produce optimism for an excellent fall run of white bass. High water and good year

classes of big fish could make 2010 a legendary year for those fish in Fremont this fall. The Fox

The Fox River between DePere and Green Bay is another fall run destination. Here, walleyes are the most popular but the fall run of muskies is what has been getting more and more publicity. There are not many places in the world where an angler has a chance to catch a 50-inch muskie and 30-inch walleye on the same day in the same body of water.

Trollers targeting both species are common most days in the fall here. Personally, I like jiggging the current breaks, river channel and deep hole below the dam because of the chance to catch large numbers of big fish.

Then, as the light wanes, I get set up to cast crank baits below the dam and tailrace rocks near the paper mill. Fish can be caught during daylight hours jiggging and trolling but the biggest walleye are caught casting at night. Enjoy a fall day of river run fishing somewhere in Wisconsin this year. You might find a crappie memory or white bass moment to never forget. Fall walleye fishing is coming, too, so it's a great time to be on the river ... any river. *W*

Joel "Doc" Kunz is a 2005 "Readers Choice" Award winner, member of the Association of Great Lakes Outdoor Writers (AGLOW) and a member of the Wisconsin Outdoor Communicators Association (WOCA). Visit Doc's website at www.wolfrivercountry.com.



DENNIS RADLOFF

Transition Condition

When it comes to early fall muskie fishing, finding and locating the “transition” spots can be the main factor to catching fish on a consistent basis. Fall transition spots will be the areas outside of the actual destination of the “fall staging” spots. A fall staging spot is an area where many muskies will spend their winter preparing for next spring’s spawn.

These fall staging areas will be just outside of, or adjacent to, where the fish will actually spawn in the spring. For example, if you fish a system where muskies utilize the tail end of a shallow bay for spawning, then the fall staging areas will be the mouth of that bay. If you fish a system where the muskies utilize a river as their main spawning area, then the mouth of the river would be the fall staging area.

The “transition” areas in early fall will be the “middle ground” between the main lake structure and the fall staging area. In the 2009 season I had an incredible pattern working a transition piece of structure.

This transition structure was a main lake sand bar located between the mouth of the river and the middle of the lake. This sand bar created a natural “stop over” point as the muskies worked their way down toward the mouth of the river. Most people wait for the fish to arrive at the “fall staging” area missing out on 2-3 weeks of fishing opportunity on the transition spots.

Another great factor about working the transition spots is that you will often have the area to yourself while others are focusing their efforts on traditional locations. So, don’t be afraid to break away from the crowds this fall and venture out to catch some muskies in transition. *W*

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 Dennis through his website www.sterlingmusky.com or 262.443.9993.

DAVE’S TURF & MARINE

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Dave Kahler talks like a man who has it all. He caught the girl decades ago and they raised four girls of their own. He owns the business, “Dave’s Turf & Marine” in Watertown, where he began in service under the tutelage of his father-in-law 50 years ago. He values his customers and he’s earned their trust and return business with high quality marine and lawn products and no-excuses service. And, Dave Kahler likes going to work...every day...with the partner he quickly credits with making the family business hum smoothly across the decades.

“I know some guys wish they didn’t have to go to their job, but I don’t feel that way and neither does Leni,” Dave said, in reference to his wife. “Leni is actually the glue that holds this whole thing together. Every day for both of us it’s just... okay...let’s go do it.”

That’s been a lot of mornings. Dave started working in service for then owner and Leni’s father, Leonard Riemer in 1961. Specializing in lawn and garden equipment including walk-behind mowers, riders and chain saws, Dave bought out the business in 1966 and expanded the service to include repairing outboards. By 1969, boats and outboards were a part of the inventory, including Mercury and Evinrude E-Tec outboards.

In 1971, Leni, who was named after her father, joined the staff in administration. She and Dave had also been tending to another more important job...raising daughters Pamela, Debra, Marcia and Kathryn. “Debbie” today



Fishing transition spots—those “in between” areas where muskies move from summer to winter haunts—can pay off big.

primarily assists the family business in sales and computer entry.

For 17 years, “Dave’s Turf & Marine” has featured the comprehensive line of high quality Princecraft fishing and recreational boats and proudly offers John Deere lawn and garden tractors and commercial mowing equipment. But it is an uncompromising commitment to customer service that compliments the quality marine and turf products that have earned reputations as household names.

“Our high customer satisfaction in part comes from our commitment to service,” Dave Kahler said. “On the marine side, Rick Mueller has been in service for 35 years. He started here at age 15. It’s absolutely a given that people we’ve dealt with before trust us, and we trust them. We’re a family business and people who like to do business with us...really like it. They know they’re not going to be left holding the bag. If they have a problem, they know it’s going to be taken care of.”

Dave’s Turf & Marine also goes beyond the ordinary. When top Wisconsin musky and walleye guide and “On Wisconsin Outdoors” staff writer Dennis Radloff approached Dave as an unknown guide seeking sponsorship, he wasn’t turned down.

“I still remember the day I walked up to Dave 13 years ago asking if he would sponsor my fishing venture,” Radloff said. “His response was ‘You betcha’. Since that day I have had an incredible guide business and tournament career in the musky and walleye industry. Dave and Leni have become family to me and I love them with all my heart. I’m always proud to represent them wherever I go. I wouldn’t be where I am today without Dave, Leni and the rest of the incredible staff at Dave’s Turf & Marine.”

Dave’s Turf & Marine has been a prominent sponsor of On Wisconsin Outdoors, one more reason why Wisconsin outdoor enthusiasts can pick up your copy at no cost at 600 Wisconsin locations. Before you buy your next boat or lawn product, see Dave’s Turf & Marine in Watertown or check out the entire inventory online at www.davesturf.net.



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DICK ELLIS

On Wisconsin Outdoors

Dominance is everything

During the rut that moves into high gear from late October through mid-November, bow hunting stories abound across Wisconsin. Bowhunters' dreams fueled all year long are no doubt peaking now in September but late fall is the time for excruciating, close encounters with monster bucks and success stories of tagging once-in-a-lifetime whitetails. 2009 has its share of stories, one of which sticks out because I handled camera work and helped drag out a mid-day special buck taken in Waukesha County.

In September of 2009, I had stood in standing corn in southern Wisconsin during the early goose season waiting for birds. None came, but I listened as Wisconsin hunter Bob Mercier explained his unique deer hunting system that targets dominant bucks exclusively during the whitetail rut. Mercier said he has been developing the 4-day system over 9 years in the field, and plans on releasing a book on the

tactic in October of 2010. Mercier originally told me about the method several years ago, in another goose blind, but was still researching and writing and not ready to go public.

Since 2000, Mercier said he has only hunted with bow during four consecutive days of the rut, and each year has been able to see what he classifies as the area's dominant buck within 35 yards of his stand. He claims 100 percent success, and has shared the system with several archers under agreements of confidentiality and said each of these hunters has also been successful in tagging or drawing big bucks close using the system.

Although Mercier's 2009 hunt was on a 12 acre piece of private property in southern Wisconsin, he said that public land hunters have and will continue to use the system successfully. Utilizing mock scrapes (man-made imitation of the buck's ground marking calling-card



Bob Mercier used his new system that he developed for use exclusively during the whitetail rut to tag this Waukesha County buck November 5th. The buck had 17 scoreable points, a 19-inch inside spread and great mass and character including a hole in the horn. Mercier has tagged or missed shot opportunities at four other very big bucks utilizing the system over the last decade. His book on the method, he said, will be published by March. (Dick Ellis)

for female companionship), and scents of both a doe and buck, the system, he said, seeks to convince the dominant buck that a breeding pair of deer, meaning a doe in estrus and an intruder buck are in the area. The dominant buck, he said, will then pattern and hunt down the phantom deer (the hunter), seeking to breed with the doe and eject the buck challenging "his" established terrain.

