

November/December 2010

Vol. 4, Issue 2

On Wisconsin *Outdoors*

with the
Dick Ellis Experts

■ **To Catch a Coyote**

Trapping pelted trouble

■ **Pheasant Fury**

Multiple states, multiple limits

■ **Prehistoric Pike**

Go big or go home

■ **First Ice**

Doing a little jig

■ **Bruins Of The Fall**

An age-old tradition

■ **Recipes By Suzette**

Feathered holiday delights

■ **Winged Beauties**

The call of the Canadas

■ **Motivated Muskies**

Fishing on the edge

■ **Waiting For Whitetails**

The art of the sit

■ **Owning-Up To Ethics**

Recover your deer

Dick Ellis

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

DICK ELLIS

On Wisconsin Outdoors

Recover your deer



(Dick Ellis)

With the exception of one stark reminder that things sometimes go wrong in the deer woods, it had been a fabulous October morning of wood duck hunting a tiny creek winding among the acorn ridges of the Kettle Moraine northern unit. In the distance, my brother John Ellis picked up decoys with the changing colors as a backdrop. I captured the scene starting with the two drakes and one hen harvest draped over the ammo case in the foreground. There were also memories of clean misses and hanging gunpowder from numerous early encounters with woodies that waffled from the sky and through the oaks offering no more than a second or two to shoulder the scattergun and fire.

The eight-point buck lay dead in the creek, unrecovered by the archer who seemingly had placed the arrow well. The exit wound was low and near the heart and the entrance wound appeared to catch the intended vitals from an elevated stand. The deer didn't seem to be dead more than a day or two. Somewhere, a hunter was probably mentally tormented by a hit deer not found. Or did he look at all? Was he young? Inexperienced? Did he find blood? Or did he assume the miss without investigating?

Too many unrecovered animals would be the only thing that could make this hunter ...stop hunting. Deer & Deer Hunting magazine published my first national piece on the subject when my party took recovery of a forkhorn the extra mile, literally, on the same day we had dropped a very big eight in its tracks. A commitment to recovery is not your decision. It's your obligation.

Every year, my same friends send their new photos of deer down and usually down quick. John Volkman from Appleton. Lee Gatzke of Lake Mills. This year, experienced and successful hunter Kim Acker of Waterford sent her photo and told her story of a tremendous whitetail taken with a bow. All are very passionate hunters not immune to the anxiety of a deer not immediately down. But they go in prepared with the bow or firearm because at the moment of truth with a buck they have usually patterned



Archer Kim Acker of Waterford with her 16 pointer taken on September 23, green scored at 202-3/8. (Kim Acker)

for months, they don't want mistakes. Their preparation puts the odds of success heavily in their favor. Knowing that mistakes are inevitable, a hunter's first doe or small forkhorn deserves your same respect.

Acker practices religiously and already has her seven and five year old daughters, Lauren and Mikayla, shooting bows. Her husband, Kurt, and Kim knew a 16 point buck was on the Franklin farm where they trade work for hunting rights. With Kurt planning to hunt other Wisconsin property the weekend of September 23, he urged his wife to use a Franklin stand due to perfect wind direction that could mean a shot at the big buck they had captured on motion camera. His travel plans changed with a call from Kim later that she had made a good hit in high winds on the monster. She estimates, though,

that a one inch difference in arrow placement would have made the difference between recovering the buck almost immediately and the long sleepless night she faced instead.

"There was no blood and no arrow," she said. "We backed out and waited until the next morning. I didn't sleep. I knew he was dead. But how far did he travel?"

After spreading out from his wife and brother Erich to search, Kurt's holler of celebration that carried over the farm fell over Kim, answering the question. Without one drop of blood or the arrow ever found, the buck had died 500 yards from the hit and was green scored by her taxidermist at 202-3/8.

"I was running through the briars. It took me forever to get there," said Kim, who also has a doe and 9 and 10-point bucks tagged since 2006. "A

Continued on page 27



Lee Gatzke patterned this buck since August that green scored 161-3/8 when he made a 23 yard shot in Buffalo County October 5. The buck's live weight was 275 pounds. (Blood Brothers Outdoors)



John Volkman of Neenah tagged this buck on opening weekend after laying out a plan in summer including planting a food plot and making a perfect heart shot while hunting with his wife, Amy

JJ REICH

The Reich Stuff

Border blasting

Hunting pheasants in bordering states on the same day can provide all-day action, as well as the potential for two limits of birds. There are many areas where you can plan a combination, multi-state pheasant hunting trip. Potential options include North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, Kansas and Nebraska.

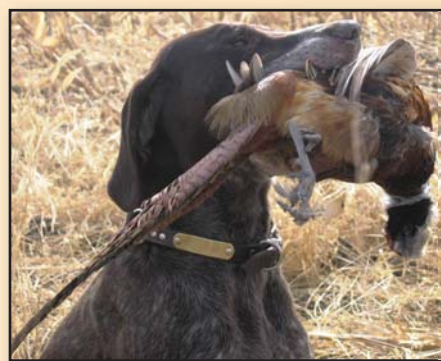
One big question is how does the possession limit apply for a hunter who has a valid license and permits to hunt two states in the same day? Bill Penning of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources gave the following explanation: "If South Dakota's daily limit is three birds and Minnesota's daily limit is two, then as long as you have a valid license for each state, you can have a daily and possession limit for each state."

However, if you have five freshly dead birds in possession you might have some explaining to do to a

conservation officer to convince him that you're on the up and up. So, as a good rule of thumb, once you reach your limit in the first state of the day, drop off the bounty at your base camp before heading out to the next state, and always double-check and triple-count your total possession so that you don't go over. This way you'll only have one limit in the vehicle at a time and avoid any extra explaining when stopped and checked.

Finally, bring along a permanent marker to document on the bag the bird count with the state and date of where and when they were harvested. This makes it easier for you and a game warden to count and keep track of the numbers. *W*

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



Teaching new hunters to appreciate the outdoors—especially youth—is the only way to prevent our hunting heritage from having an expiration date.

DON KIRBY

One At A Time

Learning to hunt waterfowl

Many of us who hunt for ducks and geese each fall can name the person or persons who "showed us the ropes," or gave us our first chance to watch the sun rise over our decoy spread on a cool October morning. For generations, the knowledge and the traditions of waterfowl hunting were handed down, often within family groups, and so the torch was passed to another legion of hunters who would learn to relish the hard work and amazing sensory rewards of pursuing migratory birds in their annual travels.

Nowadays, however, some things have changed. Foremost among these are some fairly obvious facts:

- Fewer of us than ever before have a direct connection to the land. With fewer families having a hand in agriculture and more of us living in

urban and suburban communities, the nearly automatic relationship with the outdoors is no longer to be assumed.

- Family structures have changed. With countless years of increasing divorce rates, single-parent families and blended family structures have come to dominate our population. No longer is there the classic arrangement of a male figure teaching outdoor skills that were taught to him by another older male, to pass along a hunting culture.
- Young people today have many opportunities to fill their time. With organized sports, school and other activities, and the pull of electronic distractions such as video games, the "free-time" of generations past

seems to be replaced with a constant hum-drum of different things to do and places to be.

What does all of this mean? Why should it concern those of us who treasure hunting today?

It means that all of us who would like to see our sporting traditions continue need to take action, and soon, to create new ways to introduce interested young people to our passions so that they might find that they, too, are filled with awe at the sound of the wind in the wings of ducks overhead.

Learn To Hunt

But take heart, hunters: You need not "break trail" on this issue alone. Much good work has been done

Continued on page 10

TERRY BITZ

Outdoor Convergence

Big pike

By the time November comes around, most fishermen have packed up the fishing gear and winterized the boat, essentially closing the door on the open-water season. Many now look forward to the ice season, including those who fish for northern pike.

However, if you're interested in big pike and cannot wait for ice season to arrive, November is one of the best months of the year to chase these toothy critters. If the weather stays warm enough, they can be caught in the open water all the way until ice covers the lakes.

Fishin' The Forage

Big pike, those approaching 40 inches, are quite different than their smaller brethren. Outside of their preference for very cold water, big pike in many ways act like a muskie. One thing they definitely share in common is a preference for larger forage.

During the fall, various forage species that are at their maximum size for the year will make their way into the shallows. Ciscoes, perch, white bass and even walleye are a target for these big pike. With that knowledge, it should come as no surprise that big baits are effective at catching big pike in the fall. While smaller baits can also catch big fish, I'm convinced that a big pike would rather expend energy chasing larger forage and therefore larger baits.

Go Big

Muskie-sized jerkbaits and gliders are quite effective during the late fall period. Shallow-running varieties such as Musky Magic Tackle's Slid'n Shads and Slippery Sliders, along with Llungen Squirkos and Fudally Reef Hawks, can be downright deadly on big pike.

At times, a steady jerkbait retrieve, snapping the rod tip downward, will generate plenty of action. However, there are days when you'll need to change it up a bit. Adding long pauses and variety to the cadence of the retrieve can turn following pike into biters. In fact, if you see a pike take a swipe at the bait and miss, as often happens with



The author and his son, Scott, take every opportunity they can get when chasing big pike. And the rewards are often well worth the effort.

"Big northern pike approaching and surpassing 40 inches are almost too valuable to keep."

jerkbaits, keep working the lure but speed up the pace. Pike will often make two or three attempts at hitting a bait before giving up the chase.

Work these jerkbaits over the tops of remaining weeds and shallower rocks to target fish that are holding shallow. You should work the lures over slightly deeper water as well. Often pike will be suspending a few yards out from structure and they will move up to strike a shallow-running bait, especially in clear water situations.

Other shallow running baits that work well are crankbaits with wide, side-to-side wobbling actions. Bucher Tackle's Baby Shallow Raiders and Muskie Mania 6-inch Jakes are good choices. And, don't dismiss the new large bladed bucktails that have taken the muskie world by storm. Bucktails tend to work better earlier in November than later, and I also find that a slower retrieve works better than a fast one.

Soft plastics lures that run a bit deeper are very effective in the fall as well. Muskie Innovation's Bull Dawgs, Lindy Tiger Tubes and Live Action Lure's Small Joes are all good choices.

Depending on the lure, you can

start fishing them shallow. As you work them over deeper water, slow down the retrieve and allow the baits to work deeper in the water column. Imagine the process as stepping the bait down the incline.


Each of these soft plastic baits can be simply casted and retrieved. However, one of the most effective methods is to pull the lure through the water using the rod, then wind up the slack line onto the reel. This basically turns these lures into jerkbaits and the erratic action is an attractant for pike. The speed of the pull and wind method will determine how deep the lures run.

Make sure to work these baits parallel to the weed lines and drop-offs. Pike will often lie on the bottom near the base of these structures as the water gets closer to 45 degrees. You generally won't have to work the bait right near the bottom as the fish will rise to strike the lures. However, you should try to get the baits down a bit deeper into the water column especially if the weed line or first drop off is 15 feet or more.

If pike are consistently holding on the bottom in deep water, as is often the case when the water drops

below 40 degrees, then consider using baits such as the Small Joes, Muskie Innovation Twin Fins, and Shumway Fuzzy Duzzits. These baits can be vertically jigged. Simply lower them down to the bottom, reel up a couple feet of line and then work them like a jigging spoon. Often the pike will hit the baits on the fall and when you go to lift the bait, it feels like you snagged a thrashing anchor.

Chasing big pike is not a numbers affair. These large fish are not as easily tempted to strike as small pike, so patience is a virtue. When I'm after big pike, I go with the expectation that I might only catch a few fish and only one might be bigger than 34 inches.

Big northern pike approaching and surpassing 40 inches are almost too valuable to keep. They play an important role in keeping the populations of small pike in check. Strongly consider taking a photo, a measurement or two and then releasing these big fish. 

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.

LEE GATZKE

Blood Brothers Outdoors

The expectations stand



The author's son, Tom, had a bow season that lasted less than 5 minutes and resulted in this 10-pointer.

Those of us who have deer hunted for a while commonly come to develop a preferred spot or a favorite stand to spend those precious hours waiting for a deer to show. If we're lucky, sometimes it only takes minutes.

Last year, my son Tom, used up most of his vacation time from work before the season started. He decided to use the few days he had left to bowhunt during the rut, so he started hunting October 30.

His truck pulled into the farmyard mid-afternoon on that day and he got out, sorted through his gear and got dressed to hunt. He shouldered his portable treestand, grabbed his bow and hiked uphill to a spot that typically has bucks cruise through once the rut starts to heat up.

We've learned through the years that by leaving the area alone until the rut, we can expect buck activity there once the rut starts. Upon arriving at the chosen white oak, Tom quietly set up the portable hang on stand and settled in to watch Mother Nature's show. He had just sat down when he heard leaves rustle beneath him. Looking straight

down at the base of the tree, there stood a 10-pointer sniffing the tree steps he had just screwed into the oak.

Having no time to get nervous, Tom clipped his release onto the bowstring and drew it back. He didn't dare stand up to shoot. With the buck directly below Tom, the stand was covering the vitals so he had to wait. Within seconds the buck nervously bolted but came to a halt 7 yards away. Tom took advantage of the opportunity and sent the arrow into the buck's chest. Estimating he had been on stand less than 5 minutes, he watched as the buck ran downhill toward the farmyard. The buck piled up 30 yards from his truck, and the drag was all downhill!

Like Son

One week after Tom had taken his buck, I set up in the same stand for a morning hunt. Before dawn arrived I could hear deer chasing below me, so my expectations rocketed. Sunrise couldn't come soon enough! As the faint beams of first light revealed the characters responsible for all the noise I

"We've learned through the years that by leaving the area alone until the rut, we can expect buck activity there once the rut starts."

had been hearing, I could see the deer leaving the area.

All grew quiet as the sun rose. Around 9 a.m. a good buck approached, taking a path that would bring him within bow range. At 30 yards I shot through an opening. The sound of arrow zipping underneath his chest put the buck in high gear as he raced off, unscathed.

A few weeks later the opening day of gun season was upon me. After a foggy morning on stand I headed back to the cabin for lunch. Lunch led to a nap and after waking up I decided to hunt the white oak stand once more. The stand had only been hunted twice this year and we saw bucks there both times, so with the favorable westerly wind I expected it to be my best option for an afternoon sit.

As I approached the stand I made noise stepping on twigs and was a little disappointed at myself for not slowing down and watching my step. Once I climbed in the stand and settled in, I pulled out a grunt call and made a few soft grunts to try to convince any nearby deer that the twigs they just heard snap were caused by another deer. It must have been convincing because within a minute or two a pair of fawns appeared. A minute after the fawns showed an 8-pointer followed and I dropped him at 50 yards. It was 1:57 p.m. when I got in the stand and 2:03 p.m. when I shot the buck.

With a stand that produced buck sightings every time it was hunted, the temptation is to hunt it often. The reason we hunted this stand sparingly was to prevent deer from patterning us. If deer had seen or smelled our presence there on a regular basis, they'd come to expect encounters with humans and react by circumventing the area. By hunting the stand sparingly, when conditions are favorable, the deer remain active in the immediate area and we expect to see deer every time we hunt it. *W*

Lee Gatzke is a member of Blood Brothers Outdoors, creator of practical and tactical deer hunting videos. Gatzke can be reached at www.bloodbro.com.



DAVE DUWE

First Ice

Doing a little jig

Shortly after the yearly ritual of Wisconsin's white-tailed deer season is complete, the next season is upon us. That season is the first ice strong enough to hold ice fishermen.

As a rule, the first ice is the most productive time to catch fish in the shallows. My favorite quarry is the feisty bluegill. In most lakes, they will be in the shallow weeds, likely in 4-8 feet of water. The shallow water has everything a bluegill requires: food and cover from its predators.

The best shallow weeds will have pockets in them with a hard bottom, such as sand or stone. I like the pockets in the weeds because it sets up ambush points for the actively feeding bluegills. When I get to a prime area I intend to fish, I drill anywhere from 10-15 holes to move and stay on fish.

Generally with first ice, the thickness doesn't warrant using a power auger, so I will use a 4- to 5-inch hand auger. In the lakes where I fish in southeastern Wisconsin, there are a lot of people fishing so I won't spread the holes too far apart. I tend to fish a hole 3-5 minutes, and if nothing happens, I move to the next hole.

It seems fish will bite consistently

the first time the bait goes down the hole if they are present. While fishing those holes the first time around, I carry my Vexilar FL-12 to check out what the bottom is like under the ice. By doing this, I can eliminate holes that are unfishable due to weeds extending to the surface. Shallower waters will freeze first, so choose lakes with a lot of shallow water. My favorite bluegill hot spot in southeastern Wisconsin is Monona Bay in Madison.

I like to use a long pole, about 42-48 inches long. The beauty of the longer pole is that you never have to bend down or sit while fishing. This makes moving from hole to hole easier.

The reels on my rods are spooled with ½- to 1-pound test. The lightest line you can get away with, the better. When using light line, use caution while lifting the fish out of the water, you don't want to break your line.

I use a high-quality spring bobber on the tip of the pole for the bite indicator. The resistance of a bobber




According to the author, fishing first-ice bluegills is the best way to beat the post-hunting blues.

going under when a fish is biting will reduce the hooking success rate. Bluegills will feel the slight resistance and let go of the bait. They are notoriously light biters—you need to watch your line; any movement could be a strike.

My preferred bait is a small No. 12 or 14 teardrop ice jig. I'll tip the jig with one waxworm or two spikes. I believe you have better success with a smaller profile bait. Fish can be positioned throughout the water column; I'll start 3-4 inches off the bottom and work it

upwards to at least 2 feet from the bottom.

The most important factor on fishing first ice is safety. Always be aware of the thickness of the ice and never venture out alone. When in doubt, stay off the ice. 

Dave Duwe, owner of Dave Duwe's Guide Service, has been guiding the lakes of Southeastern Wisconsin for 15 years, specializing in Delavan Lake and Lake Geneva. Go to www.fishlakegeneva.com or www.fishdelavanlake.com.

TOM CARPENTER

Badger Birds

Evening grosbeak



Evening grosbeaks are named for the time of day you are most likely to see them, as well as their sunset colors of yellow (the setting sun), white (the day's last clouds) and rusty-brown fading to black (the darkening sky).


These stocky and handsome finches have steadily expanded their range from the mountain West, all the way to the Atlantic. In Wisconsin, we most often see evening grosbeaks in late fall and winter, as the birds travel the countryside (they prefer forested habitat, especially with conifers) on their nomadic search for seeds.

Look for the evening grosbeak's thick, sturdy bill that is capable of cracking even the hardest of seeds.

Listen for this grosbeak's simple call—a series of short chink, chirp or clink notes used to keep a feeding flock in contact.

Attract evening grosbeaks with black-oil sunflower seeds. Tray, platform and screen feeders are best, as these birds like sturdy footing.

Consider that a much-maligned "weed" tree—the seed-rich box elder—might be responsible for the evening grosbeak's happy and successful range expansion into Wisconsin and further eastward. Know that as fall progresses and winter arrives, your chances of seeing nomadic evening grosbeaks increases.

Did you know that this grosbeak's Latin species name, *vespertina*, forms the root for vespers or evening prayers? 

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Hunting, Fishing, Travel
and Outdoor Humor

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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MIKE FOSS

Diary Of A Bear Guide

The bears of Bayfield County



Thanks to tons of patience, Hunter Johnson was able to pass a few small bears before shooting this 380-pound boar.

As I stood there listening to the hunter tell me his story of his day's hunt, I was thinking to myself: I don't remember seeing any huge bears on that bait station—although my Cuddeback trail camera was only there for a week.

I have to be honest, as I booked my last bear hunter this year I had to make one last call to reassure myself that we could handle this large number of hunters without hiring more guides. With the confidence of my guides' answers to that question, and with 28 hunters booked, I was soon to find out how things were going to flow. I had months to prepare Northern Wisconsin Outfitters for the big hunt, but if you don't watch yourself, time can and will catch up with you.

Starting April 17, 2010, I placed my first of many bait stations I call teaser baits, just to let the bears know the food will be there. Slowly throughout the summer I add more bait stations. In fact, 3 weeks before the season opened I checked out a new area—not that I needed to—and I set three more bear baits and added these as back-up stands; all three stands were used and all produced beautiful bears.

Another One For The Books

As I listened to Mike Falstad of Wausau, he told me he was watching what looked like a big bear; the bruin just walked back and forth on the old logging

road but would never commit to the bait or present an open shot.

"Did he act like he was spooked?" I instinctually asked. "No, he said, but he knew something was just not right, and then he slowly walked away." Mike was a quiet man, but I could tell he couldn't wait to get to his stand the next day.

Early in his stand on day No. 2, it was a different story for Mike. The same bear came in toward the bait from a different direction. The wind was perfect, the big bear felt comfortable and walked in on the trail we use when baiting.

"I never let him get to the bait," Mike said. "He offered me an open shot and I took it. The big bruin ran to the left, dropped over the edge of a deep ravine and all was quiet."

That bear ran only 20 yards right to the bottom of that deep, water-filled ravine before expiring. It took six men 3 grueling hours to retrieve that monster of a bear. The live weight was an estimated 490 pounds, and after the drying period is over it will be very close to another Boone and Crockett black bear.

Young Guns Blazin'

My youngest hunters in camp this year, 13-year-old Hunter Johnson from West Bend and 16-year-old Taylor Smull from Cambria, showed the others hunters in camp how it's done. I don't know who was more excited: Hunter or his dad, Rob.

"We got it all on film," Rob said. "A small bear came in first; he kept looking over to his left down the trail, and I knew there was another bear over there but we couldn't see it. That big bear circled behind the bait staying just out of sight. Finally, when he thought all was well, he showed himself—but he wouldn't commit to the bait."

"The big bear cautiously walked up and down in front of the bait," Rob continued. "Finally he presented a broadside shot, and the big bear went down 5 yards from the stand."

The live weight of Hunter's bear was approximately 380 pounds and will score close to 20 Boone and Crockett points.

Taylor Smull, the only woman in camp, was scheduled for the second week of the bear season. The 3rd day of the season hunters filled more tags than I expected, so I gave Taylor's dad a call: "Let's get Taylor a bear. Pack your bags and get up here."

Arriving early afternoon the next day, it was too late for them to travel the extra 30 miles to the bait station I wanted them to hunt. I decided to put them



Taylor Smull hunted with Northern Wisconsin Outfitters and killed her first bear, a beautiful 225-pound sow.

on a bait station close to camp. That evening Taylor and her dad returned to camp all pumped-up.

"I saw one!" Taylor said. "It was great, but it looked small so I passed on it."

The next day, with plenty of time, they traveled the ½-hour ride to a fresh stand.

"A nice bear came in and then left," Taylor explained. "I thought my opportunity was gone, and then another one came in. I wasn't going to let this one walk away, so I put the crosshairs on its shoulder and squeezed the trigger." The 225-pound sow ran 30 yards.

A Look Back

A total of 28 bear hunters in camp each had shot opportunities and 24 bears were taken. I went through sixty-five 55-gallon barrels of bait; 6,000 pounds of pie filling; 10 gallons of Bacon and Anise scented spray (Bear Scents, LLC); and 5 gallons of Bacon and Anise scented gel. For the upcoming 2011 Wisconsin bear hunting season, I will be booking 15 hunters the first week and 7 hunters the second week.

As I reflect back on this year's hunt, I still can't believe how smoothly it went. Everyone in camp worked together: When a bear was down I would ask who wants to help track, and everyone's hand would go up. Once again I made a lot of friends and more hunting memories. I already can't wait 'til next year. *W*

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.



SUZETTE CURTIS

Recipes By Suzette

Feathered delights

Holidays are right around the corner, which means it's time to plan those holiday menus. Instead of the usual Thanksgiving turkey, why not try something different this year? Goose, grouse and pheasant are all wonderful options for a festive meal. *W*

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

Roasted Goose

by Suzette Curtis

8- to 10-pound goose, with giblets	2 tbsp. olive oil
4 c. bread crumbs	2 sweet onions, chopped
2 apples cored, peeled and finely chopped	¼ tsp. sage
1 tsp. salt and dash of pepper	2 tbsp. butter

Preheat oven to 500 degrees. Sauté giblets in oil until tender; chop and mix giblets and oil together with bread crumbs, onions, apples and seasonings. Stuff goose and rub skin with butter. Place goose in roasting pan, breast-side up. Roast 15 minutes; then reduce heat to 350 degrees and continue roasting approximately 20 minutes per pound. Let stand 10 minutes before carving.