Mercier said he personally has over the last decade tagged what he believes were the area's biggest bucks or missed opportunities at the dominant buck he had drawn in close. He has tagged a 20-inch wide nine pointer, another huge nine pointer and missed 10 point and 12 point bucks using the system. "Getting them to come in is what I can teach you," he said. "I can't make you a better shot."

Careful to use human scent eliminators, Mercier's hunt began on November 3rd. During the planned 4 days he hunted over his mock scrape and mock tree rubs next to the authentic deer signs with controlled scent drip canisters of both buck and doe set on a defined trail. He hunted virtually all of Tuesday and Wednesday and saw one deer. The target buck, he said, will arrive on any day but usually day three or four and on occasion more than one big buck will arrive at the scrape.

"I always cover my trail with a lure that will attract the buck," Mercier said. "Remember I am only seeking one buck; the most dominant buck in the area. When you follow the directions the buck will come in during daylight and he will freshen the scrapes giving you a close shot opportunity."

On November 5th or day three of the system, Mercier had an encounter with a "huge 10-point buck" that stopped short of the mock scrapes and almost beneath the hunter's treestand did not move for 30 minutes. Mercier had seen the buck previously during the summer and estimated 14-inch tines and an estimated Pope & Young score of 160.

The buck moved to the scrape. Mercier arrow missed what "was the most dominant buck in the area ... or so I thought." He would soon meet, however, the real king of the forest. Still in the morning hours, Mercier was drawn by the grunting of two bucks and watched as a mammoth animal kicked out another buck and trotted in to where Mercier's own grunt call brought him to a stop one yard from the mock double scrapes. At 20 yards the shot was true.

Mercier called and asked if this reporter could help drag the buck and take photos. The 17 point non-typical had not traveled far. The buck has a 19-

Continued on page 25



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www.TeresaMullenmaster.FirstWeber.com



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Jen Christie Pietsch
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www.AnnileePietsch.FirstWeber.com



SCHROEDER, JAMES & ASSOC.
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Spencer Schroeder
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PHIL SCHWEIK

Lines From A Hooksetter

Big baits = big fish



Fall is the time when the “big dogs” come out to play. Water temperatures are steadily working their way down and the muskies are putting on the feedbag.

Now is when you want to start bringing out the big stuff. Muskies are normally opportunistic feeders, but in the fall when the water temperatures are down they prefer large, slow-moving baits or lures.

Large jerkbaits like Suicks or Reef Hawgs with their tantalizing back-and-forth motion will often lure a big muskie into striking. Big, deep-diving crankbaits like Depth Raiders and Double D's, along with large rubber baits like Bulldawgs from Musky Innovations, will get down to the area where they lurk and provoke an attack.

And believe it or not, giant bucktails like the Double Cowgirl or the Sumo Sam by Slowie Tackle slow rolled over muskie haunts will rouse even the laziest of fall muskies into striking.

Only In Autumn

All of these baits are used regularly throughout the year, but when fall arrives they are in a class of their own. Fall muskies might be lethargic due to the declining water temperature but that doesn't mean

they are going dormant.

This is the time of the year that they start bulking up for the upcoming winter. The thing to remember is that at this time of the year a big muskie isn't going to exert more energy to chase after or attack a bait than it's worth. A small spinnerbait that might have worked when burned over a summer weedbed just isn't going to cut it now.

A big muskie wants a meal—not a paltry snack—and when it sees an opportunity coming its way in the form of a large, slow-moving bait or lure, it realizes that this is something that is worth going after. They seize the opportunity and strike. This is when you get ready, hang on and set the hook!

Fall fishing can be fun and very rewarding, but you must be ready and willing to put in the time to pursue and run the appropriate baits and techniques. *W*

Phil Schweik owns and operates Hooksetters Guide Service in Central Wisconsin. Phil is an avid tournament fisherman and seminar speaker. Phil and his clients put 125 muskies in his boat last year, with the largest one being 53 ½ inches long and over 40 pounds. Contact Phil at: 715-693-5843 or visit him at www.hooksetters.biz.

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Stories of the one that got away become the catch of the day. Check out the **hidden rivers, streams and lakes of Richland County** while enjoying the breathtaking scenery. The rich splendor of color and fresh crisp autumn air will bring you back again and again! [Click on Richland County.](#)

Where's your favorite place to wear orange? At a **Green Bay Packers game**, of course! Get more use out of your blaze orange hunting gear by wearing it to support the Pack against the Buffalo Bills 9/19, the Detroit Lions 10/3, the Miami Dolphins 10/17 or the Minnesota Vikings 10/24. To get your tickets and book your hotel, [click on Brown County.](#)

Adams County parks in Central Wisconsin, just north of Wisconsin Dells, offer camping, fishing, boating, swimming, and hiking located on **Wisconsin's second- and fourth- largest**

bodies of water. Parks offer modern hot showers 24 hours a day. [Click on Adams County.](#)

Iron County is a sportsman's fall paradise for hunting, fishing and ATVing. **214 lakes** including the 14,000 acre Turtle Flambeau Flowage for some great fall fishing. Hunters can utilize **377,000 acres of forest land** in Iron County with a variety of game species. The brilliant colors of fall also offer some of the years best ATVing. For an ATV trail map or a sportsman's map showing public land and public boat access, click on [Iron County.](#)

Polk County is located in scenic NW Wisconsin on the Minnesota/Wisconsin border. **With over 400 lakes**, you'll have no trouble finding a great fishing hole. Don't forget to **canoe/kayak** the beautiful St. Croix River and bring your bikes to ride the **Gandy Dancer State Bike Trail**. P.S. ... the Fall color is gorgeous! [Click on Polk County.](#)

Set your own pace while the brilliant colors of autumn surround you. **Hike, bike, hunt or fish.** Whatever your pleasure, there's room for you in Marinette County. [Click on Marinette County.](#)

September & October are beautiful months by the lake. Bring your bike & ride the **30+ mile Interurban Recreational Trail**. Hike through fall foliage in nearby natural areas. Shop the bountiful Farmers Market. **Tour art galleries** October 8-10, or try a **Ghost Tour** the end of October! Calendar of events, [click on Ozaukee County.](#)

Surf & Turf the Wolf Pack Way? For your Surf the tributary streams to Lake Michigan have **King and Coho salmon** stacked up like cord wood below the dams. And your' Turf the Fields & Marshes are alive with the sounds of **waterfowl** music for the fall flights. [Click on Sheboygan County.](#)

Chequamegon Bay Tagged Fishing Contest May - October 31 on Chequamegon Bay in Ashland. Purchase a 2010 Tagged Fishing Pin for \$5.00 prior to catching a tagged fish and you could **catch a fish worth \$1000** or eleven other fish worth cash prizes. [Click on Ashland County.](#)

Fall Colors, fishing, ATV riding, and hunting are just a few of the activities that are waiting for you on your Northwest Wisconsin vacation. With nearly a thousand lakes, **hundreds of miles of trails and scenic roads**, you'll find plenty of adventure in Washburn County. [Click on Washburn County.](#)

Celebrate **Ruffed Grouse Fall Festival** throughout Park Falls October 9. The Price County region offers **five scenic trail systems** for motorized vehicle enthusiasts to explore. All five are open to ATV and UTV use; some open to off-road motorcycles. Many trail systems allow direct access to food, lodging and services, while others are in undeveloped areas. [Click on Price county.](#)

The hills are rolling, the river is flowing, the **leaves will be changing**, and **apples ready for picking**. You can get to it all from the Grandview Motel in Ferryville, WI. Duck hunters: a few dates left to fill for **premium Mississippi river hunting**. Contact guide Todd Lensing for info. [Click on Crawford County.](#)

In Walworth County, some of the **best fishing of the year** is after Labor Day weekend. The walleyes and trophy pike are hungry and ready to be caught! Call Dave Duwe's Guide Service 608-883-2050, and for more information [Click on Walworth County.](#)

While boating or fishing on Lake Winnebago, launch at Calumet County Park system's updated harbors. **Brothertown Harbor, Stockbridge Harbor and the Calumet County Park Harbor** all offer modern launching facilities and ample parking. The harbors also offer a safe spot to park the boat to wait out bad weather. [Click on Calumet County.](#)

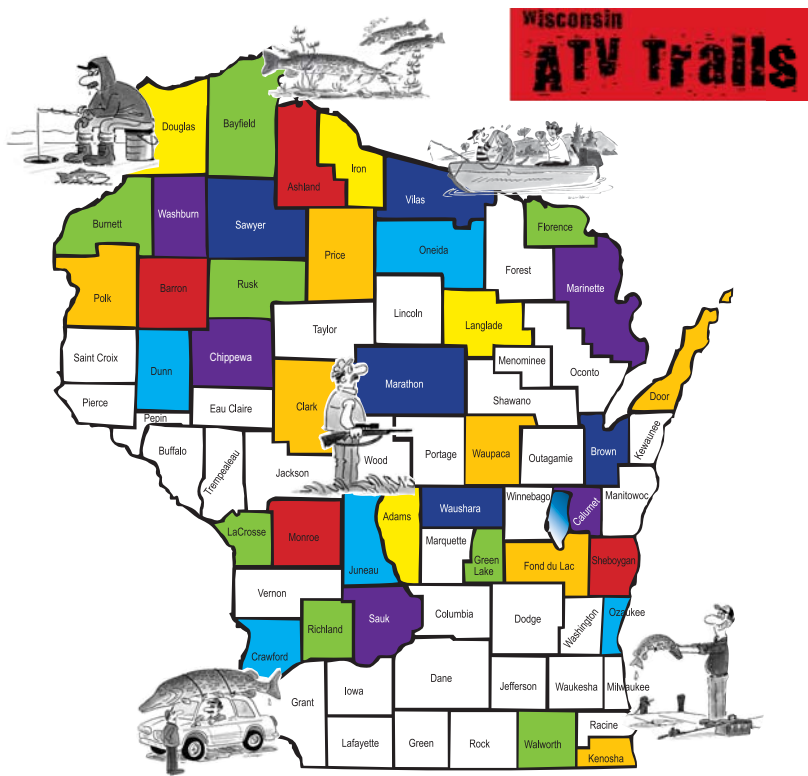
Get out on the road this fall and take in the **spectacular fall colors** and attractions in Chippewa County. Visit our two state parks, bike the **Old Abe State Trail**, take in a historic downtown, or stop by one of our many **apple orchards, wineries, or brewery** and sample the fruits of our labor. [Click on Chippewa County.](#)

Treeland Resorts presents four resort locations on the **Chippewa Flowage** for family, friends or business group. Special **discounted fall rates** for great fishing, color, hunting or just getting away from it all. Explore the trails for **hiking and biking** in the nearby forests. Mention *On Wisconsin Outdoors* with a new reservation and **get a free T-shirt**, call (715) 462-3874. [Click on Sawyer County.](#)

Great Fall Fishing! Bass, walleye, northern and pan fish at the Big Chetac Resort on **Big Chetac Lake** in Sawyer County. Enjoy the 'Up North' at its best. [Click on Sawyer County.](#)

The Dog Days are over and **fishing is hot** with great smallmouth and big pike fishing guaranteed on a daily basis on **Lake Geneva**. Contact Jim Tostrud at

Explore Wisconsin | County-by-County at www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com



Wildlife Visions for guide information. [Click on Kenosha County.](#)

Big muskies take center stage in September and October on the Wisconsin River system and its backwaters. Let Hooksetters Fishing Guide Service guide your next trip. [Click on Portage County.](#)

Don't forget to follow some of **Wisconsin's best bear hunting** this September and the ongoing quest for the monster boar, Snaggletooth. **100 percent shot opportunity in 2009** and a tagged Boone & Crockett boar at 638 pounds with Northern Wisconsin Outfitters. [Click on Bayfield County.](#)

High water and vast numbers of bait fish in the river means fall fishing action is about 2-3 weeks behind but **unbelievable action** looms on the September-October horizon. Like **monster pike**? The Wolf is the place. [Click on Waupaca County.](#)

Don't forget the **fabulous fall walleye and whitebass runs** are right around the corner on the Wolf River. Fremont Chamber of Commerce has information about the area. [Click on Waupaca County.](#)

There's a feeling of excitement in the air in Douglas County when the foliage transforms from lush summer greens to the **vibrant reds and yellows of fall**. Enjoy some of the finest fall fishing around or hike, bike or ride on our recreational trails, including the new **Straight Arrow Trail for Off-Highway Motorcycles**. [Click on Douglas County.](#)

The **Bicycling Capital of America**, Sparta, Wisconsin is home of the very first 'rails to trails' in the entire country including a **three-quarter mile long tunnel!** Join Sparta for the first annual **On the Trail Beer & Wine Challenge** Saturday, September 11. For details, [click on Monroe County.](#)

As the temperature starts to drop, come enjoy the **fall colors** of Langlade County! You can take a walk on none of our many **hiking trails through fields and forests**. Watch as the trees change to beautiful shades of reds, oranges and yellows. Make your visit unforgettable. [Click on Langlade County.](#)

The **four canoeing rivers** of Juneau County offer breathtaking scenery and many islands to stop and explore. Take along a camera because you are sure to get some great pictures of **panoramic views and wildlife** as you navigate the waterways of Juneau County. [Click on Juneau County.](#)

September 3-5 **ATV Rally**- Scavenger Hunt, Mud Run, & Trail Challenge. September 4 is the **Flambeau 40 On-Road Bike Race**. October 9 - **Ruffed Grouse Fall Festival**, demonstrations, shooting competition & lessons, kids games, crafts & Hunter's Dinner. [Click on Price County.](#)

Check out 5 good reasons to visit **Manotak Lodge in Ontario, Canada** this September: Walleye, Northern, Jumbo Perch, Smallmouth Bass and Musky. Find us by [clicking on Waupaca County.](#)

Visit us in the Cable Area in southern Bayfield County in the heart of the **Chequamegon National Forest**, with miles upon miles of trails; hiking, biking, skiing, ATViing and snowmobiling! Join us this fall for our **9th Annual Fall Festival** on September 24 & 25, family fun for everyone! [Click on Bayfield County.](#)

Lakeview Log Cabin Resort is one of Marathon Counties fishing, hunting, and vacation get-aways on **Lake DuBay**. Located on the border of Marathon and Portage Counties, the water offers walleye, musky, northern, bass, catfish, and panfish year round. **Mead and Dewey Wildlife Refuge** are within reasonable driving distance for the fall hunt. [Click on Marathon County.](#)

Autumn in Clark County can't be rivaled, offering **breathtaking vistas** of flaming foliage. Our 133,000 acres of county forest provide access for **hiking, scenic driving, wildlife observation, berry picking, horseback riding**, and motorized and non-motorized recreational trail use. The forest abounds with whitetail deer, traditional small game and black bear. [Click on Clark County.](#)

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• A River Guide (Jason Guarke)

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TERRY BITZ

Outdoor Convergence

A 'flightful' fine line

Pheasants have been hunted in Wisconsin for more than 100 years. This native of Asia was introduced into the state in the 1800s and has since become part of the Wisconsin hunting tradition.

Pheasant hunting today is provided via a mix of raised-then-released birds and the wild population that tends to fluctuate with the yearly weather conditions. Filling in the gap between released birds and the wild population are the various game farms that exist throughout the state.