• OnWisconsinOutdoors.com •

Roasted Grouse

by Suzette Curtis

2 grouse	1 orange, sliced
2 tbsp. orange juice	2 tbsp. honey
½ c. white wine	Salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Sprinkle salt and pepper inside and outside of birds. Using toothpicks, attach orange slices to breasts of both birds and place in roasting pan, breast-sides up. Combine orange juice, honey and wine and pour over birds. Roast, uncovered, about 45 minutes, basting frequently with pan juices. Remove birds from pan and let sit for 5 minutes before serving.

Pan juices can be combined with flour to thicken for gravy.

• OnWisconsinOutdoors.com •

Roasted Pheasant

by Suzette Curtis

2 whole pheasants without giblets	½ c. butter, divided
1 bag frozen pearl onions, thawed	1 c. pomegranate seeds
1 c. seedless grapes	½ c. water
2 c. heavy cream	¼ c. brandy
1 c. chicken broth	½ tsp. tarragon

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Rinse pheasants and pat dry. Melt 4 tbsp. butter in large frying pan over medium-high heat. Sauté pheasants in butter until browned on all sides; transfer to roasting pan. Roast pheasants for about 25 minutes until done. Meat should be white with pink near the bones. Remove from roasting pan to serving platter. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.

Meanwhile, melt remaining butter in same large frying pan over medium heat. Add onions and sauté until lightly browned. Add water; cover and continue to cook over medium heat until onions are tender, about 20 minutes. Turn heat down to low, add fruits and cook until warmed through. Remove from heat and arrange around pheasants on serving platter.

Combine pan drippings with broth, brandy and tarragon in pan over medium-high heat. Slowly add heavy cream, stirring constantly. Continue to cook, stirring frequently, until liquid has reduced to desired consistency. Transfer to gravy bowl and serve over pheasant and onion/fruit mixture.

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BARBARA WEDDLE

Winged Beauties

Year of the geese

The first flocks arrive out of the north on an early November Sunday. I'm stretched out on the sofa reading the newspaper when I hear the raucous gabbling that signals their arrival. My cat, Belle, also alerted by the noise, springs to the sofa back that faces out the large living-room window and slants her feline eyes upward, marveling with me as fragmented bunches of Canada geese swoop across the gray Midwestern sky, then glide to the ice-glazed surface of the river that runs by our house.

That evening, when the sky is a cloudless gray and a bitter wind strips through the frost-blackened river oaks, I slip into my coat, don my wool toboggan and walk down to investigate. In the near darkness I'm barely able to make out their dark shapes. Feathers fluffed, necks tucked into their chests, they're burrowed in for the night around an elongated opening in the ice shaped like a large navy bean.

All through November, December, January and on into mid-February they remain, flying out each morning but always returning just before sunset. New flocks arrive daily until their ranks swell to more than a

hundred. By mid-December they are the topic of many discussions in our small town. My daily walks to the river become a ritual.

One evening, as I pass a neighbor's house, she steps outside. "They should have moved on by now," she says. She turns an eye toward the river. I can't decide whether her frown suggests disapproval or merely incomprehension. "I like it that they are here," I respond.

At home I tease Belle, my cat. "If you don't quit galumphing down the hall and nibbling on my houseplants and clawing at the furniture, I'll throw you to the geese." However, Belle is as intrigued and as pleased with the geese as I am and often watches with me as they leave and return each day.

One end-of-February evening, hands fisted in my gloves, I find myself positioned by the river as usual. The temperature hovers around zero as it has for months. Spooked by my arrival, a couple geese slip off the ice soundlessly and fall into the water. Blown by a strong north wind, they



"All through November, December, January and on into mid-February they remain, flying out each morning but always returning just before sunset."

sidle in a small and silent drift for a moment then rise and flare away—against the direction of the wind. "Geese always take flight into the wind." Whether true or not, those words, spoken to me by some hunter relative, come to mind.

I've already turned to go back to the house when I hear a sudden and violent burst of noise.

Snowmobiling on the river is a common recreation during long Midwestern winters, and, up the river in the short distance cutting figure eights on the thin ice, is a young man on a snowmobile. I fear this invasion of man and machine will cause the geese to leave.

The next day my fears are realized. The geese are gone. All that remains to remind me that hundreds of geese once camped near my home is an ice-covered river riddled with piles of droppings.

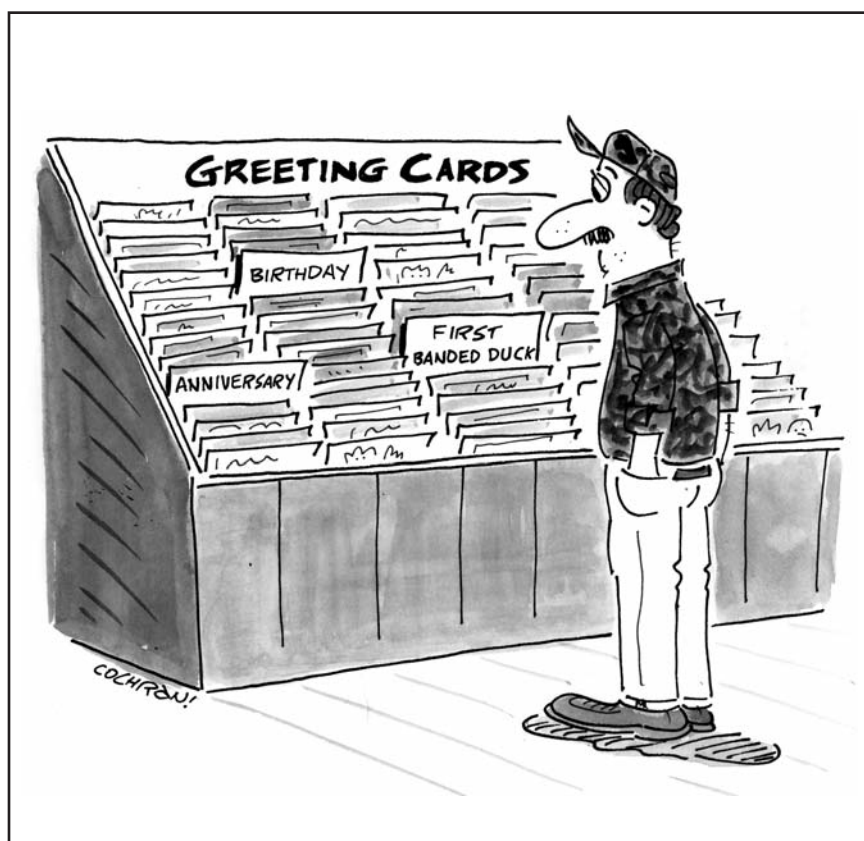
A few days later, however, I hear a familiar cacophony of sound. Outside the window I see them—circling high, flying in all directions, above and below each other, some so high they appear to be gnats.

I breathe a sigh of relief then quickly bundle up and cut across the backyard to a place by the river where they appear to be congregating. Stiff

with cold I tiptoe up on them using a heavy spruce as a duck blind. For a moment I have this wacky image of hundreds of geese with wings cocked to their ears, listening as I approach.

However, they are oblivious to my presence. Strutting back and forth on the river ice, they squabble among themselves, as though vying for favorable flying positions as they prepare to leave again. Down river, looking like some Paleozoic green wasp, the obnoxious snowmobile is sliding onto the river ice again.

That night, when there is only a faint light in the western sky, I stand by the river again, perfectly quiet, shivering in the half light, searching for dark shapes burrowed around an opening in the ice and listening for the bugling sound of a lead goose quacking in alarm. I see nothing. I hear nothing. This time the geese are truly gone. *W*



Barbara Weddle has had essays, book reviews and articles published in more than 150 magazines. During Wisconsin's long winter months she can usually be found at her computer; however, now and then you may catch sight of her at river's edge watching flocks of Canada geese fly in.

1
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— Fishing Guide — DENNIS RADLOFF

DENNIS RADLOFF

Fishing On The Edge

Find active muskies on the outside edges of the baitfish

Fall fishing is what many consider the “Holy Grail” in regard to catching a trophy musky. These opportunities are narrowed by locating muskies that are taking advantage of optimal feeding conditions. As muskies search the necessary forage to build winter body mass, locating the baitfish will lead you to active fish.

No matter what the primary forage on your body of water, you will often find perch, cisco, whitefish, shad, or shiners in large schools. Large schools of baitfish in the fall can be found along deep weed edges, main lake break lines, or suspended near structure. The common tactic utilized most often is to concentrate on fishing directly through these abundant

schools of baitfish. This will usually result in contacting the active muskies feeding on these baitfish.

There are times though when working through the schools of baitfish that we don't seem to be finding any active muskies. I have found that sometimes the muskies will be suspended on the “outer edge” of the baitfish, instead of right under. Even if a musky has just finished feeding on a large school of baitfish, they will often continue to hang around the outer edges of the school. Some of these muskies on the outer edges may be getting ready to move in and feed, while others may just be remaining close to the food source until the next feeding session.



Joe Hardwick with his first 50" incher caught working the edge of the baitfish.

By targeting the muskies on the outer edge of the baitfish school you can increase your chances of catching more muskies. This simple adjustment will surely lead you to more muskies this fall, perhaps the big one you have been looking for! *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 www.sterlingmusky.com or at 262.443.9993.

KIRBY, from page 3

already, by those who have already identified the issue for all of us. One of a number of key ways that all of us can make a difference is through the Wisconsin DNR's Learn-To-Hunt Program.

In a DNR Learn-To-Hunt Program new hunters who've not already been licensed for a given pursuit (for example, waterfowl hunting) go through an intensive training program that covers basic elements of firearm safety as well as key information about the game being pursued, rules and regulations for the season, and aspects of the culture, traditions and customs surrounding that sport.

Shortly after successfully completing the educational portion of the program, the new hunters are paired up with an experienced mentor who has good familiarity with the particular pursuit. They enjoy a hunt together,

with the mentor offering close supervision and tutelage as the day goes by. In this way, the new hunter is able to enjoy the whole experience of the hunt, including field dressing and perhaps even preparation for the table. This first-hand experience drives home the lessons of the classroom work.

Currently, there are literally hundreds of Learn-To-Hunt events that occur all over Wisconsin every year, covering almost every species one can legally hunt. For any of a variety of reasons, waterfowl hunting is among those that has the least Learn-To-Hunt opportunities available to potential new hunters.

In early 2010, the Wisconsin Waterfowl Association resolved to help improve this situation.

By the time you read this, most—if not all—of our new and continuing Learn-To-Hunt waterfowl events will

have been completed for the fall 2010. Hopefully, with the efforts of our hard-working member-volunteers across the state, we will have doubled or tripled the number of events related to waterfowl. For those that have answered this call to duty, thank you!

Our work is not done, however. As a state with one of the strongest waterfowling traditions in the country, we should continue to expand these opportunities to expose today's youth, who will be tomorrow's leaders, to the sports that we cherish.

The Wisconsin Waterfowl Association will be continuing to seek new volunteer mentors to join existing team of mentors, and to start new teams in their areas, throughout 2011. If you are an experienced duck or goose hunter, and would like to become a part of this movement, I encourage you to contact us so we can help you become a

part of this exciting opportunity.

It's only when all of us take an opportunity to give something back, something as precious as our knowledge and experience, that we can push back at the wave of change that is reducing the number of hunters of all kinds, waterfowling included. *W*

Author's note: Contact the Wisconsin Waterfowl Association at: wisducks.org.

Don Kirby is Executive Director for the Wisconsin Waterfowl Association. He joined the group after 16 years as a Store Manager with Gander Mtn. in Wisconsin. Prior to his time with WWA, he did extensive outdoor media work on radio and TV. He has an MBA from UW-Milwaukee, and lives near Green Bay with his wife Kathy and their children. Don has been an avid waterfowler for nearly 30 years.

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The Art Of The Sit

It's time to really hunt from your stand this fall

Many deer hunters think hunting from a deer stand doesn't take much thinking or effort, other than the energy needed to get to your spot.

Not true! Stand hunting is much more than just sitting in the woods. Turn your deer stand experience into a real hunt and you greatly increase your chances for success this gun season. You need to actively engage in the hunt. Do it through good planning, believing and keeping your focus sharp, and really hunting. Put together, these factors comprise "the art of the sit."

Plan, and Assure Comfort

Take care of your personal comfort. If you're cold, wet, miserable, hungry or thirsty, you're not going to be still and alert while maintaining concentration. Your only worries should be minimizing movement while listening and watching for deer. So plan well.

Smart hunters walk in to their stands, to avoid noise and disruption. There's nothing worse than working up a sweat, then sitting and getting chilled as your body cools down and the sun comes up; you're done in an hour. So always pack a daypack or rucksack full of warm clothes, and walk to your stand with the minimum on.