On an invitation I visited Blonhaven Hunt Club, which is located northwest of Beloit near Orfordville. Residing on more than 300 acres, Blonhaven is the oldest continuous operating hunting preserve in the state. The club offers the opportunity to hunt pheasant and partridge from late September into early April.

I have to admit that I had little

knowledge of hunting on a game farm and was not completely sold on how the operations fit in with my own idea of fair chase. I also have to admit my experience with pheasant hunting mostly came in my youth and whatever meager skills I had were probably lost decades ago.

Thankfully, the club offers people like me the chance to learn to bird hunt without having to contend or compete with other hunters who swarm public hunting grounds in the fall. With Blonhaven operating under a game farm license, people are able to hunt through a longer season than normal and they do not need a hunting license, even if they are nonresidents.

"Bird hunting is not that hard to learn," said John Mathews, club manager. "And we can supply everything a hunter needs, outside of the guns."

Blonhaven has several hunting



The hunting crew with the pheasant bagged on the hunt. Scott Hill (holding the bird) and Dave Hill along with Corky are in the foreground. The author's sons, Scott (left) and Devin, are in the background.

guides on staff to help provide hunting expertise as well as dogs for those hunters who don't have their own.

The club offers ringneck pheasants as well as chukar and Hungarian partridges for the hunts, which take place in one of many fenced hunting

zones. A paid hunt includes three released pheasants for each hunter, though hunters can pay to have more birds released into their hunting area. Blonhaven is a bit unique in that

Continued on page 25

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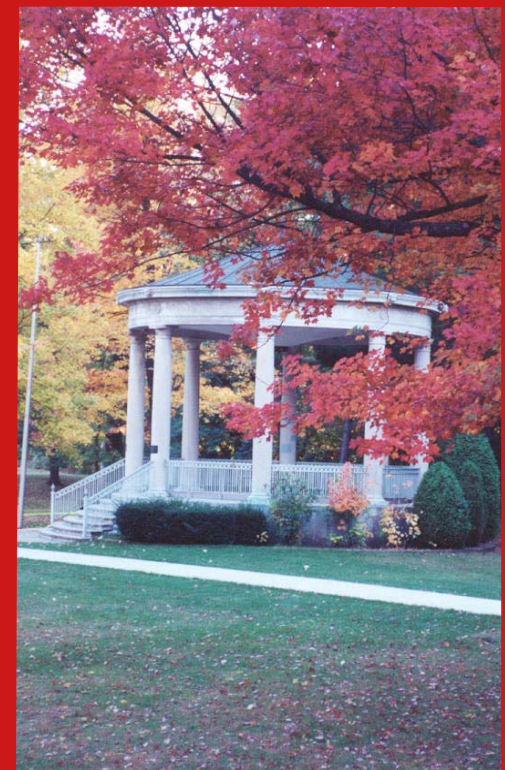
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JERROD ERDODY

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Early season success

It was my second evening on stand for opening weekend of Wisconsin's bow season. I had succeeded in earning the right to hunt bucks this evening by harvesting my earn-a-buck doe the evening before. The weekend weather had been rainy and warm to this point, but skies were clearing and temperatures were dropping. It was shaping up to be a good sit.

Earlier in the afternoon I had scouted this spot for worthiness of a hunt. Though subtle, I saw all I needed to see as I walked the overgrown logging road a couple hundred yards into the timber along a ridge top. There was a natural puddle of water about four inches deep and 3 feet around.

Careful review of topo and aerial maps also revealed the end of this ridge as a typical buck bedding area. The water puddle was, no doubt, well known to the local critters and it could likely be just the ticket to ambushing a good buck in daylight.

With a Southwest wind I had the wind direction in my favor. Anything bedded at the end of the ridge would have the wind at their back. To get to the waterhole they would have a crosswind. I would sit the down- and across-wind side of the puddle to remain undetected to anything approaching.

Game Time

With my stand and plan set, I returned to my truck to clean up, get dressed and get Shawn, who would be filming my hunt. Shawn brought his Lone Wolf portable treestand and set up 15 feet behind me, providing a good angle to any action we might have. We each wore an earpiece and microphone so we could communicate.

As the evening passed, only a few

small critters showed. With about a half-hour of good light left, I whispered to Shawn in my wireless microphone that it was getting to be about "that time" where we should be seeing something if it were going to happen. It wasn't 10 seconds later that I turned my head toward the end of the ridge and noticed movement.

"Shawn, I see a deer down the ridge," I whispered "It's a buck." I couldn't tell yet whether it was a shooter. Shawn started filming, and as he found the buck in his viewfinder and zoomed in, I heard him say, "He looks pretty decent."

When the buck reached the top of the ridge he made a 90 degree turn and headed for us—well, for the water puddle at least. As he got closer I could see he was pretty wide. At 40 yards he started circling downwind of the puddle. As the buck approached I saw his rack had a couple stickers coming off his tines and really good mass, and that convinced me to take him.

The buck turned again to come straight into the puddle, dropped his head and began slurping down water, facing me only 10 yards away. I stood ready to draw any moment as I waited for him to finish drinking. I had decent shooting lanes both left and right of him, so I told myself to stay calm and wait this out.

Two minutes later he started to his right. I drew when he stepped into a 2-foot-wide shooting lane in the early season foliage. I waited for his next step forward, and as he took that step I let an arrow fly. An immediate whack ended the silence.

All hell broke loose as the buck busted through the thick cover, heading downhill. I saw right away my arrow found its mark and was over halfway into the chest.

"That's a dead buck, Dude!" was



The author's mature early season "slob" buck had 13 scorable points, an inside spread of 19 3/8 inches and a gross score of 144 1/8 inches.

my reaction to Shawn as I watched the buck take out trees on his death run. Three seconds later it was all over. Though we didn't see him fall, Shawn and I both felt great about what we'd just seen and knew he shouldn't be far.

A short tracking job later revealed the buck crashed where we'd last seen him. As I took my first close-up look at the buck and put my hands around his rack, it revealed that I'd killed a mature, 13-point "slob buck" with a beautiful early season cape and a rack with all kinds of character.

It was 1:30 a.m. before we finally had that deer out of the woods. We took pictures even further into the now cold, crisp night and it was 4 a.m. before we finally had supper—I guess that would be breakfast. Then we reluctantly called an end to a perfect night in the early bow season. *WB*

Jarrod Erdody is co-owner of Blood Brothers Outdoors (bloodbro.com), which makes instructional hunting videos geared toward killing mature bucks year after year. He is a proud father of three and owns Erdody Studios, which provides web design, graphic design, video production, and other creative services to a wide range of clientele, many in the outdoor industry.

CUNNEA, from page 7

interest of his surroundings. A pretty sight with the bright white/deep liver markings sparkling in the sun, set against the dying and faded browns of the field behind him.

Of importance to me was watching him use his nose to investigate his surroundings, and willingness to go away from me, but still stay within eyesight.

He and I have been working with a pheasant wing on a fishing line in the house, teasing him and commanding "whoa," working on a pause-before-leap pointing instinct. Still don't know if he has any such, but even if he does not, if he will trail or scent pheasants and stay within a reasonable range so that they will flush within range, I'll be happy.

At other times, I'm using frozen wood-duck wings for "fetch" commands in the house. I keep the lead on him and pull him back to me to reinforce the concept. (I can do this one-armed.) He cannot escape. Each time, he has a resolute clenched mouth grip on the wing, so each time, I press lips to teeth until he releases. It often takes a while. No growling, but adamant that his grip is absolute. My job is to convince him it is not.

To date, I have won. And tomorrow, Mick and I will move a little closer. *WB*

Bill Cunnea has been a writer, teacher, consultant and outdoorsman for over 30 years. He continues to be taught lessons by his dogs in southwest Wisconsin, where he's lived for 20 years. He's never caught a lunker, nor shot a 12 point buck, and he's got the lack of trophies to prove it.

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355 JAP. T99 6.5 LONG TRAINER W/ORIG. CANVAS COMPOSITE SLING \$259.00
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EXC. BORE, WORN STOCK, 80% \$550.00
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534 LUGER P08 JME1942 WaA14 VG-EXC. BLACK HOLSTER W/NAZI PIN IN FLAP \$195.00
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573 LUGER LP08 NAVY MOD. 1906 BROWN OR BLACK HOLSTER, SUPERB REPROS \$59.00
580 COLT/S&W .45/.44 DA 5-6" EXC. BROWN "HIBBARD" WESTERN REVOLVER HOLSTER CIRCA 1910 \$125.00
593 MAUSER C96 WWII CHINESE PRESENTATION STOCK/HOLS. CARVED W/LEAF&VINE DESIGN, EXC. \$235.00
596 MAUSER C96 BOLO CHIN. WWII PROD. VG WALNUT STOCK/HOLSTERS \$149.00
598 MAUSER C96 WWII CHINESE SELECT STOCK/HOLSTER FOR PRENTATION GUNS, CARVED W/DAGON. SUPERB \$299.00
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www.checkpointcharlies.com

S. WILKERSON

Surplus Firearms

A box cannon: the Mauser pistol

No one was enamored with the Mauser C96 “broomhandle” pistol as Chinese warlords during the early part of the 20th century. These regional tyrants came to prominence with the demise of the Manchu Dynasty, whose end was hastened by the failure of the Boxer rebellion. Like the Opium Wars and the Taping Rebellion, the Boxer uprising was an attempt to combat foreign domination of Chinese trade, rule, religion and culture.

Millions of Chinese and thousands of foreign nationals died in these brutal, bloody and ultimately futile wars that finally led to the end of the Manchu Dynasty. Upon its demise, most of China disintegrated into numerous feuding fiefdoms. The reign of the warlords only ended with triumph of the communists under Mao in 1948.

Like most tyrants, one of the first acts of the foreign governments that controlled China’s ports, if not its interior, was to address firearm ownership. Exports of most firearms were banned, except for use by foreigners and those Chinese that did their bidding.

Pistols were an exception, and the German Mauser C96 proved to be a popular item. One of the reasons for this was that its manufacturer skirted the rifle ban by producing the pistol with a combination butt stock and holster. Long barreled C96s were also produced, making, in effect, a small carbine, or in some cases, a submachine gun. Fully automatic versions with removable stick magazines, the Model 712, were also produced.

The C96 was far more rugged and reliable than the majority of semi-automatic pistols of the time and fired the very effective 7.63 mm cartridge. It held 10 rounds in a box magazine in an era when most rifles held five, or less. Loaded via stripper clips, the C96 was notable for its accuracy. Called the “broomhandle” in the west by virtue of its pistol grip shape, the Chinese referred to the C96 as the “box cannon” because of the square magazine located in front of its trigger.



Mauser pistols, with a warlord stock holster, are available at Checkpoint Charlie's.

Nuts And Bolts

While the “foreign devils” might have controlled the coasts, some major cities and ports, most of the country was in the hands of the warlords. China was too big of a country for the usurpers to totally conquer, including, eventually, Japan. Japan made an especially horrific attempt to subdue China and enslave its people, a fact that the Japanese are still loathe to adequately acknowledge and much of the West has conveniently forgotten (unlike Nagasaki and Hiroshima.)

Warlords, as one might expect from their title, were constantly battling each other, jockeying for power, influence and territory, and, thus, had an unquenchable need for firearms. Based on the number of C96s (and other firearms) that fell into their hands, there seems to be little doubt that many port officials had few qualms about trading with the warlords. Mauser could not supply enough of these very popular pistols in China. The Spanish firms of Astra and Royal saw a marketing opportunity and sold boatloads of arms similar to the C96, but even they were not enough to satiate the Chinese appetite for Box Cannons.

Ever resourceful, the Chinese

themselves attempted to fill the void with homegrown versions of the C96—with varying degrees of success. While generally of better quality than the famous Khyber Pass firearm clones of Pakistan, Chinese gun makers, working with suspect metal, rudimentary tools, and no factory blueprints, couldn't hope to compete with Astra or Royal, let alone Mauser Werkes. Still, many of them provided long service to the warlord armies and later, to the People's Liberation Army.

When Congress liberated American gun enthusiasts from the shackles of the 1968 Gun Control Act in 1984, it coincided with the opening of free trade with China. While the results of this would prove devastating to many facets of the United States economy, trade with China brought in an influx of collectible firearms that hadn't been seen since the end of World War II.

Among the millions of new and surplus arms that came into the country before the Clinton administration put an end to it in 1994, were thousands of C96s in varying grades, from worn-out paper weights to newly assembled pieces built on new and surplus parts. Prices, as always, were reflective of


condition, model, and scarcity. Several firms also sprouted up that rebuilt tired specimens and/or created new variations, including at least one with a rifle-like stock and 16 1/2 inch barrel.

Like all good things, affordable C96s became a thing of the past when Clinton banned the further importation of Chinese firearms after some fully automatic AKs were found in a shipping container from that country. As is also true among most firearm bargains, I missed the original boat. Once prolific, C96s of Chinese—or any other—origin have become virtually unobtainable at area gun shows and dealers. When they are available, in my experience, their providence is often suspect and their prices always outrageous.

Imagine my surprise, then, when I examined the Checkpoint Charlie's ad in this edition of On Wisconsin Outdoors. Among the hundreds of firearms for sale are a multitude of C96s of different stripes, including Chinese copies and original Mausers.

Owner Charlie Justmann scours the country, attending gun shows and estate sales for collectible firearms. He has also been in business long enough to have gained a reputation for honesty and fairness to the point that gun sellers seek him out. Even better is the fact that his prices are reasonable and he allows a three-day inspection period, along with a detailed description of his wares on his website at checkpointcharlies.com.

Checkpoint Charlie's sells more than a few of my favorite things. In addition to C96s, K98s, Garands, Lugers and Nambus, are daggers, medals, helmets and lots more. Check out Checkpoint Charlie's ad in this edition of On Wisconsin Outdoors and see what I mean.

If its guns or “militaria” related, chances are Mr. Justmann has it or will in the near future. 

S. Wilkerson is an award-winning Wisconsin journalist, firearms expert and student of the Second Amendment. Contact him by email at cheapshots@onwisconsinoutdoors.com

TOM CARPENTER

Cub's Corner

The building of a duck hunter

When you think about all the hunting opportunities Wisconsin has to offer, it's an unfortunate fact that the number of waterfowl hunters here, and nationwide, is in decline.

That's too bad, because there is grand sport to be had while participating in the wonderful tradition of wildfowling. What's more, ducks need our help—now more than ever. As dedicated sportsmen and women, we all know the best way to save and enhance game habitat, and promote a species' well-being, is to get folks interested in hunting it.

So I'm issuing a challenge: Take a young outdoorsperson duck hunting this fall. Your best opportunity might be Wisconsin's annual youth waterfowl hunt, tentatively set for September 18 and 19 as of press time. (Be sure to check the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources website, dnr.wi.gov, to confirm the dates.) Here's how to have some duck hunting fun, and maybe bring home a couple ducks.

First, note that you don't have to be a duck hunter yourself to find waterfowling success with your young hunter. Remember—the definition of success is loose, and doesn't have to include dead ducks. But the definition always includes fun, and you can make a lot of that if you approach things the right way. Here's how.

I've got to be honest. Your first step might well be to talk to a committed waterfowl hunter, and dance around the topic of having a young hunter and wanting them to get interested in waterfowling. I do not know one serious waterfowl-hunting nut who would pass up the chance to say, "I'll take the kid!" Then you can tag along, learn, and partake in the fun.