Sooner or later, no matter how many clothes you put on or how good they are, a stationary body is going to chill. That's where a heat source becomes important. Remember: heating isn't cheating. Even old-time trail-watchers built fires to help them sit for long stretches.

Some of the best heat-generating investments are disposable handwarmers. If you're in an enclosed blind on the ground or in the air, a portable heater makes sense. You simply screw a radiator top into a propane fuel tank, light it, and enjoy the heat. I don't go deer hunting without one when I have a kid along, as it virtually guarantees you at least an extra hour or more on stand—an hour that can really pay off.

Another part of the comfort equation relates to liquid and food. Simply put, your body metabolizes a lot of water as it tries to generate heat on a

cold day. Ever get a headache while hunting? Most hunters blame it on eye stress. In reality, most of those headaches trace back to dehydration. So bring water along, at least a 20-ounce bottle and better yet, two.

Food is important. Avoid junk. Opt for something decent—a sandwich

that one sees from a deer stand. Immerse your thoughts and attention on your surroundings. You're more likely to hear the hoof-fall of an approaching deer if your ears are at work listening to that distant flock of sandhill cranes. Likewise, trying to identify that bird flitting through the

and east-central Minnesota for over seven decades, and had well over a hundred whitetails to his credit, many of them shot off lonely stands back in the middle of nowhere.

Merlin told me: "When you're on stand, you need to be hunting. Most guys sit there making all kinds of movement, daydreaming, jerking their head back and forth, looking at the ground, even dozing. But you have to work—listen hard, look closely, move slowly and only when necessary—and be ready."

Minimizing movement is the first step to good stand hunting. Settle in, get comfortable, then let your eyes scan and your ears listen. Look for pieces and parts of a deer: the horizontal line formed by a whitetail's back or belly; four vertical legs; a patch of white from a deer's throat or rump; the twitch of an ear; the flick of a tail. Success only comes when you see the deer before it's upon you.

One of stand hunting's biggest sins is setting your gun down. Reaching for a gun wastes critical time and makes too much movement. Instead, keep both hands on your gun, and hold it in a relaxed yet ready position on your lap, or cradled. Make only a minimum of motion to get ready to shoot.

Rehearse for a minute when you arrive at your stand. Think through the shots that might present themselves, get that gun up and make the slow swing you might have to execute. Imagine where a deer might stop.

Assure quiet. This means soft wool or fleece outerwear that won't make noise against twigs or bark. Prune branches and twigs. Work out squeaks or creaks in your stand beforehand. If you're on the ground, clear leaves and debris away from your feet so you can make any necessary foot shifts noiselessly.

Take care of all the details, and then really hunt when you're on stand this gun season. Your meatpole will thank you. *W*



The author with a Green County buck earned after a long vigil on stand. Planning for comfort, believing in the spot, and hunting with purpose, paid off.

*"Take care of all the details,
and then really hunt when you're on stand
this gun season."*

on whole grain bread, an apple, granola bars. Jerky is fine, too. If you try to be a he-man and go without food or drink, your levels of energy and alertness will drop, as will your attitude, and it will cost you a deer.

Believe, and Stay Sharp

Once you've assured your comfort, it's easier to stay sharp on stand, keep your attitude in the positive zone, and believe that you will see—and get—a deer. With that mindset, you will hunt hard and effectively.

But the longer you sit, the more challenging it becomes to maintain focus. It helps to become interested in the parade of birds and other nature

bushes is the perfect way to notice the twitch of a deer's ear or the flick of its tail.

Tell yourself that success is just around the corner, behind that tree, over a hill, hiding in that marsh, walking this way along the deer trail ... that a half minute from right now you could have your deer. It can happen that fast!

Hunt, Don't Wait

The best stand-hunting advice I ever got was from my friend Marlin Madison, an old-time deer hunter that I would pit against any of today's hot-shot TV hunters. Merlin worked the big woods of northwestern Wisconsin

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

NATALIE BEACOM

The Allure Of Ice

The simplicity of ice fishing

As you wipe away the fresh white snow with your gloved hand and peer through the sheer ice, your mind wonders whether it's seeing or imagining movement through the dark layers of hardwater. All it registers is your reflection.

Standing, you look around to get your bearing. You have walked what seems like a far distance out onto the lake. The orphaned holes scattered across the terrain have made for careful stepping and your footprints have all but disappeared in the surrounding tundra of whites and gray. Only a few months before you were on this lake, rocking in your boat in open water and searching for the same fish.

With the exception of the winter wind encouraging the snow to dance its horizontal and vertical jig, nothing is moving. While there are shanties littered across the water's frozen

surface, you see no one. There's a whirring whisper in the air that's calming, but it's mixed with cracking noises underfoot. You are on layers of thick ice but this natural cracking teases both your sense of fear and your sense of adventure.

Dressed warmly and prepared to get to the business of catching dinner, you push up your cap and begin to drill. The auger's grinding temporarily cuts through the quiet and in a moment of surprise, there's a release and your arms give. Ice water begins to bubble up from the ice column with remnant spirals from the sharp blade. This small hole, one of many you've drilled, is a gateway that has already provided years of exhilarating fishing experiences during cold Wisconsin winters.

Hardwater Love

Ice fishing is an institution for



many. As soon as the ice blankets the water, huts go up and pop-up sleds make their way out on the lakes in search of hot spots, and even the tried-and-true overturned white buckets have a home on a frozen Wisconsin lake.

From early ice in November to just before the spring thaw, anglers share a fellowship out on the hardwater. It's a shared connection of a love of fishing in any condition, with new

inexperienced members welcome. If you are the newcomer or reluctant ice fisherman, here are a few tips on keeping it simple when just getting started.

Most of the gear required to ice fish you likely already own, or a quick stop to your neighbor's garage will outfit you appropriately. Your annual fishing license is all the state requires. There are no special permits or

Continued on page 23



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Photos: Scott Hoffman, NPS, BC Tourism, WI ATV Association

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See what our Explore Wisconsin partners are planning just for you ...

The holiday season is here at last! Celebrate Thanksgiving and Christmas by enjoying many extravaganzas in our area. We welcome you to the **Berlin, Green Lake, Markesan, Princeton and Ripon** area, to learn more visit glcountry.com. [Click on Green Lake or Fond du Lac County.](#)

Big Chetac Resort just concluded our 26th season of serving our guests with some of the **Wisconsin northland's finest fishing and overall vacation fun**. Keep an eye on our website during the off-season as we build another fabulous three bedroom cabin that keeps our long-time visitors coming back. See you in the spring. [Click on Sawyer County.](#)

Ease into winter with a holiday shopping trip to Ashland. From the Christmas Cash Raffle to Hunting Season to the day after Thanksgiving shopping fun, Ashland is ready for your visit. Come to the **Garland City of the North Christmas Parade**, with "Story Book Christmas", December 4. [Click on Ashland County.](#)

Explore Manitowish Waters as you enjoy your favorite hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation activities! **Walk, ski, or snowshoe or snowmobile** in our winter wonderland. Our frozen waters provide endless ice fishing, too! Easy to find: travel U.S. Hwy. 51 or fly in to D25. For complete area information, [click on Vilas County.](#)

With dazzling fall colors a vision of the past, we look towards a winter wonderland. Visit Chippewa County and enjoy over 300 miles of **snowmobile trails, multiple cross-country ski trails, over 450 lakes and streams** excellent for ice fishing, and many other great winter activities. [Click on Chippewa County.](#) Bayfield County is a winter wonderland!

Enjoy 100's of kilometers of groomed **cross-country ski and snowmobile trails throughout the Mt. Ashwabay and Chequamegon Nat'l Forest** areas, alpine skiing and ice fishing amongst spectacular views of the Apostle Islands Nat'l Lakeshore, hunting, the Ice Road, and the unparalleled hike to the Ice Caves of Mawikwe Bay. [Click on Bayfield County.](#)

It is hunting season in Sparta! Sparta is known as the bicycling capital of America but it could be the **Archery capital!** Do you know this is where Mathews bows are made? Silent Outdoors and Sparta Archery are new bow dealers in town and both have excellent indoor and outdoor ranges to try out! Prefer snowmobiling? Sled our 300 miles of trail! Call 800-354-2453. [Click on Monroe County.](#)

Adams County Petenwell and Castle Rock Parks are open **year round for camping** with heated shower/restroom facilities. No reservations necessary! Unload your snowmobile and hit the trails right from the parks. Petenwell Park also has ATV camping with access to the ATV routes. Castle Rock Park 608-339-7713, Petenwell Park 608-564-7513. [Click on Adams County](#)

"The People's Choice: Best Wisconsin Town on the Lake". For regular updates, [click on Ozaukee County.](#)

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Visit the Superior area in the state's Northwest corner for excellent **downhill and X-C skiing, snowboarding, tubing and snowshoeing**. Snowmobile and Winter ATV on over 325 miles of groomed interconnecting trail systems. Fish the St Louis River for trophy musky and walleye. With 321,000 acres of public land, there's plenty of adventure for all. [Click on Douglas County.](#)

Cooling Fall water temperatures will draw baitfish into shallow water adjacent to spring spawning territory in the Green Bay region and lakes of southeast Wisconsin, making the opportunity for a **slob musky or walleye** very real. [Click on Door County.](#)

The crisp chill of fall is in the air and hunting seasons are in full swing! Marinette County is a **haven for small game hunters**. Tag your trophy in "the real north!". [Click on Marinette County.](#)

The Wisconsin bear season just concluding saw 24 of 28 hunters score in Northern Wisconsin Outfitters near Washburn, **with 100 percent shot opportunity**. When the coveted tag comes only once every eight years, you'll want to keep an eye on us. We work for you. [Click on Bayfield County.](#)

Great Hunting Parcels in the Waushara area through First Weber Real Estate. [Click on Waushara County.](#)

Calumet County is home to **five different public hunting grounds** that include prairies, marshes, and wooded areas. The Killsnake Wildlife Area, Kiel Marsh Area, Brillion Wildlife Area, Ledge Road DNR land, and High Cliff State Park are all open to the public. Please note all areas have designated times for hunting. Please contact the DNR to find out when it is open for public hunting. [Click on Calumet County.](#)

Pro Football & the American Spirit military exhibit now open at the Green Bay Packers Hall of Fame. Learn more at www.lambeaufield.com. Upcoming Green Bay events include **Snowmobile USA November 12-13 and WI Gun & Knife Show Dec. 31-Jan. 1**. Both shows are at Shopko Hall in Green Bay. [Click on Brown County](#) for a complete events listing.

The Hayward Lakes Area would like to welcome you. Rich in small town atmosphere, Hayward is an ideal destination. Whether it's a variety of accommodations, **fantastic fishing, excellent dining, golfing or unique shopping** you're looking for you're sure to find it here. Contact us for a FREE Vacation Guide. Woods... Waters... World Class Events. [Click on Sawyer County.](#)

With 148,000 acres of County Forest land and over 950 lakes, Washburn County is a great destination for Fall Hunting, Fishing, ATViing and much more! Great Fall/Winter events include: **Christmas Arts & Craft Show, Ladies Night Out, Santa's Pizza Party Train Ride and many others.** [Click on Washburn County.](#)

Your outdoor activities will have a plush blanket of snow as Iron County is the **Snow Capital of Wisconsin**. Over 200 inches of snow makes ideal conditions for the nearly 500 miles of snowmobile trails as well as skiing and snowshoeing opportunities. Make plans for your ice fishing trip to Iron County with over 200 lakes to choose from including the 14,000 acre Turtle Flambeau Flowage. [Click on Iron County.](#)

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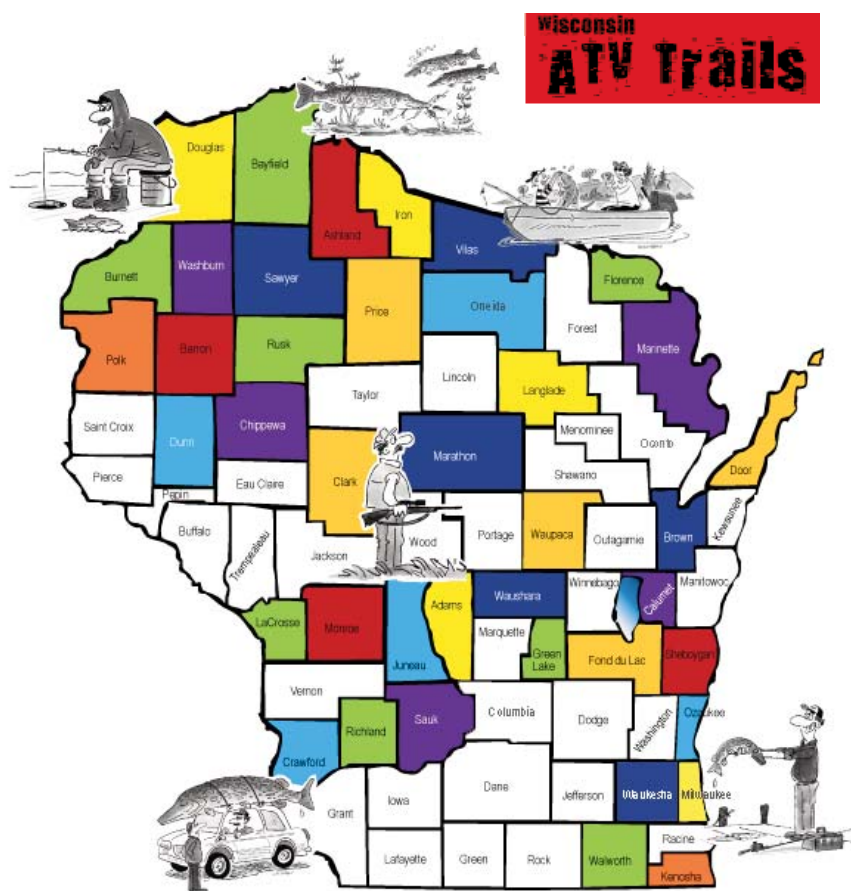
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There are BIG reasons to visit Juneau County in October... **Big fish, Big bucks, Big turkeys, and Big events!** Come, enjoy the big waters, woods and hospitality of our county; home to Necedah National Wildlife Refuge, Castle Rock & Petenwell Lakes, 4 winding rivers and tons of outdoor fun! ***Click on Juneau County.***

No matter what type of hunting you do, the fall and early winter are an excellent time to get out and enjoy our wonderful **natural resources here in Polk County**. A great way to enhance this experience is to introduce a child or a non-hunting adult to the great outdoors of Wisconsin through the newly passed Mentored Hunting bill. Please consult your state hunting regulations for details. And remember...fishing is also great this time of year. ***Click on Polk County.***

Clark County's late fall provides top **notch hunting opportunities – especially for white-tail deer.** Winter's snow transforms

the landscape into a sparkling fantasyland. Check out Bruce Mound Winter Sports Area. It's the perfect place for downhill skiing, sledding, tubing, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling or making a giant snowman with the kids. ***Click on Clark County.***

Richland County – the best hunting location for man, woman and child. **Hunting deer, hunting for the perfect Christmas Tree, hunting for great holiday shopping bargains, and even hunting for Santa.** Bring the whole family to Richland County for exciting hunting opportunities. *Click on Richland County.*

Fall colors are ever changing and not only with the trees. Fall run salmon turn colors and have brightened tributaries. As the foliage falls, so does the sky with flocks of northern mallards. **Come take a shot at this cast and blast** courtesy of Sheboygan County and Wolf Pack Adventures. Give a

"Memory" this Christmas, a gift certificate for a outdoor adventure! **Click on Sheboygan County.**

Langlade County is a snowmobiler's paradise! With over **500 miles of regularly groomed trails**, we have something for everyone. Whether you prefer a leisurely ride or are a die-hard snowmobiler, Langlade County is a great destination for you! Click on Langlade County. ***Click on Langlade County.***

Bring the Family to see over TWO MILLION lights in Riverside Park nightly from 5-10pm beginning on November 26th. Among the splendor is a 140 foot Christmas Tree and animated light displays that fill the park. **Live nativity presentation on weekends until Christmas.** Santa is here until Christmas Eve to visit with all the children. Don't miss the chance to experience this spectacular display. ***Click on LaCrosse County.***

The Mississippi River in Southwest Wisconsin is open for adventure. Come for the **fall waterfowl migration or the fabulous fishing**. Stay at the Grandview Motel in Ferryville and enjoy the gorgeous autumn sunsets over the Big River!" ***Click on Crawford County.***

Price County is a sportsman's paradise when it comes to late fall and early winter. Early indications are that the Ruffed Grouse population is strong in the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest and hunting for the **"winged dynamite"** continues through January 31st. Fall is the time to fish for monster Musky and with fewer people venturing out success rates tend to increase. **Ice fishing tournaments** begin in January. Ice anglers will have several opportunities to fish and win great prizes, all while benefiting local organizations. To order a sportsman's map and a county calendar, of events, ***click on Price County.***

Lakeview Log Cabin Resort is a warm winter get away for those who deer, bird hunt, and even trap. Early ice fishing is great and when the snow flies, you can **hit the snowmobiling trails and prime skiing** is within reasonable driving distance. Located near Mosinee, south of Wausau. *Click on Marathon County.*

FLORENCE COUNTY
• Wild Rivers Interpretive Center

FOND DU LAC COUNTY
• Green Lake Country Visitors

GREEN LAKE COUNTY
• Green Lake Country Visitors

IRON COUNTY
• Iron County Development

JUNEAU COUNTY
• Juneau County

KENOSHA COUNTY
• Wildlife Visions

LACROSSE COUNTY
• LaCrosse Area Visitors Bureau

LANGLADE COUNTY
• Antigo/Lanlade Chamber

MARATHON COUNTY

- Hooksetters Fishing Guide
- Lakeview Log Cabin Resort

- Marinette County Tourism
- A River Guide (Jason Guarke)

MILWAUKEE COUNTY
• Fish Chaser Guide Service

OZAUKEE COUNTY
• Port Washington Tourism

POLK COUNTY
• Polk County Information Center

PRICE COUNTY

- Park Falls Area Chamber
- Price County Tourism
- Wounded Warriors in Action

RICHLAND COUNTY
• Hybrid Redneck Events

RUSK COUNTY
• Rusk County

SAUK COUNTY
• Birchcliff Resort

SAWYER COUNTY

- Hayward Lakes Visitors Bureau
- Treeland Resort

SHEBOYGAN COUNTY

- City of Sheboygan Tourism
- Wolf Pack Adventures

VILAS COUNTY
• Manitowish Waters Chamber

WALWORTH COUNTY
• Dave Duwe's Guide Service

WASHBURN COUNTY
• Washburn County Tourism

WAUPACA COUNTY

- Fremont Area Chamber
- Manotak Lodge , Ontario
- Wolf River Outfitters Resort

WAUSHARA COUNTY
• First Weber Real Estate

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TODD BOHM

A Road Less Traveled

Coyote trapping for beginners

“I concentrate on three keys to be successful: controlling scent, location and trap-set types.”

With the explosion of coyote populations in Wisconsin, an opportunity is presented to outdoor enthusiasts to catch some of the wildest predators on the earth. Coyote trapping can be difficult because of their uncanny nose, but by following a few simple tips and using a few basic sets, any trapper can experience success.

In trapping coyotes or any dry-land furbearer, I concentrate on three keys to be successful: controlling scent, location and trap-set types.

Scent Control

Coyotes have an unbelievable nose, and controlling scent is crucial in trapping success. I prefer to use a No. 1.75 or No. 2 coil spring trap that have

been boiled, waxed (unscented wax), and hung outside to get rid of scent.

When making my sets or checking traps, I wear a set of hip boots that are solely dedicated to coyote trapping. I keep them in a rubber bin, do not touch them with an ungloved hand, and never wear them where they would be contaminated by human or other scent. I also wear a set of elbow-length rubber gloves anytime I'm making a set or handling my traps. These gloves are not worn when baiting the set as any lure scent that you get on the trap may cause the coyote to dig it up. The rubber gloves are also kept in a separate container and only used for coyote trapping.

Trap Location

When looking for locations to make your sets, remember that coyotes are opportunistic predators. They are creatures of the edges in many ways similar to whitetail deer.

I look along field corners, thick-cover edges, dips or gullies along fields, or anywhere a coyote can hunt but still feel protected from large openings. Other places I've been successful in trapping coyotes have included logging roads, log decking areas and old abandoned beaver ponds.

One key factor when considering trap locations is maintaining good relationships with landowners and other people that might use the land on which you're trapping. Catching the farmer's dog or some hunter's prized pointer will go a long way in destroying landowner relationships and giving trapping a bad name.

Catching non-target animals can be largely avoided by staying far away from buildings when trapping or if trapping public land trying to set your traps in little traveled areas.

Favorite Sets

My two favorite sets when trapping coyotes are the dirt-hole set and the flat set. I try and make my dirt-hole sets look as natural as possible. Remember, you're trying to make a coyote think that some other predator buried a prime morsel of food for later consumption. I also make sure the trap is bedded extremely solid. The last thing you want is to have a coyote working the trap and step on an edge and pull back because

they realize something is wrong.

Another tip when making both the flat and dirt-hole set is to make these sets from the back. Most trappers will kneel down in front of the set where the coyote is going to approach from. In my opinion, crafty coyotes can sense where you knelt so making the sets from the backside will put more pelts on your stretcher.

Trapping coyotes is a great way to get out and add another dimension to your outdoor interests. It will truly test your skills and knowledge as a trapper, but the reward of seeing that first coyote in your trap is well worth it. *W*

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



The dirt-hole set and the flat set are the author's two most successful tactics for trapping coyotes.



TOM CARPENTER

Cub's Corner

Good reads for young hunters: 'Whitetail'

I still have my old and tattered but beloved copy of one of the greatest white-tailed deer hunting books of all time: *Whitetail - Fundamentals and Fine Points for the Hunter*. If you know this book, you're nodding in agreement right now. If you don't know it, you owe it to yourself to obtain a copy. And if you have a budding young hunter in your life, there is no better way to get that kid excited for, and educated about, deer hunting.

Those of us around in the 1970s might remember the old Outdoor Life Book Club. For the crazy sum of \$1 you got to choose four books, as long as you agreed to buy a certain number of additional volumes from the Club during the next year. I guess I was a schemer of a kid. I would sign up, get my four books for a dollar plus shipping costs, ditch the club, then sign up again at various friends' addresses

and get a different four books for another measly dollar. I still have all of them (along with hundreds more outdoor books gleaned over the ensuing decades). *Whitetail* is one of the most treasured in my collection.

The book was written by George Mattis, who grew up on a remote dairy farm near Birchwood, Wisconsin, and hunted the northwestern part of the state. He hunted whitetails in many other regions of the United States as well. But he loved his home hunting ground of Sawyer County and other Wisconsin woods best, and that makes the book all the more relevant for a budding Badger State deer hunters.

As the Wisconsin gun season loomed each year, I would read that book from front to back and back to front, absorbing every word and studying the spare but attractive etching used as artwork. No photographs here: It was Mattis' clear, concise, entertaining and descriptive writing that captivated the imagination.

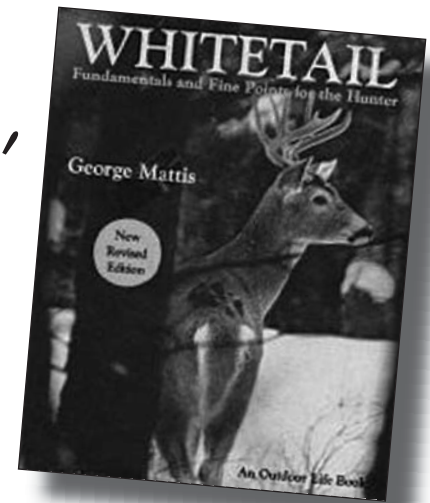
One of the neatest things about *Whitetail* is its blend of story telling—actual hunting tales—along with its clear and straightforward instructions on the “how” of hunting. Mattis was a masterful writer, knowing just how to choose the right words to evoke the circumstances and excitement of a particular hunt. Consider this gem, written about a buck Mattis shot at the last minute on the last day of the season, after potting a snowshoe hare for dinner:

The job (of dressing out the hare) finished, I straightened out from the tiring crouched position.

Directly in front of me, near my stand on the ridge, stood a large buck, watching me in bug-eyed wonderment. Even as I reached for my gun, he cocked his head slightly

from side to side, completely engrossed in my odd behavior in this remote swamp jungle. He was an easy target at about 50 yards, standing slightly quartered to my left with head held high. With blood-sticky fingers, I squeezed off the neck shot which brought his hulk down to his tracks.