But many of us want to do it ourselves. That's understandable, because it's even more satisfying from most hunters' perspectives. Plus, it helps get the young hunter more involved in the preparations. Take these steps:

Search And Scout

This can be the most challenging part of the whole process. Call local game wardens, talk to other sportsmen, check out local marshes and ponds. Don't be afraid of public land, and don't shy away from small spots; some of my best youth hunts have been on little backwoods wood duck ponds. Also, you'll find that getting permission for youngsters on private land is oodles easier than getting access for yourself. Once you've located a hunting spot, get out there and watch the ducks, see where they like to be, and plan your ambush spot.



The author's son, Ethan, with a trio of early season teal. Youth duck hunts hook kids on the grand sport of waterfowling, and ducks need all the friends they can get nowadays.

Do this only a week or so before your hunt.

Gather Gear

As the "finding and scouting" phase happens, you should also be gathering gear. A half-dozen to dozen decoys will do it. Borrow them, or buy a six-pack or two of mallards or teal, or a mix. It's fun to rig decoys, so do it together. Secure a couple duck calls. Watch a DVD and let the young hunter prepare to call in the field; calling is fun—what kid doesn't love to make sanctioned noise—so let them. (Who cares if it scares a duck. But it

probably won't.)

Find some camouflage for the young hunter to wear, and knee-high rubber boots. You wear the waders and act as retriever if you don't have a canine up to the task. Stock up with a couple boxes of ammunition. For early season ducks, I like Federal's Black Cloud in size 4 shot—it's just about right for early-season teal and wood ducks, and mallards not yet in their winter garb. Get the young hunter some practice with their shotgun (choked with improved cylinder, modified at most).

continued on page 23

TOM CARPENTER

Badger Birds: The tufted titmouse

Although Wisconsin is on the eastern edge of tufted titmouse range, you can still spy plenty of these dapper little relatives of the chickadee in the Badger State's hardwood forests.

The first thing you notice when a tufted



titmouse flits past is the big, black, beady eyes.

There's no mistaking it! You also can't miss the crest on this subtly handsome songbird. An acrobatic and energetic bundle, the tufted titmouse provides hours of entertainment for bird-lovers hiking in the woods, sitting on their deer stand or watching out the window.

Look for a small, steely colored, blue-gray bird with a whitish belly, gray face with highlights around the eye, and flanks tinged with rust. The tufted titmouse is longer and more slender than its close cousin, the black-capped chickadee.

Note the titmouse's active crest, extra-large feet (for clinging), and tiny black beak.

Listen for the titmouse's call—a chant of notes

sounding like Peter-Peter-Peter-Peter.

Attract titmice with black-oil sunflower seed year-round. Add suet to your offering in winter.

Provide titmouse nesting cavities: Place a couple bird houses with 1¼-inch openings, then "prime" the cavities with a few wood shavings.

Did you know that the tufted titmouse has two western cousins? The oak titmouse is brownish, and lives mostly in California, while the all-gray juniper titmouse inhabits much of the mountain West. Look for them on your travels.

Native son Tom Carpenter writes about the outdoor world for a variety of national and regional publications.

NATALIE BEACOM

Life On The 'Other' Side

Musings of a hipster

While the feminine hourglass figure is a very important biological feature defining women as the “fairer” gender over the male species ... it can be problematic for the female hunter making her way through the woods. A person can really isolate the curvy conundrum to one, OK maybe two, specific areas, but in an attempt to keep this clean, printable and not to offend anyone’s Victorian principles, I will focus on one nemesis—the hips.

The issue women face with hips is less about size and weight. Make no mistake we can clearly claim issues with those as well, but when it comes to hips it’s more of a shape issue.

Heavy, skinny, wide, narrow. Regardless of size, women have waists; we go “in” in the middle before our body’s bone structure juts out again. Compared to the male torso, which is just a straight shot all the way from head to toe, we’ve got the more complicated figure.

We gals will praise this curved anatomical feature while we are in stirrups breathing in a timely fashion and pushing for dear life. We have even been known to brag proudly of our “child-bearing hips” in those tense moments; however, this attitude is short lived. Quickly we renounce our hips and it turns into “curse these dang child-bearing hips!” Chubby or skinny doesn’t matter as women share the same structure and are almost always in the process of coming to terms with or changing the appearance of this part of our physique.

Hips In The Woods

How this gender complaint becomes a hunting woe is quite simple, and although I hate to perpetuate a feminine stereotype, it’s really about shopping. Specifically, it’s not as easy for us to walk into a store and buy our

hunting clothing off the rack and know it’ll fit well and be comfortable.

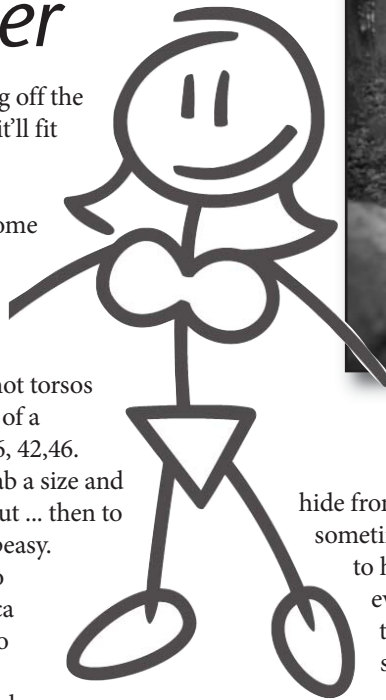
I cling to some sour grapes about how easy it is for men with their straight-shot torsos with the luxury of a uniform fit ... 36, 42, 46. Grab a style, grab a size and head to check out ... then to the hunt. Easy peasy.

I ask you to imagine if Jessica Rabbit went into her favorite outdoor shop to buy some duds for a pheasant hunt. She’d get the pants up mid-leg, hit hip and it’d be all over. After finally getting them jimmied over her hips she’d be happy until turning around for a back view to find that they gapped at the waist and belting them looked strange and felt weird.

Outdoor apparel manufacturers are becoming more aware of the female hunter and the market for female attire. More feminine cuts in both shirts and pants in varying sizes more closely fit our shape to provide comfort in the field. These options are also becoming easier to find locally without having to order or being cost prohibitive

Even footwear is becoming chic friendly, so there has been improvement in the hunting apparel industry for gals as of late. Unfortunately, a few outfitters still feel the need to gratuitously incorporate varying shades of pink in camouflage patterns as if a trace of hot pink in the Realtree camo will sway any woman on the fence about hunting.

Breaking up the curvy silhouette is not gender specific. Women want to



hide from our quarry, too, and sometimes it can feel condescending to head to a retail store and see everything from binocular grips to duck call lanyards, even gun stocks, in pink.

Women will always continue to throw on our guy’s flannels and blaze vests, your big comfy camouflage coats and well-loved wool pants. We find comfort in these clothes and gear not only because they belong to the men in our lives, but for those of us who believe the weave of these garments hold years of stories from every hunt.

From those proud moments just after a kill shot to the laughs had when that turkey looked right at you and skedaddled away. This field wear holds a legacy and provides a sense of ownership of time earned and experience gained in the field. Even as part of the preparation for a hunt, getting the blaze aired-out, packed and ready to hit the field is part of the hunting experience that genders share.

So, both anatomy and biology aside, it’s nice to have our own pants for many reasons. ♪

Natalie Beacom is a librarian and freelance writer residing in New Berlin and enjoys spending time hunting and fishing throughout Wisconsin. Email natalie@onwisconsinoutdoors.com.



CARPENTER, from page 22

Hunt Hard, Fun, Smart

Set up well before legal shooting time. Throw out the decoys—I like an odd number like 9 or 11 or 13—and leave a little opening in front of you as a place to invite the ducks to land. Have the breeze at your back or from either side, because ducks land into the wind. Rig up a little jerk cord on one of the decoys, to give some movement to the spread. That’s more important than calling. But let the young hunter quack the call, too.