That hunt was from a stand, but Mattis was truly a master of the still-hunt. He also covers deer drives (recommending a small group as the most effective), talks about tracking deer, and writes extensively about lucky breaks. But it doesn't stop



really immersing yourself in the natural world is the ticket to outdoor enjoyment ... and that all that attention to what's going on around you is going to make you a better

“Whitetail gives you the idea that really immersing yourself in the natural world is the ticket to outdoor enjoyment ... and that all that attention to what's going on around you is going to make you a better hunter to boot.”

there. Trailing wounded deer receives ample coverage. Field dressing gets plenty of space. Buck fever (and getting over it) is discussed extensively.

More than anything though (and one reason Mattis was such a superb hunter), is this: He was a student not only of the white-tailed deer, but of all of nature. This is readily apparent throughout the book, but especially in a section called *The Hunter as Nature Observer*. A total of 19 pages are devoted to the joys of wildlife watching while deer hunting.

The anecdotes here are grand indeed. An annoying and over-active mouse. A family of hunting weasels. An encounter with a hibernating bruin. Watching snowshoe hares at play. A mink wrestling with a walleye in the shallows of a lake. All the small birds that flit by our stands or across our path. A partridge (ruffed grouse) that dived into a shallow snowbank; Mattis retrieved the stunned bird, watched it revive, and then let it fly off.

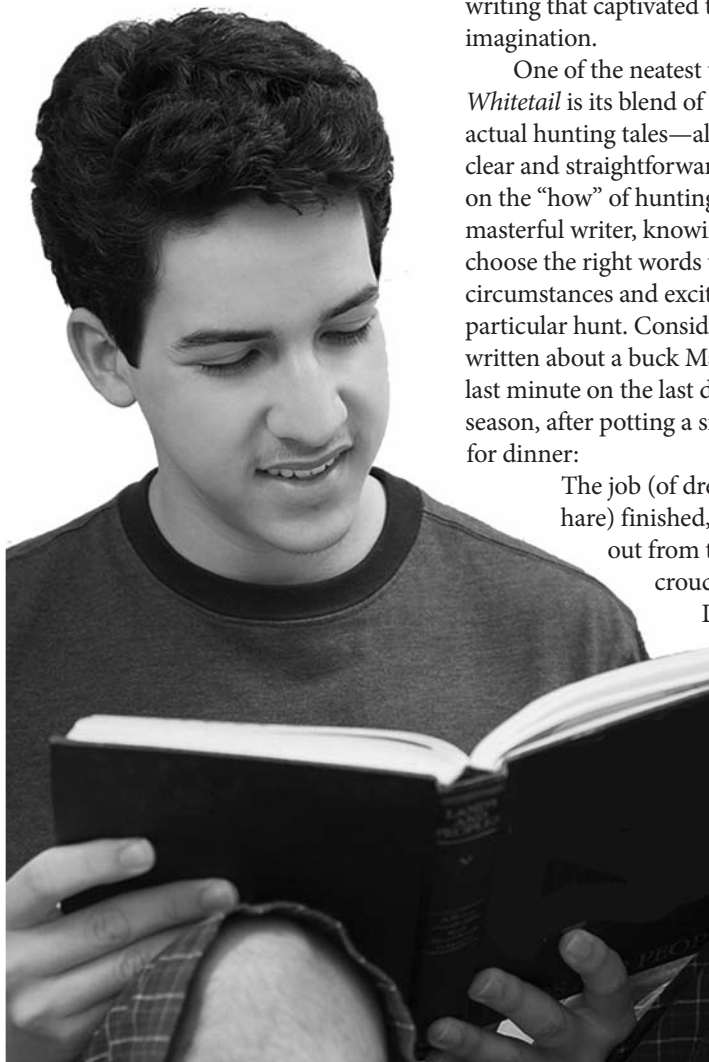
Whitetail gives you the idea that

hunter to boot. What magnificent lessons for today's young hunter.

Of course, there are specific lessons on deer and deer behavior too. Buck habits. The rut (we don't know that much more now than he did then!). Spring and summer whitetails. Wintering deer. This book is chucked full of wonderful deer hunting advice and information, and Mattis doesn't waste a word.

You can still obtain a copy of *Whitetail - Fundamentals and Fine Points for the Hunter*. Check out Amazon.com; the used books are quite affordable (often in the \$10 range even with shipping). *Whitetail* is as enthralling to read now as it was when first published. Consider obtaining a copy. I still get mine out as deer season approaches each year, to recapture some of that boyish excitement for the hunt. It works every time. *WC*

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



TOM LUBA

Fall Bass "Pick 3"

"I call it the angling version of Wisconsin's 'Pick 3.' The odds are though, that putting your money on more than one lake just might mean a very nice return next fall."

Somebody once told me not to put all my eggs in one basket. Fall bass fishing is often like the egg adage. I'm living proof of what can happen if you depend strictly on one body of water for all your fall bass fishing.

I fished a small millpond/flowage for years. When the fall weather was stable, with only a gradual cool down, the fishing was awesome. The water cooled, the weeds went down and the bass sat up on the remaining green weeds, 3-4 feet under the surface and ambushed just about anything I would toss their way. However, when a vicious late fall cold front whistled its way through the area, the surface temperature could drop 10 degrees in a day or two. Good fishing headed south.

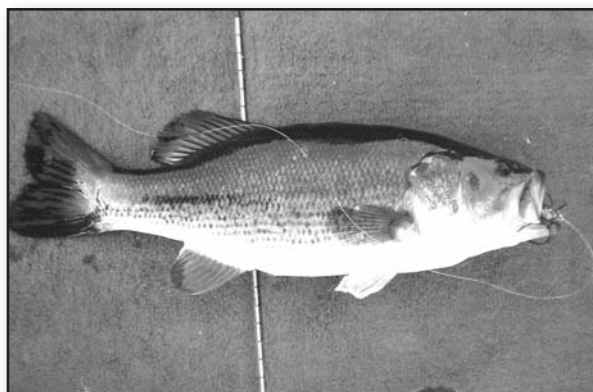
On a late October day many years ago, after getting one half-hearted hit in a few hours, I surrendered. On the way home, we meandered past the Wolf River. I did well there on smallmouth earlier in the month. Because the season was ending, and I figured I couldn't get much more beat up than I did on largemouth on my shallow honey-hole, I did a quick turn into the nearest landing and dropped the boat in.

We motored down river to some deep rock areas which were adjacent to wintering areas for the bass. During 2 hours we caught 35 smallmouth. They were hitting as fast as we could get a bait down to them. Talk about a 180-degree turn from the cold, shallow lake.

The light went on upstairs. It taught me a lesson that I took to heart. I call it the angling version of Wisconsin's "Pick 3." The odds are though, that putting your money on more than one lake just might mean a very nice return next fall.

I didn't give up on the shallow lake, although I watch the weather closely every time I'm planning to fish it. I certainly made it a point to spend a lot more time on the river. And I went back and revisited several clear, deep lakes that I fished quite a bit in the summer, but passed over when fall rolled around.

Today I let the weather determine where I fish. "Nice," warm, stable fall weather lets me zero-in on the bass in the shallow lake. On windy days, it's nice to nestle down in the river channel and listen to the wind howl overhead. When the temperature starts to move on down, looking November straight in the eye, it's nice to hit that deep body of water, knowing that the



Swimming a jig 'n pig through the tops of weeds that are still green is a proven tactic for fall largemouth. (Luba)

fish always have depth to escape into and can remain catchable up to freeze-up.

Searchin' Shallow

The shallow lakes are almost like fishing flats. A lot of them aren't much deeper than 10-15 feet. Some have channels through them from a feeder river (a must as it provides the necessary oxygen when the lake freezes over). But mostly, the fish are reachable at any level.

Early during the fall, casting spinnerbaits or shallow-running, crawfish-colored crankbaits across the remaining green weeds can get active fish. If they aren't as active, a soft plastic stickbait, such as YUM's Dinger in black with blue fleck, can be lifted and allowed to flutter back down into the weeds. The fish might not jump and run after a crankbait, but an enticing piece of plastic floated right down in their wheelhouse will get bit more often than not.

Swim jigs, or a regular jig and pig pulled in and out of the weeds, are also baits worth trying, as are long minnow baits. When the fish are active they'll chase the regular floater/diver. If they are not as active, try the suspending jerkbait, in Tennessee Shad or Baby Bass patterns.

Rollin' The River

Rivers are productive virtually all fall. And smallmouth, which don't mind colder water, are usually on the prowl. Early, floater/diver crankbaits such as Strike King's Series 5 or Bomber's Model 7A are good choices as the fish patrol from mid-depth to shallow, feeding heavily. Use brown crawfish, Firetiger or Candy Apple Red; they are all proven colors.

Diggin' Deep

When the water starts cooling, the fish will start to move deeper and will still feed at will. Tubes, bucktails, grubs and 4-inch Dingers rigged "wacky" will take fish. If the water is clear, give the watermelon and green pumpkin a whirl. If the water has more color to it, I like chartreuse, motor oil, white salt and pepper or green with orange flecks.

My hardest-working bait is the tube, in the 3-1/2-inch size rigged Texas style and hopped or dragged (in colder water). Look for the bass near water that is about 18-20 feet deep, which should be close to wintering



The author with a good fall river smallmouth.

areas. Often, the fish move up on close-by structure to feed, and if you can intercept a school of smallies, the action can be like a lit string of firecrackers. The fish can be quite active all the way down to 40-degree water.

On deeper lakes, I like to start at a drop-off and see where it goes from there. A lot of times, when it is colder, the fish start biting later in the day. When the water temp is in the mid to high 40s, a suspending jerkbait or suspending diving crankbait, such as the Fat Free Shad in baby bass or gold/black, can draw fish back up. The crankbaits can get down deeper and at times, getting the bait down that little bit farther to entice them will trigger bites.

Tubes on the breakline or working it down the breakline are also effective. Worms can also work into the fall. If they won't hit a worm, especially after seeing them all summer, a 3-1/2 inch tube can take over as the lure of preference. I like to use a smoke back with a whitish bottom laminate in terms of tubes. Rig it Texas style with either a 1/8- or 1/4-ounce sinker. Salt in the bait usually causes the fish to hold it longer. I also use scent, if it's not already impregnated in the bait, as an added attraction. Tubes will work all the way through the fall period.

Check the waters in your area to see what you can come up with for fall options. I'm lucky enough to have waters that fit the bill close to home. I'm not the state's biggest gambler, but, come late fall when there are bass to be caught, I play the outdoor version of "Pick 3" pretty regularly. *W*

Tom Luba is a free-lance outdoor writer and bass fishing fan from New London, WI. Tom fishes as much as he can and never gets tired of setting the hook.

JOEL "DOC" KUNZ

On Wisconsin Rivers

Singing the first ice backwater blues



As winter takes its grip on the Wisconsin landscape, there's a call of sorts, one heard only by a few brave souls: the calling of "first ice."

Small lakes and ponds will begin to freeze first, as will the backwaters and bays on area rivers and larger lakes. Because many of these areas are the type of places that panfish are using, the draw is obvious. First-ice bonanza stories are as common as tales of 10-point bucks. Any die-hard ice fisherman has a few. Tales of limits of bluegill, crappie or perch abound, and in this day and age, there are often digital pictures to prove them.

You see, red-hot first-ice fishing is no longer a well-kept secret. Today's angler has better access to the information and equipment that help to provide a rewarding day on the ice. To the fishing industry, it's all good news. To old Uncle Joe who used to fish the backwaters of the Wolf, Wisconsin or Fox Rivers alone, the news is not so sweet. But that's the way of the world and the best thing we can do is to teach the younger generation to respect both the resource and the people who are using it. Fishing With Your Smarts

Access to the Internet is one of the biggest factors

in putting more people on first ice. Reports of good fishing leak out and create the potential for droves of anglers to descend on an area. That not only can be bad for fishing, it can create some potential danger on thin ice. Anglers should be cognizant of this potential problem and watch for changing ice conditions at all times. Anglers should also have a backup plan and look to fish in areas less crowded.

The cold night/warm afternoon conundrum leaves many wondering, "How much sun can the ice take?" I have, over the years, been witness to anglers who have ventured out in the morning on good ice, then got stranded far from shore when trying to return in the afternoon.

Current is another factor and a major consideration when fishing any river system. Even the backwaters have current, providing a potential deadly combination with a warm sun. Travel light, and travel smart. Anglers should use "creepers" to avoid falling and keep equipment to a minimum. A bucket, rod or two and flasher or underwater camera should be all you need. All of that can be carried in the bucket, leaving the other hand available to carry a spud bar.