Wait for a 20-25 yard shot. Some ducks, like teal, will head right in. Take ‘em when they set their wings and are about to land—when they’re slowing down but not yet on the water. Blue-winged teal will dominate your bag, but be prepared for a wood duck and the occasional local mallard.

Bring along bug dope, snacks and plenty of refreshments. That’s what the bucket is for—a place to carry everything, and a seat for hiding among the cattails or brush. Wear head nets so ducks don’t see the inevitable little face peering up at the incoming birds.

A youth duck hunt is about as much low-pressure fun as you can have together. Quacking ducks, the sweet smell of the marsh, getting a little dirty ... plus, the ducks haven’t been hunted yet, and they decoy well. (Plus, the ducks will have a friend for life.) My kids usually shoot a box of shells, and we’ll bring home a few teal. But the day’s take is always measured in memories created, and of that there is always a full limit. ♪

Native son Tom Carpenter writes about the outdoor world for a variety of national and regional publications.

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KEVIN MICHALOWSKI

Dog Talk

Tidbits and morsels

*“Getting a dog ain’t about doing things the easy way.
It’s about doing things the right way.”*

I’m often asked (probably because I look so intelligent), “What’s the best dog?”

A question like that makes my eyes roll back, my head spin around and provokes strange hissing noises. But once I regain my composure, I can usually follow up with some sort of counter-question like, “Best for what?”

The often predictable response is, “Well, I do a little of this and a little of that and I want a dog that’s easy to train.”

“Easy to train,” I say. “Well, if

you want a dog that’s easy to train, get a puppy.”

“That’s not what I mean,” says the prospective dog owner. “What I mean is...”

It’s at this point that I step in and try calmly and rationally to explain a few things about owning a dog. I talk about the responsibility, the costs, the investments in time and energy, the frustration, the emotional highs and lows. In fact, I go on and on. I intentionally try to bore the person into a trance-like state so I can then whisper into the person’s ear,



If you want a dog that’s easy to train, get a puppy. Taking care of a dog means more than supplying food and water. You need to make the animal’s care and training top priorities.

“Getting a dog ain’t about doing things the easy way. It’s about doing things the right way.”

That last part usually snaps the questioner back to consciousness. Some pick up right where they left off, asking me about breeds that are easy to train, which dog will work best for which type of birds and where they can get a good deal on a remote training collar.

But every once in a while, I get through to someone. If he or she were in a 12-step program, my little speech would provide a “moment of clarity.”

Cause And Effect

Now, I make no claims about being the world’s greatest dog trainer, or even the world’s best dog owner—but I try. I’m a simple hobbyist who has learned through trial and error, read dozens of books and watched dozens of videos.


But I did get into the dog game with a level head. I knew what I wanted and I knew why. When I started out, I wanted German Shorthair Pointers to hunt birds on the plains. I found a breeder with a line of big, strong dogs that possessed endurance and seemingly boundless energy. Then I found a trainer who could help me channel that.

Later on, as I found myself hunting more and more ducks, I considered a Chesapeake Bay retriever, but learned they might not be the best with children. So I looked at Labs; lots of them. I found the dog I wanted, paid attention to the training and think I ended up with a pretty good animal.

These days I do my best to balance a busy schedule with the demands of training a couple dogs. I’m not perfect, and neither are my dogs. I allow some faults because those faults are not the problems with the dog, but problems with the trainer—me. So I cannot be angry with the dogs.

Instead, I need to refocus my training efforts and get myself back on track. It’s all about priorities. You can see where your dog lies on the scale of priorities by how well the animal performs in the field. It’s that simple.

That’s how the world of dog ownership has got to work. You need to go into with a level head and the idea that you are going to do what it takes to create a great dog. If you think buying a dog from a self-titled “Master Hunter” means you are going to automatically have a great dog, think again.

All dogs start with two things: a good sense of smell and some basic curiosity. You need to channel those elements and provide timely reminders to keep the dog on track. After that, all dogs learn by association. The dog simply responds: If I do this, something happens. It’s your job to make sure that “something” is consistent. The cause and effect should be the same every time for every infraction. When you do that, your dog will be easy to train. 

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 Kevin at askdogtalk@hotmail.com.

REEL MEN BLEED



Professional Fishing Guide and radio host Gary Engberg of Gary Engberg Outdoors

**Be a Hero.
Give Blood.**

Can You
Spare
A Drop?



BITZ, from page 18

hunters can harvest more birds than they pay for.

According to members I talked to at the clubhouse, it's the scenery and Blonhaven's approach that appeal to them.

"This is the closest you can come to wild bird hunting in this area," said Tim Gillman, an Illinois native who is a member of the club. "It's a very natural setting."

The club graciously offered my two sons, Scott and Devin, the opportunity to hunt to see how a typical outing would take place. I followed along to take photos.

Dave Hill, who breeds and trains German short-haired pointers, was our guide for the hunt. Hill's dog, Corky, would be searching out the birds in the fields of milo and switch grass.

Just Like The Real Thing

Once we got into the hunting area, Hill released Corky from the truck. The pointer took several long laps around the area as if to show us he was primed and ready to go.

Hill walked us to the edge of a rectangular field of milo and set Scott and Devin on the edges of the field. Hill provided instruction on how we would proceed through the field and stressed safe shooting in order to protect hunters and dog. He then sent Corky on his way and the hunt began. As we walked, Hill provided direction to us and would issue commands to the dog.

We walked the length of one milo field without coming across any birds. However, just as we were exiting the field, Corky ran to the edge of the next milo field and stopped with his gaze locked forward and his tail pointing back.

We slowly entered the milo

scanning for sign of the pheasant that Corky's sensitive nose said was hidden there. Hill began to step on the bent over stalks trying to flush the bird out of its cover. Just as we started to reverse course, the bird broke out of hiding and took flight like a rocket. It flew past Scott who took a quick shot, but cleanly missed.

The same scenario would be repeated several times over the next hour where Corky would go on point and the pheasants would jump out of hiding and take flight. Unfortunately, none of shots found their mark.

Eventually Hill's son, Scott, joined the hunt to show us rookies how it's done—and to maybe satisfy Corky who I thought might be getting a bit impatient with the lack of shooting prowess. Again, Corky tracked down a bird, went on point and the pheasant was flushed. This time, however, the bird did not escape and succumbed to birdshot from the shotgun. Corky retrieved the bird and proudly brought it to Hill's hand, ending the hunt on a high note.

After seeing how the property was managed and how the hunts took place at Blonhaven, I was convinced that hunt clubs can offer a legitimate hunting experience. This was not a canned hunt where a hunter is guaranteed to bag a bird. Fair chase, in my opinion, was on display.

Walking the fields brought back memories of pheasant hunting with my uncle three decades ago. I vowed as I left that day to not let so much time pass before hunting pheasants again. *W*

For more information on Blonhaven, visit blonhavenhunt-club.com, or call: (608) 879-3911

Terry Bitz is a freelance writer who resides in Pleasant Prairie, WI. He can be contacted at tbitz@wi.rr.com, or visit his web site www.outdoorconvergence.com.

ELLIS, from page 12

inch inside spread, massive beams, multiple brow tines, tremendous mass and a unique hole-in-the horn.

"I have had an opportunity to see a dominant buck every time I use the system," Mercier said. "The system not only works, it takes timing the rut to a new level."

For immediate information on the release of Mercier's book, "Dominance is Everything ... to a Monster Whitetail Buck!" contact with Mercier at dominanceiseverything@gmail.com or 262-719-2743. By mid-September, Mercier's website will be active at www.dominanceiseverything.com. *W*

This Dick Ellis syndicated column "In a Rut" originally appeared on November 16, 2009. Read Dick's column archives at www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com.