Anglers should check ice thickness every step or two—from start to finish. Again, ice thickness can vary quickly, especially on river systems. Always be of the mindset that your first step on good ice doesn't mean everything else around you is that thick. Smart Strategies

Find the weeds and you'll find the fish. Crappies, perch and bluegills will use this cover as long as it's standing. Once snow cover reduces sun penetration, weeds will start to die quickly. Although clear ice can make fish spooky, snow cover just inhibits ice forming. So does a windy day. The best first ice is created by a few days of stable, cold weather with below freezing temperatures.

As far as bait and tactics, I still like to use wax worms, spikes and live minnows although there's a growing tendency to use plastics. Their effectiveness can be quite good, but there are times when two or three wax worms wiggling on a hook are what triggers fish to bite. Yes, I said two or three wax worms. One thing I've learned over the years of tagging along with some of the area's best ice anglers is that at times I didn't use enough bait. I'd pick the nicest looking jig and stick a "bug" on it and hope for the best. I also found that I often moved the presentation too much and didn't fish light enough line.

Now I have an ice fishing set up specifically for panfish, using light, specially designed "ice line." And I use electronics to help me locate fish. I'll drill a few holes then let things settle down a bit before starting to fish. Keeping still and limiting movement is important on clear ice. Once I start fishing, I don't want to drill any more holes if I can help it. Your local bait shop is your best source of information. Stop by and find out what's been producing fish and for the latest in ice conditions. It's your best, first and most important step to being productive on a consistent basis. Good luck, and be safe. *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.

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DAVE SURA

North Of The Border

A Manotak Adventure

As I lay awake in my cabin at Manotak Lodge anticipating my first morning of fishing on Perrault Lake, dreams of walleye, perch, northern pike, smallmouth bass, and muskie bounced around in my head. I had hoped to take my wife Kati, daughter Abby and myself out for a day of fishing with our guide Bill. When I awoke these dreams were not to be, at least those of taking my family out, as an intermittent rain and gusty winds greeted me at the dock at Manotak. After donning my raingear, Bill and I made our way out into the windswept waters in search of shore lunch. We would spend the next 4 hours searching for fish to fill the livewell as well as our bellies at lunch. Bill did not disappoint. As we went from spot to spot, we picked off enough fish for lunch while teaching me where to find fish on this 11,000 plus acre body of water. Although the rain kept my family off the water, the rain allowed them the opportunity to eat a fantastic shore lunch cooked at the lodge by the guides. After lunch Bill and I continued to share stories of past fishing adventures, hunting opportunities around Perrault Falls, and good spots to try later during the week. I was very impressed by his knowledge of the lake, his skill controlling the 17.5 foot G3 boat in the wind, and his willingness to help a first timer on the lake.

The next two days were very much like the first, windy and rainy. Despite these conditions as well as the lake temperature dropping around 7 degrees, the other fishermen and I continued our assault on the lake. Fishing was tough, but with the help of Dave, my guide Bill, and the nice people I met, I was able to



go out and catch fish. Maybe not the hundreds I dreamed of, but enough to keep me interested. I slowly, but steadily picked walleyes and smallies off Twin Islands, one of the lakes many rock bars, and enticed several northern pikes from a weedy bay on Hatfield Island. Tuesday afternoon I was able to get Kati and Abby out for the first time. I took them to a spot just south of the lodge where we worked a rocky shoreline with jigs and minnows. We were able to pick off a few walleyes and bass before the cool unstable air began to emit showers across the lake. I decided it was wise to get them off the lake before they found themselves in the same condition as my cell phone, soaked.

I awoke to sun and light winds on Wednesday morning. For the first time

“As we went from spot to spot, we picked off enough fish for lunch while teaching me where to find fish on this 11,000 plus acre body of water.”

this week, I was able to venture to other parts of the lake. I went out with Blake and Barry from another cabin and tried a few new spots and caught a few fish on those spots that morning. That afternoon Kati and Abby came out again. We decided to try one of the other lakes for perch. We traveled across Lake Perrault to Church Lake where we met many of our fellow fishermen from camp. That morning fishing was hot here. We anchored the boat where the guys had been catching crappies that morning. Abby caught a small northern with my help. After not getting anything we moved to a spot in the shallow weeds, anchored and proceeded to catch a bunch of perch. Most were small, but Abby had a blast reeling in the striped bandits.

Blake Hastings and I traveled 25 miles Thursday morning to Fluke Lake, Manotak Lodge's remote musky lake. We were told we could see many

continued on page 23

Manotak Lodge – The Overview

By Dave and Kathleen Sura

Imagine yourself on a rollercoaster. This rollercoaster is going up and down, through trees, and past rock formations. This rollercoaster is called Highway 105 that leads you to the Manotak Lodge located on beautiful Perrault Lake.

Manotak Lodge is owned by Dave and Linda Becker. This is a 4-star fishing lodge. There is a great reputation for fishing, quality accommodations, excellent meals, and friendly service. They offer all-inclusive packages in the American Plan, the Evening Meal Plan or the Housekeeping Plan. There are 16 modern cottages that accommodate from 2 to 12 guests. The buildings, grounds, boats, and motors are immaculately maintained and the competent staff will see to your every need. In 1954, an American Oil Company built a 2100 square foot log lodge to be used as a fishing retreat for its executives. In this lodge, meals are served, you can shoot a game of pool, meet new friends, and swap fishing stories.

After arriving on August 14, we were met by Dave and Linda. As part of the check-in procedure, Dave sits down with you and discusses the policies of the lodge i.e. use of boat, fishing regulations. As this is happening, his wife, Linda fills out your fishing licenses. Then we were off to cabin 1A. This was a 3-room cabin. Sleeping for 4, kitchen, and bathroom. The cabin is nestled in the woods. A stone pathway leads you to your cabin, the other cabins, to the lodge, and to the big, beautiful lake.

Down by the lake you are met by a family of ducks. There is a mother with her 4 babies. Lunch has been coming to the lodge for the past 4 years. She is their “pet”. It is a precious thing to see a six-year old girl feed the ducks, but it is more precious to see the grown men feed the ducks from their hands. On the dock, you see the boats that are ready for fishermen to load up their equipment and depart on their way to catch the one “trophy” fish that will be talked about around the dinner table with the other fishermen.



One tradition that the Manotak Lodge has is the “fishing chart”. When you check in on Saturday, you put your name on a chart. You have from Saturday to Wednesday evening to catch the longest Northern Pike, Smallmouth Bass, and Walleye. The measurements are put on the chart. Around the fire pit on Wednesday Night, Dave and Linda talk about the week and announce who has caught the longest fish in these 3 categories. They also have a time for the guests to share stories and talk about what they have done for the week.

The different plans that are offered at the Manotak Lodge offer many things. For a home-cooked meal, you will want to walk to the lodge. There is a chef that cooks meals from scratch. There is a different entrée offered each morning for breakfast and also for dinner. These meals are fit for a fisherman that has spent the whole day on the beautiful lake. Each meal was cooked to perfection and delicious.

From the deck hands to the kitchen staff, everyone that works at Manotak Lodge makes you feel at home. You feel like a part of their family. They help you in any way that they can. They answer your questions, listen to your stories, ask you questions and are full of information about the lodge and the lake. You find out about what brings them here and why they love to work here.

SURA, from page 22

muskies here and had a good chance of landing some. This is not a trophy lake, but a number one where the average fish measures in the mid thirty inch range. We both wanted to catch a musky, so we were excited to fish the lake. Once we hooked up the motor and began to make our way out to the first point to fish, we noticed the algae were in full bloom. The entire lake was covered. We still were determined to fish and we did. We fished 5 areas we were told held the most fish. I finally managed to briefly hook a small fish. It made one jump, threw the hook and it was over. We returned to camp with the memory of that fish and the wolf we saw hunting along the lake that morning. Never give up I told myself. After a snack with the family, I decided to return to my favorite spot, the Twin Islands. However on the way, I stopped in a small weedy bay for northerns. The dock hands clean the pike and remove the y-bones, so I figured I would keep a few small ones and see how they taste. I'm glad I stopped. In ten minutes, I landed two small pike on chartreuse spinner bait. With my limit of pike, I fired up the 50 horse Yamaha and was at old faithful in minutes. Over the next hour I caught a few walleyes, kept two and was back at the dock for photos. What an afternoon it was.

Friday was the last day. Kati and Abby went out with me again. We went to the shoreline spot we had done well earlier in the week. I worked that spot with crank bait. I caught several smallies and one small pike. After a trip into Jackfish bay for photos and sightseeing, I dropped them off and headed out again. I decided to explore a little, so I went to Rainy Lake. After a slow ride through a small channel I arrived at the lake. On the way down the lake, a couple from the lodge gave me some

advice on where to go. I headed there in search of perch. The bite was tough. I managed a handful of perch, one of which was 12 inches! I caught two walleyes and a nice 16 inch smallies before I had enough sun. That evening I went out for the last hoorah. Although I caught only one fish, the gorgeous sunset made the trip worthwhile. Sadly, I docked the boat for the last time. What a trip.

Tips

If you're planning a trip to Manotak Lodge here is a few suggestions for locations and tackle. For walleyes and smallies, find rocks. This lake is loaded with rock bars and shorelines. Fish these areas with jigs tipped with minnows, leeches, and plastics. The best depths for me were 5-25 feet. Depths and baits change depending on when you go. Talk to Dave for the hot baits and locations, or hire a guide like I did. For pike, find the weeds. Most bays have them. Throw spinner baits, buck tails, and stick baits for them. Again things change from week to week, so talk to the guys at camp or experiment for yourself.

I would like to thank the staff at Manotak Lodge, especially Dave and Linda for a great vacation. You will not find a better staff anywhere you go. If you are interested in fishing at Manotak, please talk to Dave or Linda soon. They fill up quickly each year. You can reach them at 1-800-541-3431, by e-mail at manotak@drytel.net, or by checking their website (www.manotak.com) for the sport shows that they will be at. ☺

Dave Sura has fished Wisconsin waters for more than 25 years. He specializes in shore and tributary angling for perch, steelhead and salmon on Lake Michigan. Contact Dave at 262.930.8260.

BEACOM, from page 13

stamps required to ice fish, but it's always a good plan to read the state's DNR fishing regulations.

Traveling light on the ice works best, and those plastic red sleds from the hardware store are perfect for the job. More often than not there's one in your rafters with an old piece of tattered twine tied at the bow. The last time you used it, you were heading downhill whooping for joy. Load the sled with a hand auger (your neighbor surely has one), skimmer, a stool/camp chair, bucket, jig pole or ice fishing rod and reel, tip-up and rod holder (both optional for fishing multiple holes) a Plano box with your tackle and a container of waxies.

That's it. You won't need all your regular fishing gear, but modify your tackle box by taking a few must-haves along with a supply of spring bobbers, sinkers and jigs.

Dress warm in layers making sure to have appropriate coverage for your hands, head neck and feet. It's not uncommon for temperatures to warm in the afternoon, only to have the wind turn frigid. Be prepared. Nothing ruins an outdoor adventure more than a chill.



"Most of the gear required to ice fish you likely already own, or a quick stop to your neighbor's garage will outfit you appropriately."

Sunglasses are also very important. The reflection of the white snow, even when overcast can make your face freeze in a wincing position. Warm boots with a good tread are helpful because you will definitely find slippery spots.

Once the gear is secured snugly in your sled, you turn and face the wind for your walk back to the shoreline. You've caught, then released, a few bluegills and a pike and are content with your day. As your crunching footsteps make their way across the white expanse, you contemplate the day and you know one thing is certain; some of your best parenting moments, biggest laughs, deepest conversations and "aha" moments have occurred on 14 inches of ice. ☺

Author's Note: For Wisconsin's fishing regulations, contact the WDNR: <http://dnr.wi.gov/fish/regulations/2010/hookline.html>. For fishing reports and ice-quality info, contact: lake-link.com.

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.

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S. WILKERSON

Surplus Firearms

Hunting for a helmet

Mrs. Steiner taught me to read nearly 50 years ago from the Little Red Book at Saratoga Elementary School in Waukesha. Much of what I read over the ensuing half century was good, like the Dick and Jane series of cloth-bound books that taught millions of us to read in the fifties and sixties. Years later, most of what I read is opinionated drek on web sites. In fact, perhaps the stupidest comment I have ever read was posted on an internet gun collectors' forum and speaks volumes about some gun collectors. The "philosopher" who wrote it was commenting on some disparaging remark another poster had made about some commonly available surplus firearm: Years after I read it, I can almost reproduce it verbatim. It began, as I recall, with the usual hokey about how we are not so much gun owners, but their caretakers for future generations. The posting then ended with this gem: "These guns have more significance than any of us."