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

PANTHER MARTIN PIKE AND MUSKIE KIT

For \$40, this kit consists of eight Panther Martin 1-ounce and 1.2-ounce stainless-steel "Big Belly" spinners, in a variety of colors, to target large pike and muskies. The environmentally friendly, lead-free lures have larger bodies to cast further and go deeper.



Every good trout fisherman in Wisconsin knows the power and effectiveness of Panther Martin spinners. These large-fish lures are made of high-quality materials and craftsmanship that produce good vibrations at all speeds of retrieval. They're perfect for September and October—those big predators will love them!

PantherMartin.com

LEUPOLD VENDETTA RANGEFINDER

For \$300, the one-of-a-kind Vendetta Rangefinder is a bow-mounted device that provides precise digital readout of your target range. The battery-powered LED display that provides a one-touch continuous scan on your target providing distance, angles and elevation that is operated by a push pad affixed to your bow grip.

This thing is slick: No more



fumbling with your hand-held rangefinder. The compact unit mounts to the riser and can be adjusted for right or left-handed bows. With bow in hand, point your bow at your target, verify your yardage, draw, aim, breathe and release.

Leupold.com

FLEXTONE BUCK COLLECTOR CALL

For \$20, Flexitone Game Calls teamed-up with Michael Waddell and the Bone Collector Brotherhood to create an innovative, flexible, "whole-herd-in-one" deer call. The Buck Collector produces all known vocalizations (including a snort-wheeze call) by simply squeezing the labeled buttons while you blow.



Yes, this call's size might be big and bulky, but its job is to mimic the sounds and volume coming from a deer's neck, throat and mouth. If you've ever noticed, a buck's head is not small, so that's why this deer call is designed to be big enough to do the job right. This deer call has an excellent sounding grunt. With practice, the doe and fawn calls sound-off great, too. And, the flexible volume control on the tip is highly effective.

FlexitoneGameCalls.com

WEATHERBY PA-08 SHOTGUN

For \$299, Weatherby's PA-08 lightweight, pump-action shotgun features a vented top rib, chrome-lined barrel, screw-in multi-choke capability and durable injection-molded synthetic stock. The gun is available in either 12 or 20 gauge options with a 26- or 28-inch barrel.

It's hard to go wrong with Weatherby's reputation for high-



quality. The SA-08 is lightweight with easy-to-manage recoil and good trigger pull. I like the look, style and price. And look for more shotgun models from Weatherby to be released soon; the company is really growing their scattergun options.

Weatherby.com

MESHQUITO HEADWEAR

For \$10-\$15, this mask offers a new polyester mesh specially designed to provide better protection against biting insects. Meshquito material is specially designed to provide better ventilation and visibility, while shielding away biting insects. One-size-fits-all full and ¾ facemasks are available which include an adjustable nose bridge and dual elastic bands for a perfect fit.

Whether you're overlooking a bear bait 15 yards away or hidden within the edge of a food plot watching for 35-yard shots at whitetails, a good facemask is always a necessity in early fall. And, you can't go wrong with the Hot Shot brand.

JacobAsh.com

NAP QUICKTUNE 360 CAPTURE REST

For \$40, the QuickTune 360 Capture Rest from New Archery Products provides reliable fletching clearance and accurate shooting. Capture brushes hold an arrow without ripping fletching. The distinctive rest features Teflon-coated stainless-steel arms, fits all carbon or aluminum arrows and comes in your choice of camo, black or tan.

The unique capture-style design secures arrows in perfect alignment at any angle for incredible accuracy even in wet and freezing conditions. Replacement tips are available for this



rest should you shoot your rest tips out over the years.

NewArchery.com

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.kamptales.com).

HELP WANTED

Sales Representative

The *On Wisconsin Outdoors* Explore Wisconsin travel campaign was introduced more than one year ago to showcase the thousands of great vacation destinations in our 72 counties. Our county partners include chambers of commerce, resorts and rental cabins, hunting and fishing guides, and other businesses interested in promoting state tourism.

We're growing fast. We're looking for a top-notch salesperson to help us work with our county partners to promote vacation opportunities throughout Wisconsin, and expand our client base.

Candidate must have solid sales experience, strong communication and organizational skills, be self-motivated, and be proficient in Microsoft Word, general office and computer skills. Graphic design skills a plus. Of highest importance, have personal and professional ethics. This is a commission-based position with hourly work available and endless opportunity for growth as a private contractor. Email resume to ellis@onwisconsinoutdoors.com.

HyperSonic STEEL™

THE NEW 1700-FPS HYPERSONIC STEEL™ FROM REMINGTON.

Introducing the world's fastest, hardest-hitting steel. With unprecedented velocity and the highest downrange pattern energies ever achieved, new Remington HyperSonic Steel takes lethality to new heights and lengths. To a level of terminal performance where more birds drop with fewer shots, at the farthest reaches of your abilities. And only Remington has harnessed the wad technology to do it.



THE WORLD'S FASTEST, HARDEST-HITTING STEEL.

1700 FPS

THE HYPERSONIC STEEL™ ADVANTAGE

SHORTENS LEAD BY UP TO 11%. Most ducks are missed from behind, but the unprecedented velocity of HyperSonic Steel compensates for this by reducing required lead by 8" at 40 yards (about a full body length) on a duck flying at average speed. It puts more pellets in the head and neck for quicker kills and fewer misses — without changing the way you shoot.



At 1700 FPS, HyperSonic Steel gives you an 8" lead difference at 40 yards.

HIGH VELOCITY STEEL
(1450 FPS, 1 1/4 oz.) @ 40 YDS.

HYPERSONIC STEEL
(1700 FPS, 1 1/4 oz.) @ 40 YDS.

THE PATENT PENDING XELERATOR™ WAD ACHIEVING 1700 FPS

STAGE ONE

New HOTTER primer ignites small powder charge in chamber, moving entire payload forward slightly to control pressure.

Ignition chamber produces higher velocities with safe pressures and full-shot payloads.

STAGE TWO

Primary powder charge is ignited, accelerating the payload to a speed of 1700 FPS.

Stress concentrator initiates petal splitting, which holds patterns tighter downrange.



Remington
One moment. One shot.™



For more on HyperSonic Steel, visit remington.com/hypersonicsteel or scan the QR Code with your Smartphone.



World Famous Hunting & Fishing Boots

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100% Waterproof

WIN 72101 Twin River

- Extremely lightweight rubber construction with 300D nylon lamination but with durability and strength to protect
- Cleated outsole for sure traction
- Removable insole for all day wearing comfort
- Adjustable nylon suspender with quick release buckle
- Strong drawstring for better fit
- Large inside pocket for extra storage

100% Waterproof

WIN 9301 Marsh Creek

- Neoprene Chest Waders
- 3.5MM neoprene lightweight, insulated, snug fit
- Each wader is air and water tested to assure waterproof
- All seams are butt cemented, stitched and sealed
- Quick release buckles
- Large outside pocket
- 200 grams of Thinsulate™ Insulation
- Double knee patches Rubber Boot Foot
- All vulcanized rubber construction
- The rubber outsole style features a deep cleated design for traction

100% Waterproof

WIN 22103 KHK Stream

- Vulcanized construction - factory tested 100% waterproof
- Insulated boot with sponge rubber padding
- Deep cleated outsole for sure traction
- Layered toe cap for longer wear
- Aggressive padded knee for protection and comfort
- Large inside utility pocket
- Draw string for better fit
- Reinforced belt loops

3112 PROLINER SERIES

- Sleek design of one piece construction
- Stretchable, Light-weight and durable
- 200 grams Thinsulate™ Insulation in Boot
- Cleated rubber or felt out sole



Innovative Construction of Stretchable, Light-weight & Durable 3-Ply Material
(Nylon Jersey/Rubber/Nylon Jersey)



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