I must admit to a history of not being a good gun caretaker. I have seriously decreased the future collectability of more than a few guns with ill-conceived improvements. I also can't say that I, unlike our president, was part of the change that we, or anyone else, were waiting for. On the other hand, thanks to people like me, lots of old people are getting far more in social security than they ever put into it. I also had a hand in making the greedy buggers that wreaked havoc on my retirement savings wealthy beyond my wildest dreams. Those are just two of the probably several accomplishments that I can lay claim to, which is two more than any firearm I have ever been acquainted with has done. Given a little time, I could probably come up with some other ways that my existence has significantly impacted others, positively and negatively.

Take it from a gun nut: Getting goofy over guns, as much as I enjoy them, is nuts. The only hate mail I ever received about a column was when I suggested that a certain rifle was kind of crude and had a ridiculous safety. "Hate" is probably too strong a word for it. It was more like suggesting that I

was too stupid to understand that by simply contorting my arms into pretzels and pulling this way and pushing that way, I, too, could operate the safety of this particular firearm. I was actually well aware of this technique, and still thought it was a pretty dumb safety mechanism.

Recently, Toothpick Jim and I have pretty much come to the consensus that unless the ban on G43s and Tokarev SVT 40s from Russia is lifted, we now own most of the surplus firearms needed in our collection. In other words, we needed an excuse to continue going to gun shows. Thanks to TP, we soon had one. He got it into his head that he needed a World War II

with an M40 liner is a very small part of this facet of his personality. Unchastened, TP responded to the poster that the liner was postwar and the helmet was repainted, so what the heck was the big deal? Among rationale human beings, this was no big deal. I must say, however, that I took the pins out of my M40 and realized it was a mistake because the liner no longer fits as tight as it did.



"Among German Army helmet connoisseurs, taking the liner pins out ruins the historical integrity of the piece (or something like that) and TP was an uncouth Cro-Magnon for doing so."

German Army helmet. This struck me as an excellent idea and one that we soon expanded to bayonets, daggers and reproduction medals. Soon providence smiled and I found what looked to be a German M40 helmet for \$150 at a gun show. The world is full of fake Wehrmacht helmets and I didn't know enough about them to know the difference between a bono fide example and a fraud. I made TP aware of it and he went to the show the next day where it passed his smell test and he bought it.

Wanting to learn more, TP photographed the helmet and posted it on an all-things Wehrmacht web site where it garnered generally good reviews. One reader, however, was horrified. TP had – GASP! – removed the pins that secured the helmet liner to the helmet shell. This was tantamount to scrubbing the green off the Statue of Liberty. Among German Army helmet connoisseurs, taking the liner pins out ruins the historical integrity of the piece (or something like that) and TP was an uncouth Cro-Magnon for doing so. TP is, indeed, an uncouth Cro-Magnon, but tampering

I, myself, have to confess to a crime similar to that perpetuated by TP. I did it to the most commonly available surplus arm in the history of the world – a Mosin Nagant 91/30. (Yes, I realize that I often write about these, and won't in my next column. Probably.) I recently purchased yet another 91/30, but unlike most, this one had had an obviously new, virtually dent- and grease-free post-war stock along with the typical flaking shellac finish. I had never seen a new 91/30 stock and I have seen a lot of 91/30s. Were it not for the flaking shellac, it would have been gorgeous. Logic told me to leave it alone. And I would have, except for a nasty piece of adhesive something or another on the forearm that I, incorrectly, thought I could remove. Long story short, my attempt to remove the adhesive ate through the fragile red shellac finish and exposed bare wood. No combination of shellac and dyes would match the wound I created.

I only had one choice. Since stocks and metal are not serial numbered on post-war refurbished 91/30s, the gun could be made "original" again with


the purchase of an unmolested and commonly available stock. This meant that I was free to strip and replace the flaking shellac on the other piece and put on a finish that would do it justice.

Which I sort of accomplished. Although I bought high quality garnet-colored shellac, it is by no means a match to the typical Russian red shellac. While I hear tell that some 91/30 refurbs have amber colored stocks, which mine now is, I don't remember ever seeing any. The amber colored birch stock is very attractive, if not necessarily historically accurate. If I want historical accuracy, I can put on the greasy, flakey replacement and no will be the wiser.

In addition to having an uncommonly attractive stock, this 91/30 has an uncommonly bright and shiny bore with a great crown. I expect it to be a very accurate rifle because of this and how well the barreled receiver fits in the stock. The gun displays none of the sloppy fit that compromises the accuracy of so many 91/30s.

In fact, if it proves to be as accurate as I believe it will be, I'm going to further compromise its historical integrity by removing the rear sight and mounting a scout scope in its place.

To paraphrase Lesley Gore, it's my gun and I'll modify it if I want to. I don't much care how history will judge what I did to it. I will admit, though, were I to turn back time, to use another really lousy song analogy, I would have left it alone.

Think before you putz. 

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



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JJ REICH

Product 6-Pack

Great gear for the woods, fields and waterways

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

THE GUN TOOL

For \$25, this multi-tool is loaded with 18 of the most frequently used long-gun tools in a compact and ergonomic folding frame. Made of durable stainless-steel with a grip-coat polymer frame, the tool features a universal choke-tube wrench, torx and allen drivers, pin punch, claw-point blade and magnetic bit storage.



I keep this tool in the pocket of my gun case. It's versatile and has everything you need to make quick repairs or tweaks. It's compact, and the choke-tube remover is real handy if you own a lot of different shotguns.

RealAvid.com

KNOXX STOCK CAMO SPEC OPS STOCK

For about \$150, this replacement shotgun stock features an innovative recoil-compensating system that reduces perceived recoil up to 85 percent, and can adjust the overall stock length by more than 4 inches. Several models are available



to customize a variety of shotguns.

This new stock made my old Model 870 shotgun look tough—very tough. And, the stock's recoil reduction is amazing. The camo pattern and pistol-grip stock is ideal for tricking out your turkey-hunting shotgun, and for reducing its shoulder-slaming kick.

Blackhawk.com

ENERGIZER NIGHT STRIKE FLASHLIGHT

For about \$99, Energizer's compact outdoor LED flashlight boasts five light modes, including three bright white (spot, flood light and spot/flood combo) and two stealthy red (high and low) settings, and has quiet "next-push-off" technology for each lighting mode. The flashlight is extremely durable, weather-proof and has a 6-hour run time. It also has a heavy-duty belt clip and double-locking battery compartment



This compact light is designed with the hunter in mind; I can honestly say the Night Strike has very powerful LEDs—its brightness and high-beam range is truly impressive.

EnergizerLightingProducts.com

JACCARD MEAT TENDERIZER

For \$35, you can achieve better cooking results from less expensive cuts of meat with the multi-blade, hand-held meat tenderizer. So, why does the work better than a meat mallet? Simply said, its razor-sharp stainless-steel knives tenderize meat by surgically cutting through the connective tissues that cause it to be tough.



If you want to make excellent venison steaks on your grill—I'm telling you, just hit your steaks with a few punches from this bad boy. All the small cuts result in better penetration of marinades and faster cooking time (by up to 40 percent). I absolutely love it!

Jaccard.com

GEAR AID BUCKLE REPLACEMENT KIT

For \$10, this Buckle Replacement Kit fixes a common problem—broken buckles. It's a fact, buckles break on backpacks, hunting vests and other strapped gear. This kit will fix it in a hurry. The four-piece kit includes a Side Squeeze Buckle; a Siamese Slik Clip; a Slik Clip; and a quick-attach, Tension-Lock Buckle.



The Buckle Replacement Kit is part of a comprehensive line of care and repair products from Gear Aid. Protect, revive, fix and maintain all your essential gear, whether at home or in the field. Gear Aid helps your equipment live a long and happy life.

McNett.com

DEER CAMP WOOL FIELD COAT

For \$130, This Melange Wool Jacket is offered in red/black buffalo plaid or charcoal colors. It features a wind-resistant and waterproof membrane, center front zipper covered with a snap front placket, warm insulation and several pockets.



I love the "old timer" look and style of this jacket. It reminds me of my grandpa and my dad. And with a name like Deer Camp, it's definitely perfect for any cold November campfire in the northern woods of Wisconsin.

Email: sales@richlu.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.kampptales.com).

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ELLIS, from page 2

her taxidermist at 202-3/8.

"I was running through the briars. It took me forever to get there," said Kim, who also has a doe and 9 and 10-point bucks tagged since 2006. "A 200-plus deer. It's pretty amazing. A once in a lifetime deer. Well, hopefully not. You just never know what's going to walk by your stand."

After capturing a great buck on Cuddeback several times, Volkman's "obsession" started. He planted a food plot in August that would peak and offer an alternative food source to the deer at the same time, about opening day, when the soybeans the buck was feeding in yellowed.

"After reviewing pictures from 2009 I'm convinced that this buck was a 9-point that I had seen and let go several times," Volkman said. "He had a habit of moving during the daytime."

Volkman drove straight through from a waterfowl trip in Canada to make it home Saturday of the opening 2010 archery season and reached the oak stand to hunt with his wife Amy, also a successful archer. They watched the buck approach the food plot from 300 yards, and John encouraged Amy to take the shot if it materialized. After more than two minutes at full draw without a killing shot presenting itself, Amy let off

and John came to full draw as the now wary buck began to hurriedly exit the field. The buck paused at 29 yards.

"My pin was on him at that point and I watched the arrow hit him perfectly," Volkman said. "We watched him run out in the CRP, pause at 50 yards and tip over. I have been pretty fortunate over the last 10 years with shot placement but the one thing I have learned is that when the adrenaline takes over your eyes can play tricks on you and where you thought the arrow hit the deer is not always the case."

"When you are shooting at an animal with the reflexes of a whitetail a lot of things can and do happen. Shot angle can make all the difference in the world. One thing I have learned is that if a deer is hit double lung, heart or a major artery is severed they will fall within 12-14 seconds of the shot and be dead in 20 to 30 seconds. I have a habit now of counting down when I make the shot and those numbers are very close. Anything longer than that and the 'back out and wait rule' comes into effect. Coming from a guy who has red colorblindness...watching a 13 point buck (unofficially scored at over 150) fall within seconds, within 50 yards...is as good as it gets."

Lee Gatzke was watching the

Buffalo County buck all summer and had thought he had patterned the animal for a sure kill on opening weekend. A neighbor's similar plans and set-up on the property line changed the blueprint when the buck winded the other hunter and changed to nocturnal travel for several weeks. Gatzke improvised and adjusted to hunt closer to the buck's bedding area.

"On October 5th I put the plan into action and that evening at 6:20 he gave me a 23-yard broadside shot," Gatzke said. "The shot hit home, the arrow buried to its fletching entering high and angling down toward the brisket but did not pass through. He ran off and all was quiet. I waited until dark and then quietly left the scene with the intent of tracking him later."

"I had self-filmed the hunt and took a look at the video to confirm that the shot was good. Then I enlisted the help of a couple friends, one of whom owns a blood trailing Draththaar. The next morning we put the dog on a faint blood trail and he had him located a short time later. Wisconsin hunters should know that using dogs to trail is legal if the dog is on a leash. The 12 point rack green scores 161-3/8 and dressed out at 230 pounds (275 live

weight)."

You're a Wisconsin hunter. It's your responsibility to make every effort to recover the hit deer. Toward that, it's your obligation to know your firearm, know your limitations with that firearm, and finally take the track until you lose it, you determine the animal has survived, or the deer is tagged. If you're hunting with someone who has not sighted in, stretches the shot or doesn't take the track seriously, don't hunt with him. If you're a new hunter, take your entire hunt to the limit. Time in the field will eventually foster the experience that cultivates expertise. In the meantime, old fashion sweat will often make up the difference. And help you hang the deer. *W*

Lee Gatzke is co-owner of Blood Brothers Outdoors which produces instrumental hunting videos geared toward tagging mature bucks year after year.

Read Dan Flood's tips on recovering a hit whitetail and DNR regulations for using dogs to recover hit deer and turkey, courtesy of Wisconsin Conservation Warden Tom VanHeron, at OnWisconsinOutdoors.com.

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